Proceedings of the Constitutional Convention

OFFICIAL REPORT.

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Mr. BRAXTON: If the gentleman refers to the clause which says whether the long haul is in the State or out of it, I agree with him. The Supreme Court has rendered a decision since that clause was written in there, in which by a divided court it is held that both the long and short hauls must be entirely within the State; and when we get to that provision we propose to have those words stricken out. Is that what you refer to?

Mr. THOM: That is what I refer to, and that finishes me with the illustration I want, that here is a provision brought before this Convention after seven months incubation, sound enough, as these gentlemen say, to be put into the organic law of this Commonwealth, that, while they were making it, has been declared unconstitutional by the highest court in this land. In other words, there is such uncertainty in these propositions not only as to matters of policy, but as to matters of law, that before the ink gets dry upon a proposition which you are asked to put into permanent form, it is wiped off the face of the earth by the decision of the highest court in this country.

Now, gentlemen, does that illustrate the prudence or the imprudence of such legislation in the Constitution? I am told more than that by the chairman of the committee upon this floor. I am told that he cannot remember, but that there were five or six drafts of this very proposition put by him before his committee, tentatively he tells us. Why tentatively? Why not finally? Why should it be necessary to deal with a great fundamental question like this where the principles must be tentative and run through five different drafts, instead of being readily put into final and permanent form.

It was tentative because in the nature of things it ought not to be final. It was tentative because these gentlemen three months ago did not have the wisdom to say what should be final.

Suppose that to-day, when the spirit of criticism is dominant in this Convention, suppose that now we are unable, with our short sight, to point out any individual defects in this constitutional article. Suppose we all rise up here now, and say "This is the final triumph of human wisdom." Is there, in that event, any considerate mind in this Convention that will be able to assure me that, with three months of operation, difficulties which we never anticipated will not appear, and defects which we cannot foresee will not come up and curse us in the practical operation of this great organic law.

Gentlemen, I assume for myself no greater wisdom than is possessed by these gentlemen of the committee. I find that for seven months they have been uncertain as to the solution of this problem. I find that they have made at least five tentative efforts to solve it. I find that on this floor one proposition has to be abandoned as unconstitutional. I find that there is now no agreement upon this floor as to the wisdom of many of the suggested provisions and great divergence of opinion as to the wisdom of any such provision at all. It is certain that the condition of change and uncertainty which has marked the deliberations of this committee will not hereafter be found to be inherently incident to the unknown and unknowable form of the problem and that disappointment and disaster will follow the adoption of this article as the necessary and inevitable consequences of the practical working of this untried experiment?

Gentlemen, I adjure you to pause and think upon what you are doing, as calm-minded, deliberate, thinking statesmen. I adjure you to remember the function with which you have been clothed by your constituents. I adjure you to remember that you are here to put into constitutional form great principles of government about which there can be no legislative mistake. Do not be guilty of the moral usurpation of taking the very vitals of your people and dealing with them in the crude and insufficient condition of your experience on this great subject. I say it is moral usurpation to attempt to solve this problem in constitutional form. I say that we were not sent here for the purpose of invading this great and important domain and of depriving the people themselves of the power to adjust their conditions to the changing necessities of their social and commercial life. When we attempt to do that; when we attempt to take up this matter upon which there is this great divergence of opinion as to what is the wisest course to pursue, we are guilty, gentlemen, as against our people, at least of a piece of moral usurpation.

One more idea, and I have done. In my opinion this legislation is against the interests of the people of Virginia. I fear it is concieved in a spirit of hostility to companies which one gentleman upon this floor has denominated as the owners of one-third of the property in the State. I appeal first, to the utterances of the advocates of this measure upon this floor to substantiate my proposition as to this hostility. I repeat again what fell from the lips of my friend from Northampton, when he declared that it is a part of the war of capital against the people. I appeal to his denunciation of these great instrumentalities, when he draws a similitude betwen them and highway robbers. I appeal to the denunciation of my friend from Danville, when he rose and denounced upon the floor of a Constitutional Convention these instrumentalities as guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors. I appeal to his further denunciation of the great power of capital, when he says that every eagle upon every dollar ought to be a vulture, and I ask you gentlemen, to consider this—you men who are young, you men who have destinies before you, you men who have sons whom you want to live within your midst, you men who are hopeful for the future, and of the prosperity of your State—I ask you if you are willing to have it go out to the mighty world that that is the spirit against capital that animates the people of Virginia?

But we are not confined to the utterances of these gentlemen. I take the article itself. I find written upon its face a declaration of hostility, such as it is impossible to controvert or deny. What is it? In the first place there is the proposition that the State of Virginia must rise here in its might and take from the hands of these people who own these roads their control, not only in the matter of rates, but in the matter of facilities, and everything that will make or mar the future of their properties. We find in addition to that, that these matters are to be determined by a commission which is at first made the prosecuting officer before it assumes the robes of the judge. We find that the article also contains the proposition that there is to be a different rule of liability upon the corporations of the State from that applying to the individuals; and we find in addition to that, that after this commission controls the rate, after it has said how much these people shall charge, and what trains shall be run and on what schedules, it is proposed to further strike down the values of these properties by providing that anybody in the State of Virginia may run a road exactly parallel to the existing roads, and within touch of their right of way.

