

THE SUMTER BANNER

Volume III

Sumterville, South Carolina, December 6, 1848.

Number 6

The Sumter Banner:
PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING, BY
WILLIAM J. FRANCIS.

TERMS:
Two Dollars in advance, Two Dollars and Fifty-cents at the expiration of six months, or Three Dollars at the end of the year.
No paper discontinued until all arrearages are paid, unless at the option of the Proprietor.
Advertisements inserted at 75 cts. per square, (14 lines or less,) for the first and half that sum for each subsequent insertion.
The number of insertions to be marked on all Advertisements or they will be published until ordered to be discontinued, and charged accordingly.
One Dollar per square for a single insertion. Quarterly and Monthly Advertisements will be charged the same as a single insertion, and semi-monthly the same as new ones.
All Ordinary Notices exceeding six lines, and Communications recommending Candidates for public offices or trust—or puffing Exhibitions, will be charged as Advertisements.
All letters by mail must be paid to insure punctual attendance.

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

No. 1.
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Columbia, 23d Nov., 1848.

To the Honorable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives:

Gentlemen: Having in your recent Session been confined to the discharge of a particular duty, you have convened here now at the time appointed by the Constitution, for the purposes of general legislation, and I cannot too deeply impress on you the importance of this duty. The right of the citizens to select their lawgivers from amongst themselves, is amongst the brightest and most cherished features in the structure of Representative Governments.

The Representative best knows the wants, necessities and opinions of his constituents, and his fidelity and vigilance is secured by the fact, that he himself is governed by, and subjected to the same laws which he obtains for them. But his obligations to his immediate constituents, are not the only responsibilities which he incurs—they are but members of a large community, and their particular interest will best be promoted by consulting the general interest; and in discharge of the sacred duty of legislator, he is responsible to the community at large.

In the discharge of the duties assigned to me by the Constitution, I shall now, and from time to time, endeavor to put you in possession of any information I possess, or may obtain of the condition, and recommend such measures as, in my judgment, will best promote the general interest of the State. And you will unite with me in imploring Almighty Wisdom, to aid and direct us in the discharge of our respective duties, so that whatever we may do, shall promote the happiness and prosperity of our beloved State.

The Report of the Comptroller General will put you in possession of the condition of the Finances of the State.

Without entering into the details which will be found in the Report, the result shows that the ordinary revenues of the State, exclusive of the profits of the Bank of the State, and dividends in the Stock owned by the State, in the South Western Rail Road Bank, amounting together to the sum of \$108,000, which has been carried to the credit of the Sinking Fund, are in such a condition as to render it unnecessary to increase the public burthens—a measure at all times much to be deprecated, and especially when, as now, the unusually low prices of our staples would render it burthensome to the citizens at large.

The Bank of the State has a very important agency in the management of its fiscal concerns. Great doubts were felt about the propriety of establishing it, when it was originally chartered in eighteen hundred and twelve; and nothing but what was supposed absolute necessity, could even then make it acceptable. It will be recalled that it was during the war with Great Britain, declared in June preceding, which entirely cut off our commerce with Europe; the pecuniary resources of the country having been completely drained by the preceding embargo and non-intercourse act with a fruitful soil, untiring labor, and abundant productions without a market, even the wealthy Planter, content to forego the luxuries which he had rendered in some degree necessary, found it difficult to meet the demands upon him for the taxes and other dues to the Government. The State then had in hand some cash, and owned stocks, and other productive securities in a considerable amount, and it was thought that these would be more beneficially employed in retaining to cash, and lending it to the citizens on real or personal security, to relieve their necessities. A Loan Office for this purpose was at first contemplated, but it was thought that banking powers and privileges would greatly facilitate its operations, and hence the charter of the Bank of the State, in the form in which we find it. From that time to this, distrust and doubts about the faithful administration of its affairs have pervaded some portions of the State, and I might add, all portions of it in a greater or less

degree—and the propriety of closing it, and winding up its concerns has been suggested. Danger of indiscrimination, the want of fidelity in its officers, and of the partiality of its favors, when managed by persons having no immediate interest in its results, are mainly relied on in support of this proposition.

