THE KU KLUX.

The Alleged Outrages in South Carolina.

ABSURD STORIES DISPROVED.

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A VISIT TO THE KU KLUX PRISONERS.

The Ku Klux Not a Political but a Social Organization.

ILLEGAL ARRESTS.

White and Black Radicals Assuming the Disguise of the Ku Klux.

SPARTANBURG, S. C., Nov. 1, 1871.

Travelling in this part of South Carolina is anything but agreeable at the present time. The railroads are good enough, but they are few and far between, and one has to take trips in carriages over miserable roads for distances of from twenty to thirty and even fifty miles, damning the Ku Klux and the President's proclamation with severe impartiality. And then the various caravansaries are anything but models of excellence, although, so far as Spartanburg is concerned, they are fairly tolerable. Still it must be confessed that it grates harshly upon one's feelings to pay a maximum of price for a minimum of accommodation. Beefsteaks, which look as if the nigger cook had "chawed" them to get them tender before putting them into the frying pan, are by no means tempting to the eye, and then it is rather rough upon a man to charge him $1 for the privilege of deciding that he cannot eat them. I mention these trifling inconveniences in no captious spirit. Who knows but what the Ku Klux have frightened the culinary art out of the darkies?

SPARTANBURG.

However, after a while one gets used to anything, and even an Upper South Carolina hash may be found palatable if the natural flavor is thoroughly disguised with pepper sauce. So that by the time I reached Spartanburg I was resigned to almost any bill of fare, and am only happy that the dinners are very good. Spartanburg was once a busy, lively town, and when the present troubles began was prospering. In the vicinity are numerous springs of nasty mineral waters, which restore life to the dead and perform various other miracles upon mortal men, women and children. As a consequence the place was a great summer resort in ante-bellum times. Large hotels were constructed, which still exist in a battered and unsightly condition, and large numbers congregated within their walls to flirt, make love, dance and play draw poker. This glory of Spartanburg has departed. But few persons are at the hotels, and those have nearly all been brought here by the Ku Klux troubles. At the "shebang" where I "hold forth" are some officers' wives, who put on an enormous quantity of airs and talk a trifle too much about "we republicans having to come down here and make rebels behave themselves." All this sort of stuff don't help matters much. Much, however, must be allowed for the thoughtlessness of women in general, and gushing loyalty in particular.

PROGRESS OF THE "WAR."

Now, to say a little something about the war. This county and York are the headquarters of United States soldiers, and here one sees any number of "boys in blue," under the command of Major Reno, who is said to be an energetic, considerate and mercifully disposed officer. In this county arrests were made without the exercise of any severity. One case was reported where the soldiers ate the breakfast and drank the whiskey of the Grand Cyclops, that formidable functionary of the "Invisible Empire" having previously made himself as invisible as the empire he has sworn allegiance to. Even this case turned out to be untrue, and the Grand Cyclops in his exile can be comforted by the reflection that no Yankees foraged upon him. As for the military operations, I have to report that the soldiers have severe skirmishes with their rations every day, but beyond these there has not been any fighting. Indeed, if it were not that this raid upon the Ku Klux was playing the very deuce with the industrial interests of upper South Carolina, the entire movement would be a huge farce. Here we have a rebellion without rebels; an insurrection without insurrectionists. Federal officials, it is true, shake their heads and assure me that I ought to have seen what it was last March; others hint that it was fearful two years ago, and I have no doubt that it was chaos at some time in the dim, remote past.

SOME BEASTLY ATROCITIES.

Before reporting what the better class of white citizens say, I must state the charges against the Ku Klux. A great many outrages are said to have been committed—all of them of a minor character, such as whippings. Some of them are positively beastly and scarcely credible. Other outrages, equally beastly, are reported, but I shall not recapitulate them. Did they really occur? Perhaps they did. But does any person imagine that intelligent, educated men perpetrated or even countenanced them? I utterly reject any such supposition. Mark you, the Ku Klux were a political and reasonable organization. Their object was to control the vote of the State, and one of their means of accomplishing this political purpose was by beastly outrages upon negro men and women. I must express the opinion that if any person of ordinary education believes these stories he ought to be sent to a lunatic asylum at once.

THE POPULAR PANIC.

Understand me. In the absence of any means of declaring these stories false I am not prepared to deny that the outrages were perpetrated. But it is grossly libellous to charge upon entire communities the filthy brutalities of a handful of illiterate, degraded scoundrels. Mr. Lyle, the democratic member of the Legislature of this county, is said to have been the Grand Cyclops of the Klan, or "Invisible Empire," in Spartanburg. He is represented to me as an intelligent, refined and well-educated gentleman. Now, imagine, if you can, such a man engaged in the bestialities I have hinted at. Lyle heard that he was to be arrested, and promptly made himself scarce. His flight, the radical authorities declare, is an evidence of his guilt; but these same authorities confess that numerous other men have left the "insurrectionary" counties against whom there was not any charge whatever. No sooner had the President's proclamation appeared than a panic seized the people. An extraordinarily large portion of the male population left their homes and went to other States rather than run the risk of being thrust into prison. Some few have returned since the excitement quieted down, but the great majority are still absent.

