

POCKET CHARTERS, AGAIN. In our editorial on Pocket Charters in Thursday's issue, we distinctly disclaimed reflecting on any individual. Our remarks were general, and were intended simply as a warning to the Legislature, on account of the various Railroad schemes brought forward this session.

Some have construed our comments as a special attack on the Midland Railway charter, but such a construction we think unwarranted by the language used, which was not specific in its character, and was not intended to apply to any particular charter. We attacked no project that was conceived in good faith, but we attacked all that were intended for private speculation.

If the Midland Company, as we are informed by some of its projectors is the fact, it is a bona fide enterprise, then we will give it all assistance that we may be able to do in our sphere, and we will hail with pleasure the consummation of its purposes. But we do not think this or any other Company should be clothed with extraordinary powers, or have more privileges than are usually accorded to Railroads. If a Company is able to build a Road it should not ask for any larger powers that are not common to other Roads.

We repeat what we said in our former article on this subject, without any purpose to attack any particular individual, or any particular scheme before the Legislature.

We learn that an effort will probably be made to repeal some of the charters that have been granted at this session. We should oppose this, because we think good faith requires that the individuals who claim to be sincere in the advocacy of their respective plans, be allowed a fair trial, and in the absence of any fraud or mala fides on their part, it would be unjust and improper on the part of the Legislature to annul their charters.

We want Railroads built in North Carolina. We will not inquire by whom they are built, so that our people get the benefit of them. But we should see to it that our anxiety on this subject does not permit us to become victimized by speculators and adventurers.

MR. GORMAN'S MILITIA BILL.

After a cursory examination of the militia bill introduced in the House on Tuesday by Representative Gorman, of Wake, we are favorably impressed with its general features, but we have not examined it sufficiently to give the plan our unqualified endorsement.

The bill is a very lengthy one and we object to it somewhat on that score, and think too much space is devoted to Courts martial and similar matter.

What we want is a plain, simple, practicable plan for enrolling, organizing and calling out the militia—with the powers of the Governor plainly defined so that he cannot as Commander-in-chief, omit any duty or exceed any right pertaining to his office.

The militia laws at present are in some confusion, and we are prepared to favor any plan, which, without conferring any extra powers on the Governor, is calculated to reduce the system to a simple code. Many parts of the old law have been repealed and re-enacted and modified, so that it requires a close examination of the several changes to understand the parts of the law which are now in force.

For that reason, we think the Legislature should pass an Act making the law clear and simple.

Mr. Gorman's bill proposes to divide the militia into two classes, one class comprising the volunteer companies and to be designated as the ACTIVE MILITIA, and the other class consisting of all other persons liable to military duty, to be called the SEDENTARY MILITIA.

We have not space this morning to refer to the details of the Bill, which has been ordered to be printed, but after giving it a more thorough examination, we will discuss its features at greater length. It seems to be reasonable and feasible, but should be carefully examined and revised, as it doubtless needs some modifications and amendments.

We are jealous of the principles of civil liberty, and naturally look with suspicion upon any project of a military character. We are opposed to conferring upon the Governor or military officers any powers not consistent with the highest liberty of the subject. The military should always be subordinated to the civil arm except in time of war; for without such subordination Republics are nothing less than absolute despotisms.

MR. BOWMAN'S DISINTERESTED PATRIOTISM.

Mr. Bowman, Republican, member of the House of Representatives from Mitchell county, has been an ardent advocate for an early adjournment of the Legislature. He has made some eloquent remarks on the subject, in which he portrayed the anxiety of the people for a short session, and said that the Legislature should certainly adjourn by the 3rd of March, at all events.

lature on the fourth of March, or give up his Federal office. It is rumored that Mr. Bowman has concluded to hold on to his Federal appointment, and consequently will not be a member of the Legislature after the fourth of March.

This explains the gentleman's disinterested patriotism on the subject of adjournment.

SENATOR NORWOOD.

The action of this gentleman in the matter of the Anderson letter, will doubtless be endorsed by every reasonable man whose opinion is worthy of respect, and is in keeping with the spotless integrity and high toned honor of the Senator from Orange.