Now, that is the article. That is the proposition which you are asked to endorse. Will that be taken by any sensible man as an act of friendship, or as an act of hostility, to the owners of these properties? Who are the owners? Who are the men who own these properties? Generally and roughly speaking, they are the men who control the capital that is to come or refuse to come into the State. They are the men that are to say whether or not investments of that capital shall be made in the development of the resources of your State. They are the men who control the tide of influence which is to make or mar the destinies of your people from a commercial standpoint. Will these men take these utterances upon this floor kindly? Will they take these denunciations of them in this bill, will they take these cruel words and destructive conditions as a declaration of friendship or of hostility to their interests? I ask you, gentlemen, who are interested in the destinies of your State, will these men take that as friendly or unfriendly? Will they regard themselves as held in friendly or unfriendly regard in the minds of the people of Virginia? When a Constitutional Convention, representing the highest wisdom, the best, the calmest statesmanship of the State, declares it will take from these men the absolute management of their own property, and that anybody who comes within the influence of the State's sentiment must be prepared to be treated in the same way, will it be any encouragement for them to come and invest in the resources of the State of Virginia?

Some of us are engaged in an effort to increase your taxable values. Some of us live in communities where development is essential to the prosperity and happiness of our people. Some of us—if I may be allowed to make a personal allusion—have already increased by our own efforts the taxable values of the State of Virginia from one to four millions of dollars. If you take this action which you are asked to take will you be strengthening our hands? Rather will you not be crushing us with a mighty death when you proclaim to the men to whom we have to go to lay our coal fields, our agricultural interests, our fields, our ports, our cities and our forests before them as investments or development? Are you helping or hurting us in our effort to bring here the forces which are to give employment to our people and bring prosperity to our State?

Gentlemen you heard from this forum on the first day of this current year, uttered by the man who now sits as Governor of your State, with the solemnity of an oath trembling on his lips, with his heart pledged to the prosperity of his people, the fact that thirty-eight per cent. of Virginia-born people are now living in other States. Has that fact no force in the minds of this Convention? Is that no indication of the fact that our State does not present such overwhelming attractions to our young men as to be able to prevail with them over the attarctions of other States? More than one-third of all your people have even sought homes in other places; even now they are seeking opportunities which you do not offer them. Will you increase that centrifugal force in the future? Will you create conditions by which the aspirations of our youth, the power and the hope of your young men, will have to find in other fields in which to exercise their talents, and to make for themselves names and wealth and prosperity?

Gentlemen, it does not do to say that these conditions have not existed in other States. It will not do to point to prosperity in some other community. It will not do to call attention to Georgia or to Texas, because every thoughtful man must realize that the conditions in those States are different from the conditions existing in the State of Virginia.

As I say, the condition of our resources is not such as to have prevented heretofore 38 per cent. of our population from leaving the home of their birth. The attractions here are not so great that we can even now keep at home our young men, but we have sent them abroad to make the fame and to guide the destinies of other States of this Union. Will you be adding to the centripetal force of your people by erecting another barrier in the way of the inflow of capital? I have often thought that all this contention is but the outgrowth of a weak, old and effete civilization. Is that the kind of civilization upon which the prosperity, hope and happiness of our people must depend in the future? I have thought that it is the echo of that terrible struggle in which the greatness of Virginia went down in war amid the privation and distress of our people. Yet here it is proposed to erect this barrier of criticism, this feeling of hostility towards us of all the great forces of this world that may make for our renewed opportunity. Gentlemen, we men of this Convention must stand for the future prosperity of our people. We must now let that past, great and glorious as it was, which should be to us only a blessing, rise up and force us into mistakes as to our future.

Let us face to the future. Let us put our State where she belongs in this great family of States. Let us make the same opportunities for our young men at home that they find when they go abroad. Let us not take from them the hope that, amid their own kin, and in their own homes, and on their own soil, they can find the same hope and the same prosperity, the same opportunity and the same destiny that they can find among other peoples.

Gentlemen, I feel that I have already too long trespassed upon your kind attention. I had intended to show you that in none of the constitutions of other States, not even in the Constitution of Louisiana, was it attempted to take hold of the question of the facilities that are to be granted, given and furnished by these corporations, that in none of the Constitutions of other States was it attempted to go to the extent that is suggested in this proposed article. You will find that in the Constitution of Louisiana, which is the most radical of all of these Constitutions, that, as to the facilities furnished, it limits the power of the commission to requiring switches at stations and to safeguarding the safety of the traveling public. There is no objection to that, in its proper place; but in these other matters, in which this proposition goes far beyond anything that has ever been attempted, let us pause, gentlemen, and not put our State in the position of the most radical, the most intolerant, and the most pronounced opposition to the great forces of modern civilization of any State in this Union. (Great applause.)