THE KU KLUX.

I have conversed with many of the prominent citizens of Spartanburg since my arrival here, and they have spoken to me with a frankness which has impressed me favorably. No person has ventured to deny the existence of the Ku Klux organization. In fact, its existence is so unquestionable that any denial would be an absurdity. And that its members, or men claiming to be such, did perpetrate gross and wanton outrages is something also undeniable. But I glean from conversation these facts: After the reconstruction of South Carolina it was not long before the State government began a systematic prostitution of justice, which almost drove the people to madness. Robberies by negroes were of almost daily occurrence, barn burnings were frequent, and for these atrocities nobody was punished. In one night in York county there were thirteen incendiary fires. Sometimes the criminals were convicted; but what benefit did society derive from their conviction when Governor Scott threw open their prison doors and turned them loose? I have before me the record of a case in which a gentleman of this county was the sufferer. He had sent to Pennsylvania and purchased a pair of Chester hogs, which, because of the superiority of their breed, cost him a large sum of money. One morning he discovered that they had been stolen, and he promptly instituted a search for the thief. The criminal was found with the slaughtered hogs in his possession, was arrested, tried before a negro jury, and convicted, so direct and overwhelming was the evidence of his guilt. He was sent to the Penitentiary, and the owner of the hogs felt that there was some consolation in the knowledge that the thief was punished. Two weeks later, to his utter astonishment, the negro convict reappeared upon the streets of Spartanburg, looked him full in the face and laughed contemptuously. He had been pardoned, because the radical politicians demanded it. And so it went on, until the whites gave up all hope of receiving justice at the hands of the State administration.

THE PEOPLE NOT PERMITTED TO GOVERN THEMSELVES.

This part of South Carolina contains more whites than negroes, and is consequently democratic. The voters, however, are not permitted to govern themselves. All government is merged into the hands of the Governor and Legislature, who appoint or elect nearly all the officers. By a villanous system the drawing of juries is made to devolve upon radicals, and let the central powers only hint that the acquittal of such and such a criminal is desirable and a jury is promptly drawn for the purpose of such acquittal. Sometimes, when the crime is too palpable and correction is unavoidable, the farce of a trial is gone through and sentence passed, but the pardon is ready for the guilty wretch before he has reached the Penitentiary. Do you feel any surprise at the whites becoming bitter and revengeful? Why, even after they elect the few officers they are permitted by Scott and his negro Legislature to elect, Scott frequently withholds their commissions from them. If Scott deems it advisable to elect a man he throws out the votes of the democratic precincts, and thus secures a majority. Are not these damnable outrages upon the rights of American citizens? Are white men, thus brutally and wantonly trodden upon by a gang of political scoundrels and adventurers, backed by a mob of ignorant negroes, likely to continue quiescent and submissive long? I shall write pretty sharply about the Ku Klux presently; therefore do not imagine that I am about to defend them. My purpose now is to show who are the worst villains in this State.

SOME WHITE LOYALISTS.

Let me take the personal characters of the white men, who are the radical leaders in this county. I have before my mind one man, who has for months past been writing to a Columbia paper the most outrageous stories concerning the Ku Klux. He was once a minister of the Methodist Church of the South. The character he bears is positively beastly. He is charged with the commission of offences so abominably filthy that I cannot even name them. Deserted by his congregation because of his bad character, suspended by his Church because of his wrongdoing, the miserable wretch turned upon the people who had befriended and cared for him before his vileness forced them to cast him off, and tried to stab them. He sought admission into the Northern Methodist Church, and was received—surely those who received him were not cognizant of his past career—and to-day he preaches to negroes and writes letters to the radical papers in behalf of the radical party. Spoken of only in terms of disgust by every respectable and virtuous white citizen, his name unmentioned even by pure-minded women, the testimony of this creature is heralded before the world as damning proof against the people of South Carolina, and we are asked to believe it. This man is one of the leaders of the republicans of South Carolina; he is regarded as being one of the principal instruments in making the President's proclamation. There are, I understand, but eight white radical leaders in Spartanburg county. I have described one. The remaining seven are not quite so bad, but every one of them bears a bad character personally. Speak to them, and they will tell you that they are in constant dread of assassination. And yet they have lived for four years, the greater part of the time without any military protection whatever, and nobody has molested them. Their political manœuvres, their stirring up of strife between blacks and whites, their taunts and threats have, it is true, excited bitter and perhaps inextinguishable animosities; but the fact that they are living to-day, when it was such an easy matter to have murdered them, is evidence that nobody sought their lives.

WHEN THE KU KLUX APPEARED.