That our readers may judge of the propriety of Senator Norwood's course we republish the letter, which was written by the Representative in the House from the County of Clay:

RALEIGH, N. C., Feb. 19th, '73.

Mr. J. W. Norwood,

DEAR SIR:

We think it of more importance to the party to deal fairly and honestly with Mr. Turner about the public printing than to pass the Amnesty Bill, and we are determined to vote against the bill unless the party will agree to give both Editors a fair chance for it. There are enough of us—and we are determined to defeat the bill unless we get fair dealing in this matter.

Respectfully,

J. S. ANDERSON.

The letter was handed to Mr. Norwood on Wednesday evening, and on Thursday morning he arose to a question of personal privilege in the Senate, sent the letter to the Clerk's desk to be read, and then moved that it be transmitted to the House of Representatives, which was done.

Mr. Norwood felt justly indignant that such a proposition should be made to him, and the allegation that it was a private note, and for that reason ought not to have been made public is puerile and without point. Whether so intended or not, the proposition was an insult to Senator Norwood, and involved the character of the House of Representatives, before which both the Amnesty Bill is pending.

Mr. Norwood disposed of the matter promptly, in a proper and honorable way, and we know that the House of Representatives is composed of such material as will see to it that its own honor and dignity are vindicated.

CONCLUSION OF THE REPORT OF BOARD OF PUBLIC CHARITIES.

We conclude this morning the report of the Board of Public Charities:

INSANE ASYLUM.

Upon a thorough examination and inspection of the Asylum by other members of the Board than the Superintendent and Physician, it was found to be well and successfully conducted in all of its departments, appointments and details. By reference to the Superintendent's report, page 21, it will be seen that the number of the insane in our State, according to the census of 1870, is reported at 779, and the number of idiots at 970, making a total of 1,749, of this number about 250 are under treatment at the Insane Asylum, leaving, as will be seen, over 500 of the insane without proper treatment, "many of these demanding constant care for protection against violence to themselves, their families or the community." From the most reliable statements that could be obtained by the Board, there are at least 150 insane persons confined as paupers in the poor houses of the State, and from 40 to 50 confined in the jails, and in both was found by the visiting agent of the Board great neglect, and often almost inhuman treatment was practised in their management and keeping. The Board would beg leave, in conclusion, to urge again upon the Executive and Legislature to take some action in this important matter.

Other States and countries, some less favored than ours, and some as poor as ours, are going forward in the great work. Shall we longer postpone it? Are we willing to be behind every other State? All are willing to be regarded by all other States as insufficient to the claims of our unfortunate? Are we willing to see them linger, pine and die in some dark, dreary dungeon in filthy and chains, or wedged away in some cold, comfortless cage, in some of the pauper hovels called poor houses in our State? Is this the fixed determination of our legislators? or shall we take some decisive step in the direction of this so much needed provision.

INSTITUTION OF THE DEAF, DUMB AND THE BLIND.

In regard to this institution, as in the case of the Insane Asylum, the annual report of the President of the Board of Trustees, Principal, and other officers connected therewith, is found to be so full and exhaustive as to the present condition, management and improvements within the past twelve months, that a lengthy report on this department is deemed unnecessary. All the officers and their assistants have (as far as the Board could judge) been attentive and faithful in the discharge of their respective duties. Some very important improvements, by additional buildings and otherwise, have been added within the last year, which, when fully completed, will greatly increase the comfort and usefulness of the institution. Some additional legislation will become necessary, more especially towards providing a building and accommodations for the colored pupils, but as the Legislature have a joint standing committee upon the affairs of this institution, whom it is presumed will submit a report to the present session of the Legislature of what is needed and what ought to be done, the Board will conclude by urging the great importance of a continuance of the same liberal disposition that has heretofore been shown to this class of unfortunate by our State Legislature.

ORPHAN ASYLUMS.