Br. Braxton obtained the floor.

Mr. WYSOR: Will the gentleman from Augusta yield to me for a moment?

Mr. BRAXTON: Certainly.

Mr. WYSOR: Mr. Chairman, I do not rise to express any change of conviction on the subject. No man has been more highly entertained by the able and eloquent argument of the gentleman from Norfolk city than myself; but I hope the Convention will not doubt my veracity when I say that, verbatim et literatim, he has made the same speech which, in my dream, I heard him make in the basement of the capitol before Judge Baxter; and henceforth I will be a believer in dreams. (Laughter.)

Mr. THOM: Mr. Chairman, referring to this dream that my friend had in the basement of the capitol, I am informed that it had more foundation than the baseless fabric of a dream. The name of Baxter sounds very much like the name of Braxton, and while my friend had his eyes shut he evidently was alluding to the court which my friend Mr. Braxton was holding in the catacombs, at which I understand he was a constant and delighted attendant. I am sure that my friend is not given to dreams. I am sure, too, that he made a great mistake the other day when he imagined that his own head was red, and he said that all red-headed men must stand together. I am sure the vision he had of the crowning of the Queen in May next out here on the Capitol square was also a great mistake, and I am equally confident that he will find that, insead of the festal occasion which he pictures in such beautiful colors to you, gentlemen of this Convention, of the crowning of Virginia, that around his May-pole in the coming spring there will be dancing a bevy of sprites who will be singing, in the place of the coronation ceremonies, a song that will go something like this:

There was an old man from Pulaski,
Who was great, if anybody should ask ye;
He came also from Giles,
But Mr. Braxton's sweet wiles,
Seduced that great man from Pulaski.
(Laughter and applause.)

Now, that very great man from Pulaski,
Who could think, if anybody should ask ye,
Stopped, thinking and dreamed dreams,
To advance Braxton's schemes:
That gray-haired old man from Pulaski.
(Great laughter and applause.)

Mr. BRAXTON: Mr. Chairman, I am glad to see that my friend from Norfolk (Mr. Thom) could find it in his heart to have a little hilarity and get up a smile after contemplating the terrible doom which seems, in his opinion, to be overhanging the State.

I must congratulate the committee upon the fact that I am about now to close this long debate, which has held them here nearly two weeks. I must ask their sympathy, however, for me that, owing not only to my natural inability, but to the really enfeebled condition, physically, in which I find myself, my efforts in discussing this great question are to be brought into such strong contrast with the speech of the great and eloquent orator who has just preceded me.

Mr. Chairman, my friend started out by promising us, if I understood him correctly, that he would give a calm and unimpassioned review of the principles involved in the measures which we have now under consideration, but I think he so far strayed away from that that he delivered to us one of the most impassioned addresses, dealing only in brilliant generalities and sweeping the cobwebs from the sky, that I have ever heard. The sum and substance of what my friend says to us is that, inasmuch as it is possible that we might make a mistake, inasmuch as it is a fact that the policies of other governments and of other legislation, although fundamental and administrative, have from time to time changed, inasmuch as it is a fact that the conditions in this country which now confront us may, in the course of time, change, therfore we should not merely recognize the danger and proceed with care and caution, but that we should not do anything whatever with reference to the railroad companies and their interests.

If my friend will carry out to its logical conclusion the argument which he makes, I submit, sir, it would be the height of folly to make a Constitution at all and upon any subject whatsoever. We should say nothing about the Governor. Why? Because the experience of other States has shown that their Governors may be elected different from the way in which our Governor is elected. "At one time the Governor was elected by the Legislature. Therefore pause and consider that possibly you are doing a great evil when you say he shall be elected by the people, because the time may come when he may not be elected by the people;" and so with the Legislature, and so with the judiciary, and so with the subject of taxation, and so with the subject of education, and every subject of which we treat. My friend will not go that far, but he will say, "No; those are things for ordinary men to deal with. Those are things about which we can and ought to legislate. Those are things which are of the earth, earthly; but when you come to invade that holy sanctuary where sit enshrined the mighty railroad kings of this land, speak low, my friends, put off your shoes from off your feet, for the very ground upon which you stand is holy, and you should not touch this celestial thing." Leave it all to them, these mighty guardians of the people's lives, their liberties, their property and their government. Legislate for ordinary men, legislate for ordinary business and ordinary property, but do not dare to put any restricting hands upon these people, these mighty Caesars who have lived upon some peculiar flesh that has made them so great that they have got beyond the control of government and of law. Bow down before these mighty mammon. Humble yourself in the dust and say, as used to be said by the kings of old, "The king can do no wrong. We will take the crumbs which you are pleased to let fall from your table and be thankful.' We will see that no law shall reach you. We will entrust you with absolute power and control to tax us as long as you think it proper to lay the burden upon our backs. We will put into your uncontrolled hands the very powers that make my friend tremble when he thinks of putting them in the hands of government, and he will say to the people that as to these great men there shall be no law. We will throw down the gates, we will cry havoc and let slip these dogs of war upon you, to prey at their will and at their pleasure.