I come now to the Ku Klux. Here is what a well known and influential citizen said to me:—"The masses of the people submitted to the gross prostitution of justice by the State authorities until their patience became exhausted. As they stood, and still stand, the laws were partisan and bad enough, but had they been fairly enforced, and had Scott not sent his negro militia among the people to browbeat and overawe them, all might have been well. Instead of this there was a mockery of justice. Men were robbed and their barns, stables and houses burned, and there was no redress to be had. We either could not convict the criminals, or when we did convict them they were pardoned. Then it was, when the people had passed the limits of forbearance, that Ku Klux organizations were formed. They were nothing more than a vigilance committee at first. Finally, as is always the case, bad men entered into it and committed outrages in its name. Every respectable citizen of this county deplored and condemned these outrages; but what could be done? Frequently, I believe, outrages were committed by negroes and white radicals, in disguise, and the blame was laid upon the Ku Klux. But I am of the opinion that in a majority of cases the men punished were criminals, and the punishment they received was on account of their crimes. The organization of the Ku Klux at all was an error, but it was just such an error as other communities similarly situated have fallen into."

A FEDERAL OFFICIAL'S IDEA.

That, you will say, is the "rebel" side of the story. Well, hear the "loyal" side. The Ku Klux, a federal official told me, was the most perfectly organized conspiracy ever known in the country. It was composed of numerous bands called "dens," headed by chiefs who formed the Grand Klan of each county. This Grand Klan was headed by the Grand Cyclops, who was chief of the "Invisible Empire" in his county. An oath, which was exhibited to me, was taken by every member, and I must confess that I cannot find anything treasonable in it. It requires the members "to support the constitution of the United States in its original purity," binds each to protect and defend the wives, widows and children of each other; to obey the orders of the chiefs, and to work for the overthrow of the radical party. As a *finale* each member swears never to reveal the secret signs, grips, &c., of the organization, under penalty of death at the hands of the brothers. There is not one clause in the entire oath more objectionable than is to be found in the oath of the Union League of this State. Notice particularly that it does not contain one word inimical to the Union. Is it treasonable to swear to support the constitution "in its original purity?" Is it disloyal to seek the overthrow of the radical party?

I put these questions to the federal official, and he at first evaded them by referring me to the lawyers for an answer. Finally he admitted that "they might not appear so." What, then, was the object of the Ku Klux? It was, he declared, to intimidate the negro voters, make the vote of these nine counties solidly democratic, and thus "defeat the will of the people." As soon as I left him I engaged in an arithmetical calculation. The total registered vote of the nine counties does not exceed 26,000, of which not more than 12,000 are republican. The black majority in the State is 34,000. Let the Ku Klux intimidate every black voter in these nine counties and the radicals still have a majority of 24,000 in their favor. Clearly the reason assigned cannot be accepted

SAME BRUTAL SCOUNDRELS.

The Ku Klux organization (I mean the Simon Pure one) was political only insomuch as that none but democrats were permitted to enter it. But it knew well enough that it had not the power to carry the State. In the nine counties mentioned the democracy had a majority; there was then no excuse for intimidation. I must insist, therefore, that the outrages were of a social and not of a political character in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred. Of course the Ku Klux organization was bad. Some of its members were brutal, hardened scoundrels, who perpetrated diabolical outrages. Some negroes were whipped who had not committed any offences, but merely because their persecutors had a personal spite against them. Ignorant, degraded, beastly-minded men committed barbarities for which they deserved hanging. Unquestionably some of the Ku Klux were horrible wretches, but I don't believe that they were "the mere tools of intelligent men." They were naturally vicious, and they gratified their propensity for vice. As a proof of this I have seen "special orders," purporting to have been issued by the Grand Klan, which denounce the perpetrators of these outrages and threaten them with punishment if they were repeated. One order declares that "certain individuals have dared to assume the disguise and name of the Invisible Empire and to perpetrate outrages upon peaceable persons, thereby bringing public odium and disgrace upon the brotherhood, which cannot be tolerated or allowed. All such individuals are notified that if they are caught in the act they will be summarily dealt with. Another order informs the members of the Ku Klux organization that they will not be permitted to engage in any expeditions except by authority of their chiefs, and sharply reproves some of them for daring to operate on their own responsibility. Now, while these things do not render the Ku Klux an amiable, lawful organization, they prove, first, that outrages were committed by men who were not members at all, and, next, that some of the outrages perpetrated were unauthorized by their leaders.

RADICAL KU KLUX.

Of the existence of a bogus Ku Klux there is not a shadow of doubt. There lies in jail here a man who had voted the radical ticket with marked regularity. When the present troubles began he was foremost in pointing out the Simon Pure Ku Klux and in having them arrested. The zeal he displayed against them was remarkable. One day, to the surprise of everybody, he was himself arrested as a Ku Klux, charged with murder and various other crimes. The evidence against this man is said to be overwhelming. At the head of a gang of negro scoundrels he perpetrated some of the worst outrages committed in the county. Wreaking his vengeance upon his personal enemies, nearly all of whom were radicals, he did not even hesitate at murder, for he well knew that his atrocities would be laid upon the democrats. The belief is general that this scoundrel will not be punished, because he belongs to the republican party.

