

The First Two Weeks Devoted to Looking over the Field—Some Measures of Great Public Importance—Notes of the Session.

COLUMBIA, S. C., Dec. 6.—Special: Observers of the work of the present General Assembly have been greatly impressed with one fact—the very small quantity of business thus far actually accomplished. The session may be considered half gone, and as yet there is no measure passed either House, which looks to a solution of any of the questions that have agitated, or at least interested, the people for many years past. One reason given for this condition of the Legislative business is that the body has been awaiting the suggestions of Governor Tillman. These having been formally made in the inaugural address of Excellency, it may now be expected that the lawyers' attention will be given to some of the matters affecting the people's interests most—because they affect the condition of their pockets.

The all-important subject of retrenchment has been gently touched. If all the measures thus far suggested as tending to reduce the public expenditures should be passed, the effect upon the tax levies would be barely felt, if at all, perceptible. This is not saying that the authors of the proposed economy in every department of our public service. The few efforts made at retrenchment should serve only to illustrate the fact that while a reduction of appropriations is surely desirable, it is not always easy to say at what place retrenchment should begin. Among the bills looking to retrenchment are the following:

A bill to abolish the office of jury commissioner and devolve his duties on the county auditor. The average annual pay of the jury commissioner is about \$700. The fate of the measure is doubtful.

A bill to abolish the office of supervisor of registration and devolve his duties on the county auditor. The House committee has reported this unfavorably, and it will doubtless be killed.

In connection with these two propositions may be noted that to abolish the office of county auditor and devolve his duties on the county treasurer. Every effort to make such a change has thus far failed. No bill, looking to this reform, is yet before the calendar of either house. In view of the calendar of the present Assembly, such a change would seem likely to command large support. But its fate would for many reasons be extremely doubtful.

A bill to abolish the pay of election managers and their clerks has been introduced. This would save between seven and eight thousand dollars in every election year—it being assumed that there may be found, in sufficient numbers, citizens competent for the work and willing to perform it for nothing. Present indications point to the passage of the bill.

Bills to reduce the pay of members—one fixing the per diem at \$3 and another at \$4. If precedents be followed there will be no reduction.

Mr. Hardin, of Chester has introduced a bill to fix different salaries as follows: Governor \$3,000, now \$3,500; Secretary of State \$1,800; State Treasurer, \$1,800; Comptroller General, \$1,800; Superintendent of Education, \$1,800; Commissioner of Agriculture, \$1,800; Attorney General, \$1,800, now \$2,000; Assistant Attorney General, \$1,000, now \$1,500; State Librarian, \$500, now \$250; Superintendent Penitentiary, \$1,500, now \$1,000; Physician Penitentiary, \$1,000, now \$500; Governor's Private Secretary, \$1,000, now \$500; Keeper State House Grounds, \$300, now \$200; Chief Clerk Secretary of State, three clerks State Treasurer, Chief Clerk Comptroller General each, \$1,200, now \$1,000 each.

Bookkeeper of Comptroller General, Clerk Superintendent of Education, Clerk Commissioner of Agriculture, each, \$1,000, now \$800 each, except the Clerk of the Superintendent of Education whose salary is \$1,200. Clerk of Adjutant and Inspector General \$750, now \$1,200.

In connection with these bills it may be noted that the House has elected a chaplain, whose compensation is in the discretion of the body, while there is now pending a bill to provide a chaplain for the House and one for the Senate—each to receive the pay of a member. The fate of the measure is doubtful.

The present chaplain of the House is the Rev. O. A. Darby, well known as the former president of the Female College.

SOME PROPOSED CHANGES.

Some idea of proposed changes in certain districts may be gathered from the following reports of House committees:

Unfavorable report from the Judiciary committee on bill to abolish costs for attorneys in the settlement of interstate estates. Bill rejected.

Unfavorable report from same committee on the bill to require a license for the sale of pistols and cartridges. Bill ordered to be placed on the Calendar.

Favorable report from same committee on the bill to abolish the costs of attorneys. Laid over for future consideration.

Unfavorable report from same committee on bill to abolish the office of Master in Laurens County. Laid over.

Unfavorable report on the bill to reduce the legal rate of interest to 5 per cent. Laid over.

Unfavorable report on the bill to make the office of railroad commissioner elective by the people. Bill rejected.

There is a general impression that the present railroad Commission will be abolished, and its duties devolved upon a single commissioner at an annual salary of \$2,500.

Among the bills passed by the House may be noted the following:

To amend the law relating to forfeited lands, delinquent lands and collection of taxes. The bill is an important one and provides that the sheriffs of the different counties in making levies and sales of delinquent lands and in paying over money collected under tax warrants or executions placed in their hands by county treasurers, shall be subject to the direction and under the control of the Comptroller General of the State in like manner as they now are to plaintiffs in execution and the Comptroller General is invested with all the rights and privileges of a plaintiff in execution to make and obtain the aid of the Court to compel refractory sheriffs to discharge their duties in the enforcement of tax executions.

It is also the duty of sheriffs to make return of all tax executions made by the treasurers of their respective counties within ninety days after the date of issue, and in case of default the county

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The report recites the procurement of plans and specifications for the buildings; the acquisition of the Clemson estate, upon the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States; the work preliminary to the erection of buildings; the election of Prof. H. A. role to the presidency; and the progress of the work in its early stages. These troubles past, the board have now on hand \$800,000 brick of their own making—sufficient for all building that can be done before spring.

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The expenditures of the year were \$225,153, leaving a balance on hand of \$225,153. The buildings are estimated to cost \$150,000. The board estimate that, in order to complete the buildings in time to open the college before the fall of 1892, there should be an appropriation for that purpose of \$800,000 by the present Legislature.

The board also ask 100 additional convicts. They recommend that the convicts of the State be authorized to pay Miss Lee her legacy, and request an appropriation of \$500 out of the money bequeathed, to place a monument at the grave of Thomas G. Clemson, and for a portrait of that gentleman. The report concludes as follows:

"In conclusion, now that the Clemson Agricultural and Mechanical College is apparently an established fact, and that these hopes are well founded, we earnestly request all the friends of education and those who desire the elevation and prosperity of all of the people of the State to unite in bestowing upon the Clemson College such encouragement and generous aid necessary to make it a success and an honor to the State."

"The friends of agricultural and mechanical education in South Carolina do not consider this the only kind of education desirable for all persons, nor do they seek to pull down or destroy the efficiency of any of the other educational institutions of the State. They desire rather to see them all prosper alike and labor harmoniously together in furnishing, if possible, to every youth in South Carolina such education, either technological or literary, as will best advance the interest of the individual and promote the welfare and prosperity of the State."

The trustees at their recent meeting recommended that the present experimental stations be abolished, and their work transferred to Clemson College. It appears altogether probable that these suggestions will be adopted by the Legislature at the present session.

UNITED STATES SENATOR.