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MISCELLANEOUS.

ACTS OF THE LEGISLATURE.

An Act *amend an Act entitled "An Act to amend 'an Act to establish District Courts.'"*

1. *Be it enacted*, by the Senate and House of Representatives, now met and sitting in General Assembly, and by the authority of the same, That so much of an Act, entitled "An Act to amend an Act entitled "An Act to establish District Courts" ratified the twenty first day of September, one thousand eight hundred and sixty six, as requires the drawing and empanneling of Grand Juries for the District Courts, be, and the same is hereby repealed, and all persons already drawn and summoned to attend said District Court as Grand Jurors, are hereby relieved of the duty of so attending.

II. That no presentment of a Grand Jury shall be necessary in any case in the said District Courts, but it shall be the duty of the Attorney General and Solicitors, after inquiring into the facts of each case, to prepare Bills of Indictment, and present the same with the papers pertaining thereto to the District Judge for his examination, who shall order the same to be docked for trial, if in his judgment, the prosecution thereof be advisable.

III. That the Juries in the District Court, shall consist of one Jury of eight Jurors at each Quarterly Session, and the venire therefor shall consist of a panel of sixteen; and it shall be the duty of the District Judge at each Quarterly Session, to order the drawing in open court of the Jurors to constitute the panel of the venire for the succeeding term.

IV. That there shall be kept a separate Jury Box for the District Courts, which shall be filled from time to time, and the drawing therefrom be conducted in the same manner as by law required for the Superior Courts; and in reference to the said Juries of the District Courts, the manner of summoning them, the duties and liabilities of the officers of the Court and the penalties for non attendance, and in all other respects, the jury law of the State shall apply.

V. That in drawing Jurors to constitute the panel of the Venire, it shall be competent for the District Judge to direct the rejection at the time of drawing of the names of persons who are known or believed to be dead, not resident in the District, over seventy years of age, or in any manner disabled from discharging the duties of a Juror; and names shall be rejected for the occasion and returned to the Box of persons who are known to be in the panel for the term of the Superior Court next ensuing the drawing, or who have served as Jurors either in the Superior or District Courts within twelve months preceeding the drawing.

VI. That to constitute the Juries in the District Courts for the Term next succeeding the passing of this Act, and for which the Venire has already been issued, the District Judge shall order the drawing of sixteen from the number of those summoned and in attendance, which number, so drawn shall constitute the panel for that term, and from them shall be drawn those who shall serve as the Jury of that Term; and, if in any District such Venire shall not have been already issued, the District Judge shall order a special court for the drawing and shall order the Venire in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

VII. That in the District Court, each party in a civil action, and the accused and the prosecuting officer in a criminal matter, shall be entitled to challenge each, two jurors; and the places of those challenged, shall be supplied from the supernumeraries.—An insufficient number of jurors in any instance, shall be supplied in like manner as in the Superior Court.

VIII. A traverse of an indictment shall not, in the District Courts, of itself, operate to continue the case.

IX. That the concluding paragraph of the eleventh section, in the words, "and in the District of Beaufort, where the Court shall be held, alternately at the Court House in the town of Beaufort, and at Lawtonville, be repealed.

X. In civil causes the defendant shall be entitled to an imparlance to the succeeding quarterly Term of the Court.

XI. The Superior Court of Equity and the District Court shall have concurrent jurisdiction in all cases of Equity; and the Superior Courts of Law and the District Court shall have concurrent jurisdiction of all cases in Law, civil and criminal, of which, by the constitution, the said District Courts have jurisdiction.

XII. That in all cases now commenced in the District Courts for services where the amount due is over one hundred dollars, the case shall be transferred to the Court of Common Pleas.

XIII. Matters of Equity pending in the District Court, shall be heard by the District Judge, at a Quarterly Session, or at such other time as with his concurrence, the parties may fix, with an appeal, as from a Chancellor on Circuit. With respect to these matters the Commissioner in Equity for the District shall regard the Judge of the District Court as he does a Chancellor with respect to matters in the Superior Court of Equity; and in both of these Courts, the law, practice, fees, modes of proceeding and effect of order and process shall be as nearly as possible the same.

A GENERAL BANKRUPT LAW.