A VISIT TO THE PRISONERS.

This evening, by permission of United States Marshal Johnson, who seems disposed to carry out his orders in as kindly a spirit as possible, I visited the prisoners—some forty in number—confined in a building opposite my hotel. All of them belonged to the lower classes, men of limited education and average intelligence. They are small farmers, who live near the North Carolina line, and, it must be said, that they are not formidable looking "conspirators" by any means. These men had voluntarily surrendered themselves, confessing that they belonged to the Ku Klux. They told me that in consequence of the robberies and trouble in the county they had formed an organization for mutual protection, but that, as they had not been disturbed, they had never done anything. I asked them if any prominent citizens of the county had made them join the Ku Klux, and they replied in the negative. When they heard of Grant's proclamation they came forward, on the advice of their chief, and gave themselves up. I pitied these poor creatures. To-morrow one-half of them will be discharged and allowed to return home. There are several other prisoners confined in the jail, and these I shall endeavor to see before my departure from Spartanburg.

PEACE AND ORDER FOR FOUR MONTHS PAST.

One of the most peculiar facts connected with the present movement of the government is that the arrests now making are not for offences of recent commission, but for acts performed months and years ago. Last spring, when the Congressional Ku Klux Committee was here, Senator Scott, of Pennsylvania, threatened military interference if the outrages were not stopped. No sooner had the committee departed than ex-Lieutenant Governor Cannon began stumping the county against the Ku Klux organization. He made numerous speeches, warning the people that they were bringing trouble upon themselves by not energetically suppressing the organization, and urged them to submit to anything rather than give the government an excuse for putting them under martial law. State Senator Foster also made speeches of a like character. The result was that Ku Kluxism almost entirely ceased. For four months past there has not been an outrage committed in the county, and the federal officials here admit this statement to be true. They add, however, that the present crusade is necessary, because "the government must prove its power." I beg you to bear this particularly in mind: since June last Spartanburg county has been perfectly quiet and orderly. The military and other federal officers here have admitted this to me, and if any attempt is made to deny what I have written I will give the names of those who have made the admission. At the very moment when society was resuming its normal condition; at the very hour when a better feeling was manifesting itself among all parties, the President's proclamation appeared, arrests began and the fast dying hatreds and bitterness of the past years were rekindled into a blaze.

NO RESISTANCE.

In this county, as in all the others I have visited, I cannot find any case of resistance to the State or United States authorities. Two years ago a couple of revenue officers were forcibly resisted by some men who were engaged in illicitly distilling whiskey. No one pretends, however, that they were any more Ku Klux than were and are the men who distill whiskey illicitly in Brooklyn, Philadelphia Ohio and other States North, and who resist the revenue officers. This is the only case of resistance on record. "I never give them a chance to resist," said a federal official to me, "because I always send an overwhelming force to arrest them." "Very well; but has any resistance been offered?" "No." "Have you ever tried to make arrests without an overwhelming force?" "No; we used an ounce of prevention." "Now, Major, are you not aware that the Sheriff of this county—a one-armed man—has gone to remote parts of the county unattended, arrested men and brought them to Spartanburg without meeting with opposition?" "So I have heard; but I did not risk finding the same submission." I put it to your readers whether it is fair to assume that a people will resist until they have resisted? I am assured by some of the most eminent citizens that there has not been a day during the past two years when a federal deputy marshal could not have arrested any citizen in the county unaided by the military.

A STRANGE EXPLANATION.

But let me give you a further fact. Many of the arrests in this county were made before the President's proclamation appeared. "Why, then, Major," I asked, "was it necessary to suspend the writ of habeas corpus?" "It was not suspended because we could not make arrests," was the reply, "but for the purpose of preventing any attempt on the part of the State courts to get the prisoners away from us." This is certainly a wretchedly poor explanation. In the first place the State courts have no jurisdiction whatever, and in the next place the State courts are in the hands of the radicals. But if the reason here given were the real one why is it that one-half the prisoners have been sent to Columbia, where the writ of habeas corpus has not been suspended?

CONCLUSIONS.

This letter is becoming almost too long, hence I must postpone some other things for another day. My investigations into the condition of affairs here have resulted in my discovering the following facts:—

First—That for four months past no Ku Klux outrages have been committed in Spartanburg county, which the federal officials admit.

Second—That the Ku Klux organization was originally formed for the self-protection of its members and not for any special political purposes.

Third—That men of infamous character entered the Ku Klux organization and perpetrated a series of gross outrages upon individuals.

Fourth—That in many instances white and black radicals borrowed the disguises of the Ku Klux and outraged their neighbors, knowing that the blame would not be laid upon them.

Fifth—That if the State government of South Carolina had not been, as it still is, in the hands of corrupt and infamous political adventurers, and had the laws of the State been fairly and impartially administered, public sentiment would have crushed the Ku Klux organization in its incipiency.

Sixth—That there was not any necessity for the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, because there was not at any time any disposition on the part of the citizens to resist the warrants of arrest. Every white man in Spartanburg county could have been arrested by a deputy marshal's posse.

