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MEMPHIS APPEAL.

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THE NEW ERA AND THE CRISIS.

AN ATTEMPT AGAINST THE GEORGIA COMMISSION.

The Railroad Commission works so well in Georgia that—although the steady, straight-going railroad men approve of it as beneficial to well-managed roads as well as to the people—the speculating, stock-managing, tricky portion of them find it much in their way. These want opportunities for producing vacillations in shares and crooked profits in management, to which the eagle eyes of the commission are an obstacle. To attempt to overthrow the commission would be to fly in the face of the people of the State, for they regard it as one of the most valuable of their institutions. They therefore have recourse to the tricks peculiar to their tribe, and strive to attain their object by indirect means. They profess to praise the commission "as much as anybody," but wish to mend some defects which, in their peculiarly pure eyes, render the institution less perfect in its workings than it might be. They desire, as a matter of strict justice, that when any railroad is under investigation it shall have the right of being heard, and not owe such hearing to the courtesy of the board, as at present. When an investigation occurs it is on the petition of some complainant, who has no such right. Both are on the same level. On application the board grants a hearing impartially, and the roads regularly appear by their officers or attorneys in advocacy of their interests. "The commissioners," as a Georgia contemporary remarks, "are not enemies of the roads nor the people; they are the representatives of the State and are equally the agents of all classes of its people. The fidelity and impartiality of its action in the past is an honor alike to the State and the commissioners." The people have not complained upon this point, and why should the railroads? Perhaps the reader may not see at the first glance, but a little reflection will show that if what is now given as a courtesy were secured as a right, all sorts of captious and technical objections could be raised to the commissioners' rulings, then would follow appeals and the law's delay. During that delay the ruling objected to would remain inoperative, which would suit crooked railroad management, but would be a detriment to the public. Also, the wealthy roads could keep matters suspended in the courts by appeal from one to the other, expensive as the process might be; but to an individual oppressed or robbed by discriminations and overcharges, such a proceeding would be ruin. At present the system in use places the citizen and the roads impartially upon the same plane, but give the railroads the right now insidiously asked for on grounds so plausible, and the positions of roads and people would no longer be equal; the railroads would possess an advantage to harass, delay and lead to expense that would make them what so many of them aim to be "masters of the situation," able to dictate to and coerce the citizens.

SHEEP IN TENNESSEE.

At the late meeting of the Tennessee Dairymen's Association at Nashville, Col. Tom Critchfield read a paper upon sheep-breeding in Tennessee, an occupation that certainly deserves more attention than Tennessee has yet given to it. Col. Critchfield has given practical proofs of the soundness of his views, for in 1876, at the exposition at Paris, France, Tennessee wool of his raising bore off the prize medal for wool for one of the most splendid fleeces that were exhibited at the exposition, in connection with another Tennessee fleece raised by H. H. Matlock of McMinn county, Tenn. Col. Critchfield's fleece was grown near Chattanooga, and was clipped from an ewe that had descended on her dam's side from one of the native scrubs of East Tennessee. This shows what can be done in the improvement of sheep and the production of wool under the genial climate and fostering influences of Tennessee. The native breeds, after a few crosses with improved breeds, can be made to yield from six to eight pounds of wool annually, and fatted lambs can be put upon the Northern markets in April and May when those markets are bare, and bring good prices. Experience proves the climate and grasses of Tennessee to be peculiarly favorable to sheep raising. In the mountainous districts of Tennessee there are valleys and hillsides that produce grasses well suited to sheep; the Cumberland table land is a very paradise for them. On the uplands of Middle Tennessee sheep enjoy great health and require but a moderate amount of care, and but two or three months winter feeding. West Tennessee has a larger proportion of rich soil than either Middle or Eastern Tennessee, and has some fine grasses well suited to sheep. The best locality of the State for breeding all varieties of sheep is the great silurian basin in Middle Tennessee; but in this section and West Tennessee the soil and climate are equally favorable to sheep, and knowing sheep-breeders can find in any section of Tennessee a location suitable for the business. Tennessee farmers will be wise if they follow the example of Col. Critchfield, and introduce a good class of sheep into their farms. Tennessee wool will fully maintain its reputation as a staple article of commerce, and the sheep will be found a source of profit to the farmer, and a benefit to the country. Mr. Flower, of Nashville, read a paper upon the subject of the silk industry, which is a very important one, and deserves more than a passing notice. It is a business that can be carried on by women and children, and requires but little capital to start it. The cocoons can be raised in any quantity desired, and the silk is pure and of great value. The business is one that should be fostered by the State, during the interval between the time it is put into the country and the time when it will be self-supporting and yielding a revenue to the State. The Commissioner of Agriculture, Mr. Fleming, is a gentleman of great energy and intelligence, and knowing the importance of the silk industry to the country, will no doubt give it his earnest attention. Mr. Flower is a practical silk man. He combines the theoretical with the practical, and is convinced he can make the business a success. He proposes to place the silk in pure and unadulterated form upon the market, and if he succeeds in this he will do much to place the business on a firm footing. The Commissioner of Agriculture will no doubt give the matter his attention, and knowing the energy of Mr. Flower, and the importance of the silk industry to the country, will give it his earnest support. Mr. Flower is a candidate for the chair of silk culture in the University of Nashville, and we hope he may be elected. We hope, too, that the Board of Trustees will select a man who, in addition to being a good scholar, will be a practical man, and knowing