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I hate to approach a subject of this sort under any mental excitement or agitation, but I cannot but feel indignant when I hear distinguished and eloquent gentlemen upon the floor preaching such doctrines to us; and if we are to make any sort of restraint, if we dare to even say that they shall be subject to the control of law, we are said to be hostile to them. It is said we are actuated by prejudice, that we are making war on them. I say gentlemen of the committee, that that criticism is not deserved, and cannot be sustained by the facts.

As I stated the other day, you might as well say that we are enemies of the human race because we want to provide rules, regulations and laws for the government and control of the people, and of all of them. Mr. Chairman, I think it cannot be successfully controverted that there should be in no State, whatever the form of government, any individual or any collection of individuals or any other power that is over and beyond the power and the control of the State.

Mr. Chairman, the right of the State to prescribe and fix rates for the railroad and to prescribe and enforce reasonable rules and regulations for the regulation and control of those roads in their public duties, is a proposition which has been thoroughly elaborated, and I leave it to this committee to say whether or not there is lingering in their minds the shadow of any doubt as to the right of a State to do that. If I caught them correctly, I believe our distinguished friends who took the other side of this case concede that that is true and that power does reside in the State. "But", says my distinguished friend, "that power should always be kept in inocuous desuetude." It should never be exercised under the most extraordinary circumstances, which my friend thinks do not exist and never have existed. I say, Mr. Chairman, the time has come and is now at hand when this power, which was put there for some puropse, must be exercised, not ruthlessly, destructively or unwisely, but calmly, prudently and considerately, but exercised effectively.

Why do I say the time has come when that power must be exercised? There are a number of reasons. The distinguished railroad commissioner of this State has again and again called attention to the necessity of having some effectual means of exercising this power. The people of the State, as stated by my distinguised and dear friend from the county of Rockbridge (Mr. Anderson) have on three particular occasions, through their representative, attempted to enact legislation of that sort, and have carried it through the House of Delegates, which is larger and more immediately in close touch with the people of the country, and probably reflects their views better than any other branch of the givernment; and their efforts have been frustrated. Nearly every board of trade in the State of Virginia, the only organized means of public expression of opinion by the business men, has, I may say with practical unanimity, and without an exception, as far as I can recall urged upon and besought this body to enact legislation that would enable this power to be put into effective operation.

My worthy friend from Rockbridge himself admits, to use his own language, that if there was any reason for such legislation as this in 1890 it exists to-day a thousand fold more than it did then, because the little protection the people had then in the way of competition has now passed away and become like an evanescent dream. The overwhelming evidence, which I will not enter into detail to repeat but which was read to you by my friend from Halifax (Mr. Stebbins), by my friend from Russell (Mr. Stuart) and my friend from Danville (Mr. Withers), showed to you the discriminations and the abuses of their power by the railroad compenies, which are calling aloud for redress at the hands of this Convention. Evidence has been before your committee, and it is a matter of notorious knowledge amongst everybody in the State, that these great benefactors, the railroad companies, so far from building up the State are here like dogs in the manger fighting off all others and doing as much as anything could be done to defeat and prevent the development of the State except so far as they can take in and assimilate that development in their own maws. I take the Norfolk & Western Railway company, owned and controled by the same men who own and control a large part of the coal fields of West Virginia, and I ask any delegate from that part of the country if it is possible to-day to develop, to mine or to ship one pound of coal from there unless they get it from the owners of the Norfolk & Western Railroad company.

I do not wish to go too much into detail, but I have here, as illustrative of the methods which these railroad companies use to build up the waste places of this State, a letter from a gentleman—I will not read his name, but I will be very glad to show it to any member of the Convention who wishes to see it—in which he informs me that he and his associates, owning a large and valuable tract of several thousand acres of coal land along the line of the Norfolk & Western Railroad, communicated with the manager of that road and asked for the same facilities that they were giving to those who were mining coal on the lands of the people who own that railroad, no more and no less. What was the reply of the railroad when asked to furnish transportation facilities for people who wished and who were ready and anxious and willing to develop the country, who owned the land and were prepared to develop the mines, and all they wanted was transportation facilities? The reply was: "The conditions of the coal market do not at the present time warrant this company in opening up any further operations, and for the present, and until such time as the demand for coal materially increases, and we see our way clear to add to our equipment to meet further demands, we are not prepared to make an arrangement for further operations. At the same time, it is not possible for me to make you a positive statement until I am more fully advised as to where the land lies and where you would expect to find a market, and in what manner you are anticipating handling your output."

I should like to know what the railroad company has to do with those things.

"I do not desire to delay your decision or action in the matter whatever, and I say to you frankly that under existing conditions it would not be to the interest of the Norfolk & Western Railroad to open up the property you refer to."