Seventh—That the Ku Klux, while formidable in numbers, perhaps, never entertained the idea of resisting the United States government. If its designs were treasonable it could, in a single night, have overpowered and annihilated the entire military force in this county.

Eighth—That the effect of the present movement is dangerous to the future of the Union. It has revived old animosities, reawakened slumbering sentiments and embittered the whites, not only in the nine counties, but throughout South Carolina and the South generally.

PUBLIC FEELING.

And now, before I close, let me write a few plain, candid words. So far as the federal authorities here are concerned I have heard no complaints against them. Major Johnson, the United States Marshal (a son of Reverdy), is a thorough gentleman in his manner and behavior, and all parties agree in representing him as performing his official duties as kindly and leniently as possible. Major Reno, the military commandant, is spoken of by all the white citizens as a courteous, high-toned gentleman. But, notwithstanding the courtesy and consideration exhibited by these officials, the effect of the President's proclamation is still the same. I do not hesitate to declare that if President Grant desired to invent an excuse for recommending to Congress an increase of the regular army he could not have found a better one than in this movement. Thus far the submission of the people has been almost abject, but it does not require unusual penetration to perceive that the humiliation is keenly felt, and that what is an ignoble war with a defenceless people to-day may become a fearful struggle with insurrection to-morrow. I do not say it will become one, but I do say that it will be best for the peace of the country if President Grant put a stop to this miserable business before submission becomes reckless desperation.

The Ku Klux in Union County—Their Operations Mainly Against Criminals—The Murder of a Mormonic Negro Preacher—Killing Negro Militiamen for the Murder of a White Man—The Most Dangerous Ku Klux Organization Headed by Governor Scott—Radical Outrages.

UNIONVILLE, S. C., Nov. 3, 1871.

Those of your readers who may have thought that my previous letters leaned too much on the side of the white people of South Carolina had best understand my position now. When I enter a county I seek out all classes of citizens. Suppose a radical office-holder or politician makes statements to me damaging to the people—I promptly inquire into his character, for the purpose of ascertaining if I can place reliance in him. Now, suppose I learn that he was suspended by a Methodist Conference for defrauding a college, that he had broken up a female seminary because of his committing certain specified beastly acts, or that he had robbed the government when he was a revenue collector, would you have me believe the statements of such a man in preference to the statements of citizens against whose characters not one word can be uttered? I think not. When the correspondent of a radical newspaper comes here he never seeks the citizens of known respectability; he goes to these carpet-baggers and scalawags, hears what they have to say, believes them and forthwith abuses the entire people. Thus it has been that while the Northern press has been filled with accounts of "rebel" and Ku Klux outrages nobody ever heard what these rebels and Ku Klux had to say.

KU KLUX OUTRAGES.

Take this county of Union, for instance. I came here impressed with the opinion that while the people had doubtless received great provocation, they had certainly been guilty of gross outrages. What are the facts? Here, as elsewhere, there have been men murdered and negroes whipped. Here also there has been a Ku Klux organization, numbering among its members, as in Spartanburg, some brutal men. I have no doubt that in some cases of whipping the victims were innocent of any offence. In other cases it is likely that the men punished were the victims of private revenge; but I am quite satisfied that in a majority of cases the operations of the Ku Klux were directed against men who were charged with the commission of crime. I shall not repeat what I have written from other counties concerning the mal-administration of affairs by the State government. The same complaints are made here. While the Ku Klux committee were in Unionville the citizens testified to the utter prostitution of justice by the Governor and his satellites. "It is a wonder to me," said Congressman Van Trump, of Ohio, who was with the committee, "that you have submitted to all of this as long as you have." Robberies were numerous, so were barn and house burning. Four times the negroes attempted to burn the town of Unionville. Well, perhaps for every twenty crimes committed there was one negro convicted, and this one Governor Scott pardoned.

KILLING OF A MORMONIC PREACHER.

Two murders were committed charged to the Ku Klux. One of them was that of a negro preacher, and the radical press raised a great howl over it. I inquired from whites and blacks about this case, and with this result:—The theological ideas and principles of the colored clergyman were lazy and somewhat mormonic, if I may coin the word. He believed that preachers ought not to labor; which was certainly not a very criminal belief. But he further believed that every male member of his congregation should regard it as an honor if his pastor took certain nameless liberties with the females of the flock. "Dat man, boss," said a sable patriarch to me, "were continerly gwine after de ooman of de Church." In plainer English, the relations of the reverend gentlemen with some of the wives and daughters of his male sheep were criminally intimate from an ordinary Christian and human nature point of view. As a consequence some of the sable brethren who could not see the honor conferred upon them were in a chronic state of wrath with their shepherd. Two days before the murder was committed a couple of negroes inquired of a white gentleman of this county if he thought that a man would die who was mutilated in warm weather (it was summer). The gentleman laughingly replied that he couldn't say if he would die, and the negroes left him. Two days later (or nights rather) the colored preacher was murdered. Now, I do not say that the Ku Klux did not kill him, but shall I charge the white citizens, in the face of what I have stated in the foregoing, with wilfully endeavoring to screen the Ku Klux when they express the belief that the man was murdered by members of his own congregation, with whose wives and daughters he had carried out his peculiar theological notions.