The Board in their present report, as heretofore suggested in reference to the consideration of other subjects allotted to their perusal and control, will not enter upon a lengthy discussion of the important question of "Orphan Asylums"

or homes for destitute and indigent children. They can but hope that the day is not far distant when there will be some provision made for them by our State Legislature. Ignorance and idleness, we all know, are the parents of vice, crime and pauperism, and the question will be presented to us face to face, whether, as a mere matter of economy without the additional incentive of humanity, it will cost more to punish than to prevent crime. We may as well make up our minds to the unwelcome truth that many of us will live long enough to witness the bitter fruits of our past neglect in failing to provide in some way, or to some small extent at least, for those poor children made orphans by the sad fate of their fathers who offered up their lives upon some bloody battle field and fill unknown graves, or in some hospital far away from those children left orphans and soon to be thrown upon the cold charities of a cold, unfeeling world; and the still sadder thought that these orphans, who have grown up in poverty and ignorance by having lost their parental watch-care and protection, will stand before the bar of offended law and be sentenced to the gloomy cells of some dreary prison for months or years, or even for life. Patriotism, economy and humanity alike demand that we should meet this great question. It will not be an untried experiment. Other States and other peoples have for many years been furnishing these homes for poor and neglected children, and already in many instances have testified that the results attained have been beyond the most sanguine expectations of those through whose influence these humane provisions were afforded.

CONCLUSION.

In concluding their report the Board would desire again to offer to the General Assembly a few suggestions: 1st. That the repealing law alluded to in the first part of their report be so modified as to allow the Board to assign at least one of its members to active duty in the State for the examination and instruction of the actual and real conditions of the classes and objects allotted to them by law, and no salary but actual expenses incurred in such service be allowed or paid.

2d. That a small salary be allowed for the payment of a secretary to collect and collate all the information and statistics obtained from the various counties, and that they be allowed to print their report.

3d. That there ought by legislative enactment to be some reasonable permanency given to the incumbency of capable men, as keepers or superintendents of the poor.

4th. There ought to be books furnished by County Commissioners to keepers of poor house and prisons, for the daily record of admissions. If prison, what charge, what age, color or sex, how long remaining, how and by what authority discharged, whether sick or well during confinement, what has been furnished, and at what cost or expense? If poor house, when paper was admitted, why a county charge, what age, color, sex, how long remaining, what furnished, at what cost and when discharged, whether first or subsequent residence? Such books to be furnished by the Board of Public Charities to the Commissioners of each county.

5th. The appointment by the Board of County Commissioners of some competent and skillful medical man to visit and thoroughly inspect the poor houses and prisons of each county, at least semi annually, and report to the County Boards such recommendations and suggestions as he might deem best and proper, for the proper care and keeping of the paupers and prisoners.

6th. The Board of County Commissioners should be compelled to visit the door houses and prisons at least semi-annually and inspect their condition, so as to provide for their care and management.

7th. That the keepers of poor houses and prisons in each county should be obligated by a prescribed oath and bond for the proper discharge of their respective duties.

8th. That the keepers of poor houses and prisons should be compelled to observe some specific regulation as to the separation of the sexes in poor houses and classes of prisoners in the county jails.

9th. That some provision separate and comfortable be provided for the insane paupers lodged in poor houses.

10th. That County Commissioners be required to provide furnaces and necessary means for heating or warming the jail and rooms assigned to lunatics in poor houses.

11th. To repeal the existing law allowing insane and idiotic paupers to draw one hundred dollars per annum from the State Treasury, as it is liable to great abuse and fraud upon the taxpayer of the State.

12th. The great want of some provision for the poor orphan children of the State as a wise means of preventing crime and pauperism.

13th. The Board would urge upon the Legislature the duty of electing two members to act as said Board of Public Charities, one in place of G. W. Welker whose term expired in July, 1872, and a vacancy occasioned by the expiration of the term of Dr. Eugene Grissom on the first of July, 1873, who has signified to the Board his determination to decline a re-election.

Respectfully submitted,

C. T. MURPHY, President, EUGENE GRISSOM, G. W. BLACKNALL.

1873. 1873.

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We refer by permission, to the following named gentlemen: Dr. G. W. Blacknall, Sheriff T. F. Lee, B. P. Williamson, Esq., Maj. A. G. Lee, W. F. Askey, Esq., Wm. T. Rogers, Esq., and Jno. G. Williams, Esq. feb-19-73 Sentinal copy one week.

NORTH CAROLINA ALMANAC, 1873.

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1873. 1873.

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