Now, gentlemen, I ask you what condition of affairs we have confronting us; and yet these people come here and tell you that they must be allowed to go scot free of law, so that they can develop the State. If, sir, you wanted to ship a bullock from your farm to the market, and the railroad should tell you that, in their opinion, the beef market did not justify your shipping your steers, and you would have to wait until such time as they could make it convenient to haul them for you, what would you think, sir? Their duty is to haul the freight that is given to them, and what the market justifies is none of their business. If these men lost by their coal operations, it was their business and not the business of the railroad; and yet they come and tell you they are engaged in the business of developing the country.

Developing it? Saying to that country out there "I care not how much mineral you have, not one dollar of it shall reach the market until it pays toll into our pocket, not for transporting it, but until it has passed through our hands and has been squeezed as dry as it can possibly be squeezed. Not one pound of coal shall be raised and shipped except off our land; and we will not even go to the ordinary and old fashioned method of buying up the coal lands and holding them and getting up what they call a corner, but we will simpy buy such amount of them as we wish to operate now and we will say to the owners of the residue, you hold them yourselves and you wait here until it suits us to buy them and buy them at the price we choose to give you; and if you don't want that price, you let your mineral stay in the ground until I and all of us are dead." And that, sir, they are enabled to say because of the franchises which have been given them and in the exercise of which they are protected by the government that you and I and all of us have established and are being taxed to support and maintain.

And yet those men come here and say "Oh, we are such public benefactors. You are indebted to us almost for the very air you breathe. It is through us and through us only that your State can be developed. Therefore give us an absolute free hand."

I go further. There are centain large corporations in this country, so large that they monopolize, I will say many, but all the necessities of life, and they are enabled to do so more by their control over the railroad facilities than in any other manner. The very backbone of the trust, as it is called, is their control over railroads, control over rates and control over transportation facilities. For what boots it, gentlemen of the committee, that the railroad company will say "Our rate for hauling is this or that," if they refuse to give you the cars to haul at that rate? How can you men in the Southwest, interested in the raising of cattle, compete upon the market with the cattle kings of Chicago, who can put their cattle in the markets always cheaper than you can put yours, and who, further than that, can say to you, "Even if we stop at the controlling of the rates, we are very sorry, Mr. Jones, but the car epuipment of the company is so much taxed that we cannot furnish you cars to haul your cattle to market."

WILL BE CONCLUDED TO-MORROW.

THE HEALTH OF VIRGINIA.

Summary of Reports Made to the State Board of Health.

From information gleaned by the State Board of Health, there are, as usual at this season of the year, a number of scattered cases of small-pox and varioloid throughout the State. In most instances they are sporadic cases, and the disease is of a mild type. The authorities everywhere have it well in hand, and no dangers of a serious epidemic are feared. If the situation grows at all grave in any of the counties, the State Board will take it in hand and stamp out the disease. There are fourteen counties from which the disease is reported, Floyd and Washington counties being the most serious. In those counties the people are very well isolated, and, with proper precautions, no danger of epidemic need be feared.

Here are the counties reporting cases: Alleghany, 2; Bedford, 8; Carroll, several; Elizabeth City, 1; Floyd, epidemic; Fluvanna, 26; Franklin, several; Giles, 4; Henry, 10; Middlesex, 4; Pittsylvania, 3; Roanoke, 4; Tazewell, 9; Washington, 52.

The following is a list of the counties from which no report of any kind was received: Bland, Clarke, Craig, Charles City, Culpeper, Grayson, King George, Lee, Madison, Mathews, Northampton, Pulaski, Richmond, Russell, and Sussex.

Telegraph Tersities.

Jacksonville, Fla.—At the annual meeting of the Florida State Board of Health a memorial was adopted praying Congress to provide for the retention and the control of the quarantine and inspection service of the ports of the island of Cuba for a term of years, or until assurance is given of the maintenance of such quarantine and inspection in its present efficiency in the event of the transference of the administration of the government of Cuba.

Kiel, Prussia.—Prince Henry spent the morning reading President Roosevelt's "American Ideals," and during the afternoon coasted on the hill at the back of the castle, over a slope which has been the scene of a hundred fierce fights.

GOOD ROADS CONGRESS AT RALEIGH, N. C

State Association Organized, and Resolution in Favor of Good-Road Building Adopted.

RALEIGH, N. C., February 13.—The second day of the Good Roads Congress was a magnificent success, and the hall was packed with delegates. The North Carolina Good Roads Association was organized, with P. H. Hanes, of Winston, president; J. A. Holmes, of Chapel Hill, vice-president, and Joseph G. Brown, of Raleigh, treasurer. The principal office is to be at Raleigh, N. C.

Resolutions were adopted endorsing the office of Public Roads Inquiry of the United States, and asking that it be made a bureau; asking Federal appropriation for highway construction; endorsing the National Good Roads Association; urging that the office of Highway Commissioner be established in North Carolina, with funds to supervise road improvements; recommending that the State provide for instruction in road-building at the University and the agricultural college; urging the more extensive use of convict labor in road-building until all convicts are thus employed; expressing appreciation of the Southern railway's work, and thanks to all State railroads for favors, and to the officials and manufacturers of road-making machinery with the Good Roads train, and thanking the press of the city for reporting the proceedings of the convention and waking the country.