MURDER OF A NOTORIOUS "FENCE."

The other murder can more justly be charged upon the Ku Klux. It was that of a white man named Owens, of whose personal character I did not hear a single kind word. He had become notorious in the county as a receiver of stolen goods, and was the recognized "fence" of all the white and negro thieves in the community. Of course, the fact of his being a bad man did not justify any person murdering him; but it is strong presumptive evidence that something else than politics was the cause of his murder. State Senator Duncan, of this county, is a republican, and is politically obnoxious to the majority of the whites, and yet nobody has ever tried to kill him, and he declares that he has not the slightest fear for his life. I am assured that Mr. Williams, the radical County Auditor, an appointee of Scott's, is politically the worst hated man in Union, and yet he is not afraid of assassination. Owens was not a prominent politician. Why, then, charge his murder to political intolerance? If the Ku Klux murdered him some robbery in which he was concerned was the impelling motive; and it is not improbable that he was murdered by some of his companions in crime.

A MURDER AND A TERRIBLE REVENGE.

But the worst offence committed by the Ku Klux of Union county, and, in my opinion, the most excusable one, was the killing of several negro militiamen for the murder of a white man. The aggravation was certainly immense. It seems that just previous to the last election in South Carolina Governor Scott determined to organize and arm a militia force and send it to these counties, ostensibly for the purpose of preserving the peace, but really to coerce the voters. He began by arming negroes, many of whom he pardoned from the Penitentiary for the purpose of putting guns into their hands. They were officered by men of their own color, and a company of them sent to Unionville. The whites of this town became alarmed. They sent a deputation to Governor Scott and tendered him the services of a company of white militia, which would guarantee the peace of the country during the campaign. Scott declined to accept any white militia at all; none but negroes would serve his purpose. Well, the negroes were sent to Union, and there, as at Laurens and elsewhere, they "carried things with a high hand." No white person ventured to leave his house after nightfall. Men's houses were shot into by these armed convicts, a shot coming within an inch of a little girl's head on one occasion. Musket firing became a common occurrence every night, and overbearing insolence marked the conduct of the militia by day. Probably the people of Massachusetts would have become as angry and excited as the whites of Union county became. They were intensely exasperated, and it only required the occurrence of an event of more than ordinary atrocity for them to lose control of their tempers entirely. It was not long before that event happened. One evening, after sundown, a one-armed white man named Matt Stevens was returning to his farm in his wagon. A short distance from the village he was surrounded by a mob of negro militiamen, who demanded that he should give them a barrel of whiskey which he had in his wagon. Stevens remonstrated with them, and finally refused to comply with their request. The fiends seized him and brutally murdered the unfortunate man. In two hours more the entire county was in an uproar of excitement. Several of the murderers were arrested by the Sheriff, aided by a posse of citizens, and lodged in the jail. Then came the counter excitement. The negro militiamen swore that they would rescue their comrades. Governor Scott sent down a writ of habeas corpus for the delivery of the murderers to his messengers and for their removal to Columbia. Another uproar of excitement among the whites followed this singular proceeding. "Scott wants to shield them," was the cry throughout the county. One hundred and fifty armed negroes were on the road outside the town threatening to move on the jail and release the prisoners. It was race against race and a bloody struggle in prospective when the Ku Klux entered the town. Two hundred horsemen, disguised, rode to the jail. "Not a remonstrance, Mr. Jailer!" they said, sternly. "Surrender your keys." Two hundred determined men took a fearful revenge for the cold-blooded murder of poor Matt Stevens. They shot or hanged every one of the murderers, struck terror into the negro militia and then retired. Union county breathed freer.

"If," said a gentleman to me to-day, "the Ku Klux hadn't come in when they did, there would have been a frightful slaughter next day. Our people had been worked up into such a state of desperation that, instead of killing the murderers alone, they would have killed every militiaman in the county."

EFFECT OF THE REVENGE.

A terrible revenge this, you may say, killing eight or ten men for the murder of one. So it was. A most unjustifiable revenge, too; and did not the citizens of the town hold a meeting and denounce the act of the Ku Klux? Did they not send a committee to the Governor expressing regret that the outrage had occurred, and asking that a company of United States soldiers be sent there to protect them and preserve the peace? I do not believe they were sorry that the murderers had been punished. They would not have been human if they had been sorry. They regretted the outrage principally because they knew that when it was told to the world, the immense provocation they had received would not be mentioned, and thus they would be condemned as cold-blooded deliberate assassins. Condemn them if you please, but before you consign them to the tender mercies of military law just think whether similar outrages, arising from similar provocations, have not been perpetrated by "loyal men" in loyal States. And decide, in addition, whether this terrific outburst of popular indignation can be justly charged to political intolerance.