I have felt the full force of these arguments, and if it was now first proposed, to establish a Bank with the usual powers on account of the State, and based on its capital, I should unhesitatingly oppose my dissent to it. There is danger that persons having no immediate interest in it, would not exercise the same prudence and circumspection, in the management of it, that they would do in their own concerns—that they might indulge in personal partialities, at the expense of the Bank, and that they might prostitute it to political party purposes.

There is yet another objection which strikes me as more imposing. But for the expectation of realizing profits at the expense of its customers, such a thing as a bank would never have been heard of. It is enough that the citizen be clothed with his proper proportion towards the common burthens, and the State ought not to accept more at his hand. It may be said, that if there was no Bank of the State, he might find accommodation at other Banks on the same terms, and the result to him would be the same, and that the State had the right to share the profits of banking.

A sovereign State, whose duty it is by every possible means to cherish and conciliate, ought not willingly to put itself in the position of a relentless creditor towards the citizen, without which no Bank could sustain itself. That however is not now the question. Would it be wise and prudent to close the Bank and wind up its concerns at this time?

There are very many reasons why, in my judgment, this would be inexpedient. I will notice a few only which strike me as entirely satisfactory. According to the report of the Comptroller General, the liabilities of the Bank of all sorts amount to and the citizens of the State, if not the sole, are the principal debtors. The credit system is unhappily so interwoven with our habits of business, that even the severe lessons that we have been taught from time to time by the sudden depressions in the price our staples, and the consequent derangement in all of our productive pursuits, have not been enabled to correct it. We are therefore now, in consequence of the low price of our agricultural productions, in the midst of one of those revulsions of commerce which inevitably brings with it a scarcity of circulating medium, and an increased demand for it. Close the Bank now, and stop its issues, and at least one source of supply is cut off.

Voluntary payments to the Bank, and exery debtor that has the means would be disposed to get rid of that responsibility, would to that extent diminish the circulation; and to force collections, would be productive of incalculable distress to the community.

There is another consideration of equal, if not greater importance. The capital stock and the profits of the Bank, are solemnly pledged on the faith of the State for every dollar she has borrowed, from the year 1820, down to this time. The act of 1838, authorizing what is called the fire loan of two million of dollars, (\$2,000,000,) which is amongst the last, makes the same pledges, and the evidence spread on your journals, shows that the agent who effected this loan, and the purchasers of the stock, had regard to them, in the negotiation for the loan. The character of the Bank itself is involved in these pledges—her neglect to fulfill them, would involve her in disgrace, and compel her to shut her doors. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose, that it facilitated the negotiation, and increased the appreciation of the stock. I can add nothing to what has been said in the report of the Committee of the Senate, at the session in December, 1846, to show that closing the Bank now, and thus cutting off the profits, would violate these pledges, and be an act of mala fides—and the worse that the creditor is without redress. The Bank is the mere creature of the State, which may dispose of its funds as might be thought fit. She is not liable to suit and the only security which the creditor would have, would be the faith of the State already violated. It is true, that by shutting up the Bank, and calling in the debts due to it, means might be provided for the payment of the public debt. But the fact of cutting off this security for its payment, would inevitably materially affect the price of the stocks, and operate injuriously to the holders—a consequence which I am sure every citizen of the State would deprecate.