The New York *Herald*, of the 7th, has the following article on a United States general bankrupt law:

The Constitution of the United States empowers Congress to pass uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies. This power has only been twice exercised—once in 1800, when a bankrupt law limited to five years was passed, which was repealed before the expiration of the term' term, at the close of the year 1803, and again in August 1841, when a general insolvent law was enacted, which was so loose in its provisions and so available for the fraudulent debtor as to excite a storm of popular disfavor. The latter law was pushed through Congress by questionable means, and among the first who availed themselves of its provisions was the Chevalier James Watson Webb, who after making a great fuss over the passage of the law, coolly wiped out some half a million dollars of debts by its aid. He derived no permanent benefit from the whitewashing process, however, since he could have resorted to it again a few years afterwards, on a smaller scale, to his own advantage. The law of 1841 had less than two year's existence, a bill for its repeal having received the President's signature on March 3, 1843. During the period it remained in operation, it was calculated that some 40,000 persons availed themselves of its provisions, whose aggregate debts must have been in the neighborhood of $200,000,000.

Notwithstanding the failure of former experiments, it has long been the opinion of the ablest financiers and the most honorable business men in the United States, that a general bankrupt law, fair and liberal in its provisions, and containing strict safeguards against fraud, would be at once a protection to the honest debtor, and an advantage to the business community. Congress alone has power to pass such a law, which would be binding upon all creditors in the United States, and all descriptions of debts. The insolvent laws of a State can only reach its own citizens, unless creditors from other States, by voluntarily recognizing the insolvency and accepting dividends from the estate, put themselves within the pale of their operation. The close and intimate commercial relations between the States render it very desirable that a uniform system of laws relating to bankruptcy, which all understand, and by which all alike are bound, should exist; and it was a wise provision of the Constitution which vested the power to make laws in the Congress of the United States.

In Europe, bankruptcy laws are of a quasi criminal character. The proceedings are regarded as hostile to the bankrupt. Under the French law, he is arrested and confined in prison, or put under surveilance, and after an examination into his affairs by the Tribunal of Commerce, he can be released on bail or unconditionally. After the investigation is completed, he can be condemned to imprisonment, with or without labor, if fraud be proved against him. The English has some peculiar features. A bankrupt who obtains his certificate of discharge, is allowed a per centage to a limited sum out of the proceedings of his estate, when the dividends reach a certain amount. When fifteen shillings in the pound is realized by his creditors, he receives ten per cent. on the whole assets to a sum not exceeding 600 pounds, and so inproportion for a smaller dividend. This affords a bankrupt a small capital with which to commence life anew. One provision of the English law would hardly suit the United States. A bankrupt is not entitled to his discharge if he has lost a certain amount within the past year immediately preceding his bankruptcy, either at gambling or stock-jobbing.

It is objected by some that bankruptcy laws are a protection to fraudulent and dishonest debtors. A good law must always be the reverse. Our present system, without any general law at all, is oppressive only to the unfortunate and honest debtor, and affords the rogue every facility he can desire to cheat his creditors. It is also an incentive or temptation to men of weak and unstable principles to become dishonest. When a person who is doing business with an intention and wish to establish a good reputation finds misfortune coming upon him he has now no opportunity to redeem himself, and will in a large majority of instances, set to work to put his property out of the reach of his creditors. If he goes down, he argues, he can never get up again, and self preservation is the first law of nature. A fair bankrupt law would enable him to stop at once, to put all his property in the hands of his creditors to pay as much as he could, and to commence again without an incubus of debt weighing him down. From dishonesty and fraud no law devised by human wisdom can entirely protect the creditor. But a good bankrupt law would afford him more protection than he at present enjoys, since it would enable him to take immediate measures for his protection whenever evidence of intended fraud should make itself apparent.

The lack of a uniform bankruptcy law deprives the community of some of its best commercial ability and business enterprise. To keep a man constantly out of business because he has once been unfortunate, or to compel him to resort to all manner of tricks and subterfuges to conceal his property and cover up his interests, cannot conduce either to the good of the creditor or of the State. The honest debtor, if he should become a bankrupt, would never fail to pay up his old obligation in full should he subsequently secure the means to do so. The dishonest man would never pay a debt at all if he could avoid it. We have examined with some care the law which passed the present House at its first session, and is now before the Senate. Its main provisions appear to be fair and just both towards the creditor and debtor, and it contains apparently stringent safeguards against fraud and dishonesty on the part of a bankrupt. At this period of our life as a nation it is eminently desirable that some uniform law should be given to the country, and the subject should claim the early and the serious attention of the Senate. It is one of the most important matters that remains before that body, and should be passed during the existing session, so that if any amendments to the bill are found desirable they may be acted upon by the present House, which has already maturely considered and thoroughly debated the subject.

SOUTHERN MANUFACTURES.—In July last, a factory of jeans linsey, ect., was commenced to be erected at De Soto, Mississippi. They began the enterprise in the woods. On the 17th of December, looms commenced running, and now the factory is in full operation. The cloth made is equal to any other of same grade, and the demand is equal to the supply. This is the shortest road to independence and prosperity, and the example of the "Magazine Mills" should be imitated in every Southern State.

From the Columbia Phœnix.