Speeches at the three sessions were made by County-Road-Superintendent McMaken, of Wake; Rev. T. N. Ivey, editor of the Christian Advocate; Mr. Abbott, of Colorado, government representative of the Good Roads Association of the Pacific slope; Professor Winston, of the State Agricultural College; Congressman E. W. Pou, Senator F. M. Simmons; General Superintendent of Free Delivery A. W. Machen; Dr. McIver, of the State Normal College; R. W. Richardson, secretary of the National Good Roads Association, and Colonel T. G. Skinner, of Hertford.

At the session to-night M. O. Eldridge, of the Bureau of Road Inquiry, at Washington, gave an illustrated lecture on good roads. Work on the streets here continues, and the meeting is pronounced a great success.

TO PREVENT COLLISIONS.

Exceedingly Powerful Headlight, and a Vertical Shaft of Light.

CHICAGO, February 13.—A practical demonstration of the utility of a new departure, which, it is claimed by railway officials, will effectively prove the solution in a large degree of the railroad collision problem, was made last night on the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad near here. The device consists of an exceedingly powerful electric headlight, which not only perfectly illuminates the track with an intensely brilliant light shaft for a distance of a mile, but also embraces the striking and novel feature of a beam of light of almost equal brilliancy penetrating over 700 feet above, which can be clearly seen for ten miles distant. This vertical beam will, in a hilly country especially, where cures in the track are numerous, so positively fix the location of trains, that nothing but carelessness on the part of enginemen will permit a collision.

THE OLYMPIA AT NEW YORK.

To Participate in Reception of Prince Henry.

NEW YORK, February 13.—The United States cruiser Olympia, Captain Henry W. Lyon commanding, came into the harbor to-day from Boston, and dropped anchor off Tompkinsville, Staten Island, about 1 o'clock. The Olympia comes here to participate in the naval reception of Prince Henry, of Prussia, after which she will proceed South, to become the flagship of Rear-Admiral Francis J. Higginson, commanding the North Atlantic squadron, now in West Indian waters.

The Olympia, the famous flagship of Admiral Dewey in the Manila-bay fight, has been at the Charlestown navy-yard at Boston for two years, in which time she has been completely refitted, overhauled, and modernized, at a total cost of $400,000. The vessel was placed in commission on January 25th, and left Boston for this port on February 11th.

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR BILL.

New Legation Building at Pekin Provided For.

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 13.—The diplomatic and consular appropriation bill, completed to-day by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, carries about $1,900,000, a small increase over last year. A new United States legation building at Pekin is provided for, to cost $60,000. The emergency fund for diplomatic and consular purposes is $75,000, but it is stated that this does not cover any unusual items.

FRENCH SCHOOLS IN THIS COUNTRY.

That for Engineers at Pittsburg—That of Political Science at New York

PITTSBURG, PA., February 13.—It was announced here to-day that the new French school of engineers will be located in Pittsburg, and the French school of political science will be located in New York. Both will be under the control of the French Government.

Y. M. C. A. Building Burned.

GENEVA, N. Y., February 13.—Geneva suffered a $100,000 fire to-night. It broke out in the Young Men's Christian Association building, at 6 o'clock, and in ten minutes that four-story brick structure was a mass of flames. Thirty boys in the gymnasium on the top floor escaped down the ladders in their gymnasium suits. Two young women employed by M. H. Harmon & Co., nurserymen, escaped by the roof to the next building.

Alleged Pension Swindler Jailed.

PARKERSBURG, W. VA., February 13.—Charles W. Evans, who is believed to be Charles Curence, of Elkins, W. Va., and who, it is alleged, represented himself to be a son of Pension-Commissioner H. Clay Evans, was arrested here to-day and sent to jail in default of bail to await the action of the grand jury.

It is charged that he has swindled many old pensioners, agreeing for a fee to secure from his father an increase in their pensions of from $10 to $15 a month. It is said that his victims are numbered by hundreds.

To Fight the Raines Law.

NEW YORK, February 13.—A tacit understanding has been reached between official and unofficial bodies in this city to fight the Raines law. This statement is made by Rev. Dr. Parkhurst, who says a plan has been arranged by which the District Attorney, the city police, the Society for the Prevention of Crime, and the Society for the Suppression of Vice are to work together to this end.

Dr. Parkhurst said to-night that the concerted movement has nothing to do with Sunday selling at present, but is against the saloonkeepers who either flagrantly violate the Raines law or disregard many of its provisions.

"Connecticut Iron Man" Triumphs.

ST. LOUIS, MO., February 13.—Austin Rice, the "Connecticut Iron Man," of New London, Conn., outpointed "Tim" Callahan, of Philadelphia, in a fifteen-round contest at the West-End Club to-night. Rice was completely eclipsed in weight, height, and reach, but notwithstanding these drawbacks, he could not be denied, and kept boring in and forcing the fighting.

Local Personal Notes.