THE BIGGEST KU KLUX ORGANIZATION.

Be pleased to let me repeat that I am not defending the Ku Klux; I am only explaining the causes that produced them. As a civilized, humane man, I look with horror upon the record of men whipped and otherwise ill-treated. But I bear in mind also that years of systematic oppression and despotism, of systematic prostitution of justice and of systematic plunder of the people, will end in violence where no means of peaceful remedy exist. I tell you that the most formidable and dangerous Ku Klux organization in this State is the one headed by Governor Scott. The most hardened and reckless scoundrels in South Carolina are the appointees of this man Scott and the elect of his Legislature; for it is they who, by their plunder of the taxpayers, by their subserviency to the negroes and by their shielding negro criminals from punishment, have produced the disorders for which the white men of South Carolina—the intelligent, respectable classes—are now made to suffer. Do you imagine that if the intellectual classes of the State had been able to repose confidence in the State government—if the State authorities had by honesty and economy inspired them with confidence—that they, the makers and supporters of society, would have tolerated a Ku Klux organization in their midst?

UNION QUIET FOR SEVEN MONTHS.

In this letter I have not concealed the fact that troubles have existed in Union county, and I have not denied that the Ku Klux, or men representing themselves as such, have perpetrated gross outrages. But will you not be surprised to learn that these troubles ended seven months ago? I appeal to Captain Thompson, of the United States Army, to say how many Ku Klux outrages have occurred in Union county during the seven months he has been stationed there. Two have been reported, minor affairs, which upon investigation proved to be personal quarrels. Curiously enough, all the federal officials admit that for months past these counties have been quiet. Why, then, wait until the troubles are over to begin operations? "Because," replies a federal official to me, "the government must show its power." Is it not a wanton display of power? While the Ku Klux were committing "outrages" nobody was arrested. From four to seven months after they have retired to their "dens" and society has resumed its normal condition, the government pounces down upon them. I defy the United States Marshal to produce a single warrant against a Ku Klux in which the alleged offence was committed within three months past.

MILITARY BLACKGUARDISM.

I regret to report that the conduct of some of the federal officials in this county has been unnecessarily harsh and despotic. A lieutenant of cavalry, named McDougal, seems to have behaved most disgracefully, treating the white citizens in an insolent, brutal manner. A Mr. Corry, one of the teachers of the high school, remonstrated with him upon the behavior of his troops, whereupon the lieutenant turned to him and declared that if he said another damned word he would have him damned well whipped. It is in sworn evidence that this man McDougal expressed a desire to burn this town. Indeed, his conduct throughout was a disgrace to his uniform, and was in striking contrast with the behavior of Lieutenant Hague. Captain Thompson and other officers, whose courtesy and consideration are highly spoken of by the citizens. I understand that formal charges have been preferred against McDougal and that he will be court-martialled.

AN OUTRAGE BY DRUNKEN DEPUTY MARSHALS.

Cases of wanton breaking open of houses and their sacking have been reported to me. One case, the affidavits of which are now before me, is most disgraceful to the government authorities. It appears that on the afternoon of the 23d ult. two deputy marshals, named Thompson and Camp, boasted that there would be "the damnedest raid on the town that night." The same night four men entered a house on the main street and asked for a negro named Macbeth, whom they began questioning concerning the Ku Klux. The darky replied that he knew nothing about them, whereupon they arrested and took him into the street. As all were beastly drunk, and as they had threatened him, Macbeth endeavored to escape them, when one of the deputy marshals drew his revolver and fired a shot at him. The noise made by the pistol attracted a number of white men to the spot, and one of them (the Town Marshal) notified the drunken official that it was against the ordinances to fire weapons in the street. The affidavits of all the parties, including the radical State Senator, prove that no violence whatever was offered by the citizens. Members of the Town Council came up and remonstrated with the deputy marshals and the two federal soldiers with them, and claiming that if they persisted in creating a disturbance they would be locked up and fined next day for disorderly conduct. To make the matter clearer to you I will give the evidence of the negro:—

John Macbeth, sworn:—Am a colored man; live six miles from town; was in town day before yesterday (Monday); I was in Shoffauf's; three white men came up, two of them soldiers, and one in citizen's clothes, wearing a slouched hat, with yellow band around it; they asked me to tell what I knew about the Ku Klux, and I said I knew nothing; they said I was a damned liar and they would carry me down to camp. They carried me behind Hill & Co.'s store, and said they would kill me if I didn't tell; I saw no pistol, but they afterward shot at me; they said I had to go, and then I ran around the corner and they fired at me, and just then I fell; they did not hit me; they were not two steps from me when they fired; I used no impudent or abusive language to them before they fired; I saw nobody strike any of these men, or use any violent or abusive language towards any of those three men; I was not carried to camp or again arrested; there were no other pistols fired and no blows struck. His
JOHN X MACBETH.
Mark.