COTTON CULTURE.

There is a new paper published in Manchester, England, devoted to the culture of cotton, its manufactures, &c., which proposes to lay before its readers the last and most reliable data and information that can be obtained in regard to the present culture and future probable value of the great staple.

Some of the statements the writer makes will be interesting to planters. He assumes that the production of cotton in India was profitable when its value, in the Liverpool market, was only four pence per pound, and the difficulty and cost of transportation were greater than they are now, and that the price which it now commands (more than double the former) will insure its cultivation in that country to a much larger extent than heretofore. He recognizes in India a formidable competitor to the Southern States in the growth of cotton, and after enumerating some of the advantages the former possesses, brings them in contrast with impediments which, since the war, have superinvened in the latter.

There are some truths in the arguments he uses to stimulate an increased production in India. He says that the present condition of the South, its incapacity for producing the former large crops, and the tax of three cents per pound, which has necessitated a method of collection that seriously impedes the movement of the crop and embarrasses the planters in their operations, may be regarded with certainty as guaranteeing the cotton growers of India and elsewhere on the Eastern continent ample remuneration as the result of the curtailment of the crop here. He adds other reasons for expecting a diminished production of cotton in the Southern States, as compared with the quantity grown before the war; and among them is the re-organization of society and of the relations of labor; that the number of horses, mules and cattle in the Southern States is now about forty per cent. less than in 1860; that the transport system, both on land and water, is still very far from being restored to its former efficiency; and that the prices of labor, and all implements, and products, and animals, are now double what they were previous to the war, and involves at least double cost in the growing of cotton, whilst credit, so essential to production, shows a very tardy recuperation.

He then places in contrast the advantages that India at present possesses. He says the prostration of energy and enterprise which resulted from the tyrannical sway of the East India Company is giving away under the new system rule; that the people of the country are recovering confidence in Europeans, and having better chances of securing to themselves the rewards of their industry, they are more disposed to cultivate the land and to engage in productive and trading pursuits generally. The writer adds that the same causes and influences are producing like effects in other parts of the East and in South America, which have valuable opportunities open and available, and of which advantage will be taken to the utmost, in order to establish a permanent and remunerative cotton trade with the manufacturing community.

We lay these views before our readers, and commend them especially to the farmers and planters of our State. Some of the positions of the writer cannot be gainsayed; and when we take into consideration, superadded to the onorous tax imposed by Congress, they must show the planter, that it is his interest to plant less cotton, and turn his attention more to other agricultural production. It shows more—that it is the interest of both the planters and capitalists of the Southern States to engage largely in the manufacture of the staple, so that if cotton-spinning Manchester is determined to make herself independent of Southern production, the South can make herself independent of her spindles and looms. This course, besides, will relieve the staple of three cents per pound, which, in the shape of protection to New England manufacturers, redounds to their advantage, and will largely increase their already ill-gotten gains.

The South has now a splendid opportunity of entering upon a career of prosperity, if she will only avail herself of it. Let the planters give up the old system of large cotton plantations, vary their products so as to furnish abundant provisions for man and beast, and the future will be more prosperous than ever it was in the past.

LETTER FROM GEN. BEAUREGARD.—The following letter from General Beauregard is published in the New Orleans papers of the 11th instant.—It will explain itself.

NEW ORLEANS, Jan. 10, 1867.

William H. C. King, Editor of the New Orleans "Times."

In your letter of this morning you publish an article from the New York *Herald*, containing some remarks relative to the speech I am reported to have made at Canton, Mississippi, to the Congressional excursionists lately in that city. The *Herald* is in error. I made no speech at Canton or elsewhere to the excursionists; but conversed with them freely, and openly told them the South had fought the North so desperately, because it was defending what it conceived to be its constitutional rights; that having appealed however, to arbitration of arms, it yielded to decision—which was given against it; that I believed the people of the South were now willing to accept the Constitution as made by the war and understood by the Supreme Court of the United States. I said, also, in my opinion, questions of secession and slavery were forever settled; and so far as I was concerned under no circumstances would I countenance any effort to revive them; that we must now direct our energies and our vitality to repairing the damages of war, and restoring to our homes some of those comforts and that prosperity which they formerly enjoyed. In answer to the questions of some excurtionists, if I thought the South would accept the constitutional amendments, I replied that eschewing politics and attending strictly to private business and the duties of my position, I had little opportunity except through newspapers, to ascertain the public sentiment on the subject; but if they desired to know my individual opinion, I would say that the South would not and should not accept those amendments, even if presented as a finality, for its interest and manhood forbade it; that we well know we are now at the mercy of the North, but that the South would never do anything which its honor could not approve, to protect its interest, and I believe would remain passive spectators of the struggle of power going on at the North, relying on the sober second thought and sense of justice of both parties to protect us. I added, though, at the fall of the Confederacy, instead of going to a foreign country to swear allegiance to its government, I preferred remaining in my own and swearing allegiance to what I conceive to be its new government.