It may be asked, if this institution is to be perpetuated and riveted upon our prosperity for all time to come? I hope not. The time may, and I hope will come, when it will be wise and prudent to close it forever. But I would not have the State violate its solemn pledges, and do wrong to its creditors, even at the risk of the dangers to which I believe it would be exposed, in the hands of unworthy and dishonest agents. We have little to apprehend from this source, if past experience is any evidence of what we may expect in the future. The Bank has now been in operation for thirty-five years, and during all that time it has been the depo-

sitory of all the public treasure; and if there has been any one of its numerous and frequently changing officers (including the branches) wanting in honesty and fidelity; any instance of indulging personal partiality at the expense of the Bank, or the prostitution of its means to unworthy purposes, I have not seen the evidence of it. Losses have occurred, and they are inevitable in all institutions of the kind; but the annual reports of the Bank, show that at least profits have been realized; and for the time to come, during which we must submit to what I regard as an evil, the Legislature is called on by every consideration of policy and interest, to keep at the head of the institution, as heretofore, able, honest, and faithful agents. When the pledges on the part of the Bank have been redeemed, it would be wise to close its doors forever, and call in its credits in such reasonable annual sums, as the community can bear. And I would on that account, earnestly recommend that there should not be any other pledges involving the capital or profits of the Bank. If they are required for these, or any other purposes, they are under the control of the State.

The increasing prosperity and usefulness of the South Carolina College, is so much a matter of pride, that the attention of every one is constantly directed towards it; and I can add but little to what is generally known of its present condition. And under a wise, consistent, and mild, but firm and uniform government, the parts all harmonize, and regularity and order reign within its walls, and emulation amongst the students; and an increased ambition to acquire knowledge are the necessary fruits.

The extensive additional accommodations for the students, projected by the Board of Trustees at its annual meeting, have by the liberal means provided by the Legislature at its last annual Session, been completed in a manner that adds greatly to the effect and beauty of the College Buildings, and yet there is no room to spare. The students number now two hundred and fifty-five, including the graduating class, which is thirty-eight in number; but it is probable that their places will be supplied by the formation of a new Freshman class. Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, all have representatives amongst the students, and it is not an unreasonable anticipation that the lights of science and literature emanating from this cherished institution, will be seen throughout the entire extent of the Southern portion of our Confederacy. It may, and the time may even now have arrived, when it will be indispensably necessary to enlarge the usefulness of the College by providing for instruction in some branches of the sciences and literature that are not now taught in it. But the subject belongs more appropriately to the Board of Trustees, to whose hands it has been wisely confided, and there I willingly leave it.

I should be gratified to present you with an equally flattering account of the condition of our Free Schools. Defective in the frame work of their original structure, they have dragged on a wretched existence, if, indeed, they can be said to exist at all, down to this day, at an immense cost, without any apparent benefits, except in the towns and cities, where, from the denseness of the population, the funds appropriated for their support can be concentrated so as to make its influence felt. Year after year the attention of the Legislature has been called to this subject by my predecessors in office; and again and again legislative committees have been directed to examine into their condition; and whilst all concede and expose the defective operation of the system, no measures have been taken towards its improvement. The will to do it is certainly not wanting, for it is a subject in which every individual has an interest; and I can only account for the apparent apathy, by supposing that no one knows, or has the means of knowing what is wanted to carry it into successful operation, with in the means appropriated to that object. The defects of the system were early seen, and having bestowed some attention to it for many years past, and with opportunities of information accessible to few (I mean a personal knowledge of the localities and population of every portion of the State,) I am utterly unable to suggest any improvement likely to produce results corresponding in any reasonable proportion to the very large sum annually expended in their support. The local Boards of Commissioners cannot be relied on for the necessary information, as they act without concert or uniformity of system; and I suggested to the Legislature at its last session the propriety of appointing a suitable agent, whose duty it should be to visit every portion of the State in detail, charged especially with collecting all the information he could obtain from the local boards, and intelligent individuals; and to propose a plan suited to the occasion. Whatever plan may be devised, I am very confident that it will be found that there will be a great deficiency of competent instructors even in the primary departments of an English education. It is possible that there will be found in every district, a few young persons of both sexes who would, for the purpose of acquiring a suitable education, free of expense, obligethemselves, when qualified, to devote a few years to the instruction of children, for a reasonable compensation;

and as a starting point in the improvement of the system, I would recommend that the Boards of Commissioners of the several districts be required by law to inquire for, and select from those offering a certain number who would be willing to accept these terms, and to place them in suitable schools; the expenses of tuition and subsistence to be provided for out of the common free school fund before it is distributed amongst the districts, or in such other way as you may see fit to prescribe.

