

The Legislature; and I communicate my views on the present occasion, not so much from a small amount of official duty, as I desire to comply with what appears to be the general expectation; and I have I trust expressed my opinions freely, not that I suppose them entitled to much weight, but because I wished them to be understood.

Signed
January 8th

Wm. Sprague

The Speaker having been requested by the House Message of Delegates to inform them what acts of the past session had been published in the newspapers and whether those proposing a change in the Constitution had been published according to the requirements thereof. For this day sent to that house the following message.

Gentlemen of the House of Delegates

I have been requested to inform you "what acts of Assembly of December Session 1858 have been published in the public papers, and whether those proposing alterations on the Constitution and form of Government were published as required by the Constitution."

The 59th section of the Constitution provides "that no part thereof shall be altered, changed, or abolished, unless a bill so to alter, change or abolish the same shall pass the General Assembly and be published at least three months before a new election and it shall be confirmed by the General Assembly after a new election of Delegates, in the first session after such new election."

The 60th section provides "that every Law shall be records in the General Court of the State, and in due time printed, published and certified under the Great Seal to the several County Courts, in the same manner as hath been heretofore used in this State." The mode of publication previously used may be ascertained by a reference to the act of 1775 Chapter 25, which directs that the acts of Assembly shall be fairly transcribed, certified under the Great Seal, transmitted to the Sheriffs of the counties, and published and proclaimed at the next County Courts.

It appears therefore that a publication in the newspapers was not contemplated, and that the 59th section of the Constitution required a month of that instrument to be published at least three months before a new election, as the laws were published, and certified under the great seal to the several County Courts.

The resolution of December Session 1852. No 79, requires the State Printer to complete the printing of the laws and journals as early a period after the adjournment of the Legislature as possible and to distribute the same as authorized by Law; but directs that if he shall not within ten days after the adjournment enter into an agreement for distribution of them, the Executive shall purchase proposals for the employment of some other agent. As the State Printer entered into no agreement within the limited time, after the last adjournment, proposals were published for the distribution of the laws and journals as the resolution required. Information was received by the Executive on the 27th or 28th of June, that they were ready for delivery; and the agent who was employed for that purpose, immediately began to distribute them among the different counties.