

The State.

DAILY AND SEMI-WEEKLY.

THE STATE COMPANY,
The State Building,
Columbia, S. C.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS.

The State—Daily Edition, Seven Days a week. By mail—One Year, \$8; Six Months, \$4; Three Months, \$2; One Month, 75c., in advance. By Carrier in Columbia—20 cents a week, payable weekly. All city subscriptions not paid in advance will be charged at the weekly rate and subject to weekly collection. The State—Semi-Weekly Edition, Tuesdays and Fridays. By Mail—One Year, \$2; Six Months, \$1; Three Months, 50 cents, in advance.

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A. E. GONZALES, President.

MONDAY, JUNE 2, 1902.

Weather forecast for South Carolina: Generally fair Monday and Tuesday, light to fresh east winds.

The Exposition—Did it Pay?

The last scenes of the South Carolina Interstate and West Indian exposition were chronicled in *The State* yesterday. For months this newspaper has maintained a staff correspondent at the exposition with the sole duty of describing its features, attractions and incidents and arousing interest in this great and worthy enterprise; and it has received many assurances from Charleston as well as the interior that its efforts to aid the exposition were not without result.

While the exposition lasted *The State* "boomed" it; now that it is over we may philosophize upon it.

It can do no harm now to say what we would have said six months or a year ago but for the fear of doing harm and being misunderstood; that so large an exposition should not have been attempted in Charleston, for the reason that conditions doomed it inevitably to failure. Charleston is the smallest city that has ever attempted so ambitious a fair—and it would be almost impossible to find in the United States a city of its size so disadvantageously situated for exposition purposes.

In the first place, Charleston has but half a circle of land to draw upon for visitors, for an arc drawn 25 or 50 or 100 miles around the city will take in 50 per cent. of salt water. Charleston, therefore, could only hope to do relatively half as well with similar neighborhood territory as Philadelphia, Chicago, Atlanta, Nashville, Buffalo and other exposition cities of the interior. In the second place, the paucity of white population in the low-country, extending upwards of 100 miles west of Charleston as well as north and south of it, reduced very greatly the attendance it was possible to secure from the land half of the circle having Charleston as its center. The rule with fairs and public attractions is that they draw many more people from near-by points than from distant ones.

The successful expositions that have been held in this country have been held in large cities, with many suburban towns and planted in thickly populated areas. They were easy of access to millions of people, and the attendance of millions was secured by quick transportation at low rates. How different it was with Charleston! The white people of that city number only about 24,000, and outside the city the white population is very sparse until a distance of about 100 miles from the coast is reached. The negroes constitute a negligible quantity in exposition attendance, so the abounding black population of the coast region did not count for the success of the big fair. And there were not as many white people within 75 miles of Charleston as within 25 miles of Nashville or Atlanta. Thus, most of the visitors to the exposition had to be drawn from the middle and up-country of South Carolina and from other States, and the time and money required for these long trips kept the number of such visitors down to a minimum.

In the very nature of things, therefore, the Charleston exposition could not have been a financial success. Even had the original estimate of cost been adhered to it could not have paid out. But that estimate was greatly exceeded, and every dollar of excess carried it farther away from a safe financial footing. It is reported that the exposition company expended something like \$800,000, a sum almost unbelievably large; but if this be so, then the State, city and midway buildings must have run the total cost up to \$1,000,000. What the receipts were we are not informed, but it is certain that the stockholders will get nothing, and probable that either the bondholders or the other creditors will suffer.

Did it pay? That is a question that will have to be left to the people of Charleston. Some will answer it in one way and some in another. There can be little doubt that the exposition, difficult as it was to draw crowds to it, did pay the people of Charleston—who did not contribute to it. There's the pity! The business man who was cautious and selfish, who risked nothing and gave nothing, or but little, re-

ceived good returns from the patriotic investments of his neighbors. Many of the contributors, no doubt, were well rewarded; but many more, we fear, did not profit as they should have done. Nevertheless, it is likely that the community as a whole received as much from the exposition as it expended. It may even have received more, for it is testified that the retail business increased from 50 to 75 per cent. during the exposition.

The shaking up that the exposition gave a community so settled and so staid was of great value, a value not to be measured in money. And the example of successful cooperation afforded by the achievement of so large an enterprise must have its wholesome effect upon the people of Charleston. But still the question recurs, did the exposition pay—not merely reimburse the city, but pay as an investment for the future?