In connection with this subject, I take great pleasure in laying before you a communication from the Rev. Dr. Curtis and Son, Principals of the Female High School at Limestone Springs, and of Mr. J. W. Hudson, Principal of the Mount Zion Academy, at Wainsborough, which contains the liberal and patriotic proposition to receive, in furtherance of any general plan that may be adopted to make the free schools useful, any number of pupils; one of females, and the other of males, not exceeding twelve each, free of any charge for instruction, to be educated for their teachers. It is generally known, that these institutions rank amongst the most respectable in the State; and my own observation enables me to state that the government, discipline, and success in instruction, will rank with any other of the same description in the State; and I would recommend earnestly, that at least this initiatory step be promptly taken towards the improvement of the free school system. Other schools, entitled to equal confidence, will doubtless be ambitious to follow this laudable example; and provision ought to be made for such a contingency. I invite your attention more particularly to this communication, as containing some useful and practical information on the subject of normal schools.

The Citadel Academy at Charleston, and the Arsenal Academy here, will furnish appropriate means of normal instruction in many of the most useful departments of science, and the South Carolina College the means of an education in the highest departments of science and literature.

In my first Message to the Legislature at its last annual session, I took occasion to bring to your notice the subject of Internal Improvements, and as no action was then had upon it, I take the liberty of presenting it to you in the hope that it will receive your early attention. For my general views on the subject I refer you to that Message; but at the expense of some repetition I will state some facts which, in my judgment, deserve especial consideration. All who are familiar with the upper portions of the State know that few, if any of its productions, will bear the expense of transportation by the ordinary means to a market, except the article of cotton, which is not grown at all in the region bordering the mountains; and even that, at the present low prices, leaves but a small net income when the charges of transportation are deducted. All descriptions of grain may be transported to our markets from any of the Northern cities at a less expense than from the mountain region, where it is grown in abundance; and with facilities of transportation, might and would be increased to almost any extent. Lime, which is found in abundance in York and Spartanburg Districts, of superior quality, is shut out even from the market in this place, on account of the difference in the expenses of transportation, by the Thomaston lime. For the same reason our great marls are closed against the iron produced in the interior, and they are supplied from Europe and the Northern States. The same remarks will apply to almost every article of production, the transportation of which is expensive on account of its weight or bulk; and I venture to predict, that unless greater facilities of transportation are supplied, the healthiest and most favored portion of the State will become tenantless. Heretofore they have found a market for their agricultural productions amongst their cotton growing neighbors, but at the present low prices they will find it their interest to raise their own supplies.

The Columbia and Charlotte, and Greenville Railroads, now in the course of construction, when completed, will greatly facilitate transportation in the portions of the country through which they pass; but if the former should stop at Anderson Court House, which I suppose probable, both will terminate in the cotton region, and neither materially aid the mountain districts, and will leave a space of more than an hundred miles between their northern terminations unprovided for. But no portion of either of these roads has yet been completed, and judging solely from what I know of the scarcity of money and the low prices of produce, these companies will find it difficult to call in the subscriptions for stocks; and without the aid of the State, the progress towards their completion must be very slow. And I would earnestly recommend to your consideration the propriety of affording them some assistance towards the completion of these laudable and patriotic enterprises.

Permit me, also, to invite your attention to what I said in the same Message, on the subject of the navigation of our water courses. The subject I know has become stale, and it would seem strange that those natural channels of transportation are destined to remain in their native rudeness and impracticability. All at-

tempts at improvement have been heretofore made at the expense of the State. But I have no doubt that if the exclusive right to the navigation would be conceded to companies would be readily organized with adequate means to improve it, so as to enable them to transport produce at rates greatly below what is now common. But it is believed that this concession can not be obtained, even from those residing on the banks of the water courses. Those employed in boating as a business, find their account in the increased price, on account of the difficulty of the navigation, and the master residing on or near the water courses, finds his in employing his own hands, instead of paying freight. There is, too, something like a natural disinclination to pay tribute for doing nature's common highways; and without legislative authority, or aid, these channels are destined to remain forever in their present rude and unimproved condition.