In conversation with the excursionists, I used the words of consolidated government when speaking of the United States Government. I meant, of course, the common Federal National Government operating under the Constitution as interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States. I remain,

Yours very respectfully,
(Signed) G. T. BEUREGARD.

A CONTINENT COVERED WITH ICE.—Prof. Agassiz comes to the conclusion that the continent of North America was once covered with ice a mile in thickness, thereby agreeing with Professor Hitchcock and other geological writers concerning the glacial period. In proof of this conclusion, he says that the slopes of the Alleghany range of mountains are glacier-worn to the very top, except a few points which were above the level of the icy mass. Mount Washington, for instance, is over six thousand feet high, and rough, unpolished surface of its summit, covered with loose fragments, just above the level of which glacier marks come to an end, tells that it lifted its head alone above the desolate waste of ice and snow.

In this region, then, the thickness of the ice cannot have been much less than six thousand feet, and this is in keeping with the same kinds of evidence in other parts of the country, for when the mountains are much less than six thousand feet, the ice seems to have passed directly over them, while the few peaks rising to that height are left untouched. The glacier, he argues, was God's great plough and when the ice vanished from the face of the land it left it prepared for the hand of the husbandman.

The hard surface of the rocks were ground to powder, the elements of the soil were mingled in fair proportions, granite was carried into the lime regions, lime was mingled with the more arid and unprotected districts, and a soil was prepared for the agricultural uses of man. There are evidences all over the polar regions to show that at one period, the heat of the tropics extended all over the globe. The ice period is supposed to be long subsequent to this, and next to the last before the advent of man.

THE NEGROES AND THEIR ALLIES IN CONGRESS.—It is stated that everybody whilst the Congressional machine is being run at Washington, scores of dilapidated negroes are seen wandering up and down, and in and around the public places and leading avenues of the Capitol. They enter the halls of Congress, cheek by jowl with the broad-clothed pimps and thieves, and take their seats with as much *sang froid* as if to the "manor born." These idle and vicious white associates occupy about nine-tenths of the space assigned to spectators, and we are informed that the seats in the galleries are, as a natural sequence, dirty, greasy and lousy, and utterly unfit for the occupation of decent spectators. But decent spectators rarely get there now, and after the bawdy and obscene jokes which so recently fell from the lips of Stevens and Spaulding, decent people will scarcely venture therein again, at least until the fanatical wretches who misrepresent the people are driven from the halls of legislation to their lairs in private life.

But the thing after all is appropriate. There are bigots and perjurers and rascals of high and low degree upon the floor of Congress, who gloat over a dissevered Union, and there are filthy barbarians and painted and loathsome prostitutes looking on and smiling approval. But within the hearts of the people there is an unquenchable love of liberty and a burning desire for recovered rights and regained freedom. Every step the Radicals in Congress are taking in the work of subverting the government and degrading the people, is hastening on the day of vengeance and retribution, which will yet sweep like an avenging fury upon the foes of Constitutional government and civil liberty.—*Hackensack (N. J.) Democrat.*

A NATIONAL CONVENTION.—The Democratic State Convention of Connecticut adopted the following resolution on Tuesday:

"*Resolved*, That, after solemn deliberation, it is the opinion of this Convention—at the suggestion of our conservative brethren of Kentucky—that a convention of the Democracy and all constitutional Union men of the thirty-six States should be called without delay by the National Democratic Committee; and we respectfully suggest that said convention meet in the city of New York, on the 4th day of March next, to advise and counsel upon the great questions that now agitate the public mind; to protest against the revolutionary and unconstitutional acts of the present majority of Congress; to announce the determination of the conservative men of the Union to resist and oppose, by every constitutional exercise of power, the disorganization of States and the destruction of State authority."

GOOD FARMING.—Some years ago Dr. Cloud, editor of the American Cotton Planter," by manuring and careful culture, raised 5,898 pounds of cotton to the acre on pine land in Macon county, Alabama. By the same system of culture, General Dunlap, of Mississippi, picked five pounds of seed cotton by weight from a single stalk. It does not pay to farm well, anywhere, in a new or old country.

PROFITABLE.—The People's National Bank, of Charleston, declared a dividend on the 7th instant. This dividend is at the rate of eight per cent. per annum, being the third one for the last year, making, in all twenty-four per cent.

One factory in Augusta, Ga., has turned out during last year 6,410,000 yards of cloth, and paid a dividend, or clear profit, of $611,000 to the stockholders.