It may freely be granted that nothing else costing Charleston, say, half a million dollars would have advertised that city as much as the exposition. But what future good will the advertising do? How will it hereafter profit Charleston? The charm of the old city is felt by all who enter it, and its guests enjoy themselves and return to their homes with a sense of discovery and a feeling of distinction; but this does not by any means guarantee their return to live or to invest. The mere widespreading of the name of Charleston by means of the exposition is not likely to accomplish results, for the name is well-known already and its familiarity to the public has not helped Charleston. In our judgment little if any money and few if any people will go to Charleston as the result of the exposition, and large expectations in that regard may well be dismissed. Nor are the people who make up exposition crowds the ones to build new railroads or establish new steamship lines. It did not take an exposition to reveal Charleston's advantages and disadvantages as a port and a focus of railway transportation.

One thing we can see as the almost certain good result of the exposition, and that is the establishment of Charleston as a popular tourist resort in the late winter and early spring. The exposition stimulated a long-needed hotel development in the city and brought thousands of well-to-do northern people to the revived and reconstructed hostelry. The existence in Charleston of a hotel like the St. John, for instance, is certain to become widely known and to bring every season hereafter a host of tourists on their way to and from Florida. There are so many interesting things to see in and about Charleston that even without Magnolia Gardens, in itself a supreme attraction, the city, now that it is adequately supplied with hotels, will be sure to get its share of the tourist business.

We hope that more than this may come of the exposition; that the people of Charleston, learning the lesson of cooperation, may apply themselves with success to the upbuilding of their fortunes and the revival and expansion of their city. But in all kindness we warn them that their prosperity will not come through the channels cherished by tradition. For 50 years they have looked to railroads for salvation, but their railroad conditions now are such that Charleston can only be made a great exporting port by a powerful line 800 to 1,000 miles long. If Charleston be really "bottled" it will take a cork-screw as long as from there to Chicago to unbotle it. In like manner, for 50 years Charlestonians have been looking to the sea for ships. Yet now they have deep water on the bay and an almost shipless harbor. Conditions have so changed that Charleston cannot get the ships without the aid of the railroads, and the aid of the railroads she does not believe she has or can get.

Almost everything is possible to Charleston, of course, if the rich men of the city shall combine in her interest. They can build railroads, and put on lines of steamers, and make Charleston independent of all adverse combinations. But it is useless to consider what they might do, because they won't do it. Experience has proved that rich men like E. W. Wagener are there, as elsewhere, in a small minority.

But even a new trunk line between Charleston and the west and new steamer lines to foreign ports could not make her prosper as she should do. Nowadays the movement of ocean freights through a port leaves little money in the local till. From the cars the freights go automatically into the holds of the steamers, and the more efficient, and therefore popular, a line the less toll is left by its freights in the port through which they pass. Charleston needs other supports than this.

We assert broadly that it is impossible for Charleston to prosper unless the country near her, the territory from Georgetown to Beaufort and from Mount Pleasant to Orangeburg, prospers also. This territory is suffering and has long suffered for lack of profitable special crops. There must be, somewhere in the world, vegetable products which could be advantageously and profitably supplied by our low-country. While rice and sea-island cotton were money-making staples in her tributary region Charleston prospered, since Louisiana and Florida adopted them, producing them more cheaply than South Carolina. Charleston has languished. No city can grow great and prosper in a unprosperous region, and therefore Charleston's first concern should be to make prosperous that region whose products must inevitably be marketed in Charleston and which must as surely buy in that city what it needs. If a crop or crops could be found which might be produced largely and profitably in the low-country with white labor Charleston would be the chief beneficiary of the discovery. If one-tenth or one-twentieth of the money Charleston has spent on her exposition were spent in maintaining an experimental farm for the purpose of testing new crops for introduction near her the benefits would soon be manifested.

Another clear and sure way to the betterment of Charleston is by the de-

velopment of local manufacturing. We do not mean cotton goods merely, but scores of other things. Charleston can probably manufacture at a profit as many different articles as Atlanta. Why should she not do so? The capital is in abundance, and the labor is there, or can be drawn there. Failure in making cotton cloth does not imply failure in other manufactures which pay better wages and employ different classes of help.