Mrs. W. H. B. Loving, of Bluefield, W. Va., is the guest of her mother, Mrs. M. Williams, on west Cary street.

Dove Lodge will hold its stated communication at the Masonic Temple this evening at 7 o'clock.

THE GLEN BIRNIE CLUB.

New Organization to Have a House at Westhampton.

A bachelor country club is being organized, and by next summer the club-house will be built at Westhampton. It is to be called the Glen Birnie Club.

The house will be built to accommodate members for any part of the summer, the fast Westhampton trolley-cars making trips to and from business practicable.

The golf links, which promise to be the best in this part of the country, a fine club-house, and many other attractions, will make Westhampton an ideal recreation resort next summer.

Prominent among those connected with the club are Messrs. A. Warwick, Levin Joynes, Richard Wortham, R. A. Lancaster, Jr., Berkley Williams, and G. A. Gibson.

SECOND DISTRICT POLITICS.

Geo. W. Jones, of Berkley, a Probable Aspirant for Congress.

Mr. George W. Jones, of Berkley, Norfolk county, is being mentioned as a probable aspirant for Congress this fall, and a probable competitor with Representative Harry L. Maynard for that honor. Several others are being spoken of as congressional possibilities, and it begins to look like Mr. Maynard will have several contestants.

The more there are the better the prospects for his nomination, it is said, by those familiar with politics in the Second District.

Mr. Jones has been a formidable candidate several years ago. He is the head of the straightout faction of Norfolk county politics, whereas Mr. Maynard is affiliated with what is known as the fusion faction. The bitter rivalry between the two factions in that county will in the opinion of some, militate against the nomination of either of the two gentlemen named. It is not improbable that the honor may go to some gentleman outside the warring arena, who could probably poll the entire vote of both factions.

VIRGINIANS AT THE HOTELS.

Some of the Well-Known Arrivals at the Leading Hostelries.

Arrivals at the hotels were about up to the average yesterday, the majority being tourists and commercial travellers. Murphy's as usual had the greater number, among them many well-known Virginians.

Hon. R. G. Southall, of Amelia, a well-known member of the General Assembly, arrived in the city yesterday.

Messrs. William Patrick and R. E. Rodes Nelson, two of the best-known members of the Staunton bar, are in the city. They are at Murphy's together with Judge Holt and Captain Ker, of the same city. These gentlemen state that they came down to hear the speech of their brilliant fellow-townsman, Hon. Allan Caperton Braxton, in the convention.

Among the Virginians at the New Ford's yesterday are John A. Nicol, of Manassas; J. L. Hawthorne, of Blackstone; L. E. Williams, of King and Queen county.

Mrs. J. Watkins Lee, wife of the well-known hotel manager of that name, now located in Lexington, is at the Lexington Hotel.

Mr. P. C. Hobbs, of Petersburg, and Detective T. L. Felts, of the Seaboard Air-Line railway, are among the day's arrivals at the Lexington.

Dr. John W. Lawson, of Isle of Wight, returned to that city to resume his duties in the convention.

MRS. STANTON IS HERE.

Actress at the Home of Her Parents, Mr. and Mrs. Deuel.

Mrs. Richard M. Stanton arrived yesterday at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Deuel. Mr. Deuel is stage-manager of the Bijou Theatre.

Mrs. Stanton since earliest childhood has been prominent on the stage of the Pacific coast, playing children's parts until at the age of 10 she entered the convent of the Sacred Heart, at Los Angeles, where she remained until she was 14. For the next two years she was with Georgie Cooper in "Little Lord Fauntleroy," and with her mother, who is also a well-known actress of the Pacific coast.

At 16 she entered college in Can Francisco, and remained there until her marriage with Mr. Stanton, who died soon after their marriage.

It was Mrs. Stanton's intention to go to Europe in June to study art, but it is quite possible she will accept one of several theatrical offers which have been made to her.

PATTERSON DIVORCE CASE.

Considerable Time Yet Required for the Taking of Depositions.

Counsel in the Patterson divorce case have been busily engaged in taking depositions of witnesses. The proceedings have occupied several days already, and as the number of witnesses is large, it is likely that considerable time will yet be occupied in securing testimony for the trial, to be held in Omaha.

Among the depositions taken yesterday were those of Mr. Archer W. Patterson and Judge Lamb. The evidence given by them related to the will of Mrs. Lathrop, who was Mrs. Patterson's mother. The matter was fully explained in the Dispatch of Wednesday.

Condition of the Sick.

Judge L. L. Lewis, who has been confined to his home for some time with an attack of pneumonia, was reported yesterday to be improving.

Mamie, the 12-year-old daughter of Mrs. Mary Schardt, of Orleans street, is critically ill.

Mrs. Mary Boltz is quite ill in the home of her son-in-law, D. F. O'Dwyer, of Louisiana avenue.

Dennis F., Jr., the little son of D. F. O'Dwyer, is recovering from a long attack of illness.

Eddie Mitchell, of 429 Denny street, who fell fifteen feet from a building on which he was at work Tuesday, is rapidly recovering.