The upshot was that the drunken men, who were acting without a shadow of authority, hurried to the camp and presently returned with more deputy marshals and more soldiers, all beastly drunk, and proceeded to arrest every white man they could lay hands upon. After arresting Dr. Rawls, one of the Town Council, and taking him to the camp, they returned to his residence, pretending to be looking for him, ransacked every room; stole his daughter's watch and chain and behaved in a most brutal manner generally. Just as they were leaving the house the Doctor, who had been dismissed by the captain in command on his own recognizance, returned. They demanded liquor from him, and, as he had none, made him give them a bottle of bitters, winding up by declaring that it was all a drunken spree. The entire affair was a gross outrage. The men arrested were most roughly treated by the intoxicated mob of marshals and soldiers. One of the prisoners was the radical State Senator, who was struck on the shoulder with the butt of a gun. He was promptly released, however. I am glad to state that as soon as Marshal Johnson received the affidavits in this case he promptly suspended his deputies, and he assures me that if upon investigation the charges prove true he will have them punished.

BLACKMAILING.

I have time to report only one more outrage. Warrants were issued for the arrest of several men charged with murdering a negro and concealing his body in a well. A careful search of the well failed to discover the body; but even if it had been there the government had no jurisdiction, as the crime was alleged to have been committed six years ago. One of the accused, a man named Whitmore, was arrested by Deputy Marshal Casey, who is said to have released him on the payment of $200 "in the dark." The same blackmailing operation is said to have been attempted on another of the prisoners, but he refused to pay the money. When the prisoners were arraigned before the United States Commissioners they were promptly discharged. Now, just imagine what the condition of affairs must be here.

SPARTANBURG, S. C., Nov. 4, 1871.

If I have heretofore said but little concerning the arrests made in this county it has been because there has been little to say. Warrants are placed in the hands of the deputy marshals for the arrests of ten, twenty or thirty persons at a time. A force of cavalry accompanies each deputy marshal, and in a day or two it returns with a squad of prisoners.

THE PRISONERS AND THEIR OFFENCES.

To a person just from New York or any of the other States in which the civil law is paramount these military arrests are not pleasant to witness. It is true that as a rule the prisoners are treated kindly, but it grates harshly upon one's ideas of civil liberty to see old men and young men, fathers of families, many of them, taken from their homes and confined in prison, most of them upon charges which do not amount to more than a simple assault and battery. I have seen one of the confessions of a member of the Ku Klux, the same being sworn to. The penitent soldier of the "Invisible Empire" evidently belongs to the lowest class, as he cannot either read or write. Of six men punished by his "den" four were charged with crime by the Klan (stealing, stabbing a State constable and beating a white man "almost to death"); one, a negro, was whipped for boasting that the Yankees would soon come, and then he would go to "quiltings," sit beside white girls and have a white wife; while the other was charged with shoving a white man at the last election and with giving information to a revenue officer. The case last named is the only one which looks like political intolerance, and I am rather inclined to believe that illicit distilling had more to do with it than politics. I think it fair to assert that you may form a clear idea from this confession as to the political character of the Ku Klux organization. I am endeavoring to persuade the authorities to let me examine all the confessions, but they seem reluctant to acquiesce in my request to that end. Whence arises this reluctance I cannot say; but it looks suspicious and is unworthy of the government. There is entirely too much of the Star Chamber business in the movement against the Ku Klux. Of course my opinion in this regard may be changed on Monday, and if my request (which is a perfectly fair and proper one) be granted I shall take pleasure in correcting my present impression.

MATERIAL INTERESTS RUINED.

Since my arrival here several batches of prisoners have arrived in Spartanburg. Not one of them, as far as I have seen, belongs to the intellectual, educated classes. They are either small farmers of average intelligence or white men of no education whatever. As their names would not be of any interest whatever I have not taken the trouble to procure them. It must not be supposed, however, that the better classes have escaped untouched. I am assured that quite a number of them have been arrested. Others, against whom warrants were issued, got information of their impending arrest and left the county. While the precise number which have fled cannot be ascertained it is said to be very large, and unless the absentees return the industrial interests of the county will suffer terribly. Already merchants here are writing to their creditors, offering to return the goods they had purchased for the winter trade, because all kinds of business have been completely prostrated by the present semi-military operations. I am told that as matters now look Union county will not produce 2,500 bales of cotton next year, against an average production of 25,000 bales yearly. What is worse than anything else is the widespread terror and uncertainty of what the morrow may bring forth. Men go to bed at night half expecting to be roused from their slumbers by the clatter of horses' hoofs surrounding their houses, preparatory to demanding their surrender. Not all of these arrests are made in the night, but very many are so made—far more than are creditable to the government. Naturally society here is almost chaotic. Much suffering will, I fear, be experienced by many of the families of the men arrested. In some cases the cotton was on the fields unpicked when every male on the farm, from fifteen years upwards, was arrested, and unless they are speedily released the entire crop will be lost. Besides, the deprivation of their male protectors have left hundreds of white women and children completely at the mercy of the negroes, and, although no outrages or depredations