In connection with this subject, I transmit herewith the report of Major William Spencer Brown, a distinguished engineer, of a survey made by him of Broad river, at the instance of the Columbia and Greenville Railroad Company, which contains much valuable information as to the condition of the river.

I had the honor to communicate to the Legislature, at its last session, that, in pursuance of its orders, I had engaged E. C. Pressley, Esq., of Charleston, to prepare and procure to be printed, a Digest of the Laws relating to the Office and Duties of Magistrate; and I have now the pleasure of informing you, that I understand the book has been printed, and will be ready for delivery during the present session. Eight hundred dollars were appropriated towards paying the expense of printing, and it has been paid to Mr. Pressley for that purpose. Whether it will be sufficient to pay for the printing and binding, I have not been informed. No provision has been made to compensate Mr. Pressley for his services, and I will take the liberty of calling your attention to the subject again, when the book shall have been delivered.

A great number of the 10th volume of Cooper's edition of the Statutes at Large, which contains the index of the whole, were burnt by a fire which consumed a number of houses in this place some years ago, and is now out of print. A corresponding number of the other volumes of the edition are useless for the want of the index. I would therefore recommend that provision be made for re-publishing that volume.

That edition brings down the Statutes at Large to the year 1838—since when the annual acts have been printed in a type and page corresponding with it. And I would recommend that provision be made for collecting them into volumes, and a general index to the whole. None but a very diligent inquirer would take the trouble of looking into more than ten years of Legislative enactments to find what the law is, and I would suggest as a good general rule, that these compilations should be made at least every tenth year.

I have received, and herewith transmit for your consideration, certain resolutions approving Mr. Whitney's project of a Railroad from Lake Michigan to the Pacific Ocean, and recommending it to the patronage of the Government of the United States, adopted by the Legislatures of the States of Maine, Vermont, Rhode Island, Maryland, Ohio, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. The project is one of the most sublime that has ever been conceived by man. One is astounded by its magnitude, and yet with adequate means no one will now question its practicability—not will it be doubted that, if carried into execution, it would greatly promote the settlement of the wild lands through which it is proposed to carry it, bringing us into communion with our fellow citizens inhabiting those remote regions, and greatly facilitate commerce.

I have also received from the National Medical Convention, held in May, 1847, in the city of Philadelphia, a memorial, the object of which is to "urge on the various State Governments the adoption of measures for procuring a registration of the births, marriages, and deaths in their several populations." I can add nothing to the argument found in the memorial, which is herewith transmitted, but my approbation of it, in support of the measure.

The present organization of the magistracy, limiting one to each Militia Beat Company, strikes me as affording great facilities in obtaining the necessary information in the country. Confined to limited precincts, acquainted with every family within it, they would find little difficulty in obtaining it. Annual reports from all to the Clerks of the Courts or Commissioners in Equity would bring together all that occurs in each district, and then collected, would present a general view of the subject. In cities, towns and other incorporated communities, the same end might be even more conveniently attained through the agency of the corporate authorities.

I transmit herewith, a letter from the Hon. W. J. Grayson, the Chairman of a Committee appointed by the Secretary of the United States to select a site on which to erect a Custom House in Charleston, in which he states that he is advised, that according to the laws of the United States, no contract for the purchase can be completed without the consent of the State. One hundred and thirty thousand dollars (\$130,000) has been appropriated in Congress for this purpose, and although the site has not yet been selected, the Commissioners are desirous of obtaining the authority of the State to make the purchase, that it may be completed, and the erect a building before the next meeting of the Legislature. Not more than two or three acres of ground