

under which the New Orleans Whigs were smarting, in having to go to Baton Rouge. They could show me, they said, the swamp on the Pearl River, which must have been alluded to. That river, though now only boatable, might, they declared, be made navigable to steamboats, when the rafts of drift timber were cleared away, and they might then have a direct commercial intercourse with the Gulf of Mexico. The soil, also, surrounding Jackson, had proved to be very fertile, and the railway had brought the place within three or four hours of Natchez, now their port. In short, their town was flourishing, by aid of natural advantages, and the patronage of the Legislature and Law Courts.

Next day, after a geological excursion, I was taken to see the State House and Governor's Mansion, both handsome and commodious, and built in a good style of architecture, but at great expense, at a time when the price of labor happened to be unusually high. I heard much regret expressed at the debts they had incurred, and at the refusal to acknowledge them in 1841. One lawyer, a member of the Legislature, declared his conviction that the repudiation of the state debt would not have been carried in his county, but for the facility afforded by secret voting. The same individuals, he said, who openly professed a more honorable line of conduct, must, out of selfishness, have taken advantage of the ballot-box to evade an increase of taxation, otherwise there could not have been a majority in favor of disowning their liabilities. This was one of the few instances in which I heard the ballot condemned in the United States; yet the position of the laboring and middle classes is, comparatively, so independent here, in relation to their rich employers, that the chief arguments relied upon in England in favor of secret voting, would seem to be inapplicable.

The dependence of the judges, for their election, on the popular suffrage, appears to have been carried farther in Mississippi than in any other state. I was told that rival candidates for the bench and chancellorship, have been known to canvass for votes in taverns, and have been asked what construction they put on certain statutes relating to banks chartered by the state, just as, in an ordinary election for representatives, men are asked what