With abounding local manufactures and a prosperous regional territory Charleston can thrive without additional railroads or steamship lines; and in the course of time can by virtue of her new strength and energy compel the full use of her harbor. But if she is to grow she must depend on herself, she must do her own work in her own peculiar field. All hope is vain that does not rest upon the sure foundation of intelligent, practical, home effort.

Another Boon from Edison.

On Wednesday last Thos. A. Edison once more sent for the reporters, and on their arrival at his laboratory at West Orange, N. J., he gave them news for which the world has long been waiting. This was the perfection of his electric storage battery to an extent which will quadruple the running range of automobiles and work a revolution in the application of electric motive power.

For three years Mr. Edison has been investigating and experimenting with a view to securing a lighter, more powerful and more durable cell than those previously used to drive automobiles, permitting the storing of a larger amount of electricity into a battery of given weight, thus correspondingly increasing the distance which a vehicle could cover on a single charge. A year ago the "chloride cell" for automobiles weighed 124½ pounds and the range of such automobiles on a single charge was not more than 25 miles. At that time Edison's experts thought that he could get a horse power for one hour continuously with a battery weight of 53 pounds. Subsequently, however, a new battery, called the "oxide," has been developed and gives a horse power for about 60 pounds of cell. Soon after this Mr. Edison announced that by his invention a horse power could be had for a weight of only 48 pounds. Many tests have been made since then and Mr. Edison is now able to announce the complete success of his undertaking.

"We have put the horse out of business," said he. "I sent my two men, Bee and Fleiss, out on the road last Friday, and told them to run the machine over a few rough roads and tackle a few bad hills. They ran 62 miles, up 75 hills, the grades of which averaged from 2 to 12 per cent., through some bog-holes and returned with 83 per cent. of the speed they went out with, and the voltage had only dropped seven volts from the original 29. That was pretty good, but I wasn't satisfied. I told 'em to go out again on Monday, when the roads were heavy from the rain, and I told 'em to run the blamed thing till she stopped, but they did 85 miles before that happened. I went out," he added, "in one of those high power gasoline vehicles the other day. We went over the same ground as was gone over with this new storage battery machine. We got to one of those steep hills, and Mr. Gasoline nearly stopped."

The vehicle used by Edison in these tests is described as "an ordinary electric runabout fitted with the Edison batteries, 21 cells, with a total required weight of 332 pounds." Most of the batteries heretofore used derived their power from the immersion of lead in a solution of acid. The lead makes such batteries exceedingly heavy, requiring a weight of about 125 pounds for each horse power produced. The best and lightest of these batteries will not run more than 10 miles without recharging, and this process takes several hours. In speaking of his invention Edison said:

"I realized that the problem would never be solved with a lead battery. So I set out to secure some combination of other metals which would produce the desired effect. At last I hit upon a combination of steel and nickel suspended in an alkaline solution. The principle is entirely different from the electrical batteries now in use."

It was my idea to construct a battery which would not be cumbersome, heavy, which would have fine wearing powers, and which would not need attention. These hopes are realized in the new battery. It is about the same size as the ones now used, but the lighter metals make it possible to secure one-horse power from every 513 pounds weight. I am now making a battery for a bicycle. It will give a horse power for 40 pounds weight, and such can be made still lighter, but they are comparatively more expensive."

These batteries will run for 100 miles or more without charging. They can be charged in a few hours. They require no attention, for all that is needed is to replenish the liquid in a few drops in a little water every now and then to take the place of that which has evaporated. I do not know how long it would take to wear out one of the batteries, for we have not yet been able to exhaust the possibilities of one of them. But I feel sure one will last longer than four or five automobiles."

I am going to start an automobile out next week for an endurance test of 5,000 miles. I shall make five separate tests of this kind with different machines, and if I do not produce a battery that will last for more than 5,000 miles I won't sell a single one of them.

Mr. Edison remarked that it was "now up to the manufacturers of automobiles to produce a cheap carriage." He had no intention, he said, of undertaking the building of vehicles, but he intended to turn out batteries of the new type from the factory he has been fitting up at Glen Ridge. He claimed that the cost of charging the batteries would be practically the same as furnishing gasoline for an engine developing equal horse power, but that there would be a saving in the cost of maintenance and repairs and freedom from the annoyance of frequent stoppages for power.

The Edison battery is very compact and in appearance resembles, it is said, a varnish can. It is enclosed in a sealed steel case 12 inches high, 6 inches long and 4 inches wide. "The battery of the cell is lined with an in-