Julian Mitchell, of Seventh street, continues ill.

Cincinnatians Off for Charleston.

CINCINNATI, O., February 13.—A special train, bearing 140 business-men of Cincinnati, left to-day for the Charleston Exposition. Among the excursionists are Mayor Fleishmann and other city officers, and Judge Miller Outcalt, who will deliver the address at the dedication of the Cincinnati building next Saturday.

The party consists of members of the Business-Men's Club and Grimes Battery. They will make several stops, and reach Charleston Friday night, returning next Tuesday.

Monument in Mexico Thrown Down.

MEXICO CITY, February 13.—Unknown persons, supposed to be members of the Clerical party, have thrown down the monument to the Liberal party martyrs at Tacubiya, a suburb of this city. The monument commemorates the execution by the Imperial General Marquis of a number of medical students and others who had shown their sympathy for the Liberal cause during the war of the French intervention. There will be a public meeting at Tacubiya.

Passports for Porto Ricans.

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 13.—The position of persons residing in Porto Rico and other insular possessions of the United States, in not being citizens of the United States, although owing allegiance to the government, led to favorable action to-day by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on a bill framed by Attorney-General Knox allowing passports to be issued to such persons the same as to citizens. The present law restricts passports to United States citizens.

TRIPLE TRAGEDY NEAR ORANGE, N. J.

Policeman Shoots His Daughter and Himself, and Causes Death of His Wife.

NEW YORK, February 13.—Philmon Crelin, a special officer at Melbourn, near Orange, N. J., shot his daughter and himself, and caused the death of his wife. Father and daughter are expected to die before morning. The daughter's name is Mrs. Mary Ferguson. She and her three children made their home with the Crelins.

Thursday night Crelin had a quarrel with his wife, and attempted to stab her with a knife. The daughter interfered and saved her mother's life. Crelin then threatened to kill Mrs. Ferguson.

To-night, when he went off duty, he brought his revolver with him. While all the facts are not known yet, it seems likely that he first shot the daughter. She was struck by two bullets, one of which entered the abdomen and the other the left breast. Crelin, it is thought, then attempted to shoot his wife, but she was suddenly seized with a hemorrhage of the lungs, and fell to the floor dead. The officer then shot himself, the bullet striking in the region of the heart.

CONTRACTORS INDICTED.

Held Responsible With Workmen for New York Subway Explosion.

NEW YORK, February 13.—The grand jury to-day returned a series of indictments against the contractors and workmen alleged to have been responsible for the fatal and destructive explosion on Park avenue January 27th, and against the city officials charged with dereliction in connection with the storing of explosives. An indictment for manslaughter in the first degree was found against Ira A. Shaler, the Rapid Transit Subway contractor, who is building the Park-Avenue section of the tunnel in which the explosion occurred. Shaler was indicted for illegal storage of dynamite, a misdemeanor. Ernest G. Matheson, chief engineer, and Joseph Bracken, laborer, were indicted for manslaughter in the first degree, and Matheson and Bracken for illegal storage of dynamite. Superintendent George Murray and Inspector Smith, of the Bureau of Combustibles, were also indicted on the charge of criminal negligence. Bail was fixed in each case at $5,000, except as to Murray and Smith, whose bail was made $1,000 each.

PRESBYTERIAN CREED REVISION.

Committee Adjourns After Adopting Article 5, on Sin.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., February 13.—The Presbyterian Revision Committee adjourned to-day, after adopting article 5, of the brief statement of the Confession of Faith for popular use, and will again meet in Washington on April 9th.

The article to-day touches on sin, and it was productive of a protracted debate, so that no time was left for the further consideration of article 3 on Eternal Purpose, which had been partly reviewed at a previous session.

ELEVATED TRAINS COLLIDE.

Many Passengers Hurt by Flying Glass, Seven Seriously.

NEW YORK, February 13.—Two express trains on the Third-Avenue elevated railway were in collision this evening at 103d street. Many passengers were hurt by flying glass, and seven were severely hurt.

One of the trains should have taken a siding at 104th street, but for some cause not explained, the switch was not thrown and the engine telescoped the coach of the rear train.

GOV. DURHAM IN THE SOUTH.

His Staff Along, in Full Military Uniform—To Visit Havana.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., February 13.—Governor and Mrs. Durbin, and the members of his staff and their wives left, over the Pennsylvania road, this evening, on their trip through the South and to Havana, Cuba. The Governor's staff officers presented a decided military appearance, all being dressed in their uniforms. The party will go directly to Havana, arriving there probably Monday evening. On the eturn trip a stop of two days will be made at Charleston, S. C., to visit the Interstate and West Indian Exposition, on Indiana day, Wednesday, February 26th. The date for the return to this city is February 28th.

For Roads Between State Capitals

NEW YORK, February 13.—The organization known as the American Road-makers of Macadamized Highways, held a meeting here to-night. Representatives from twenty-seven States were present, and the following officers elected for the ensuing year: Henry S. Earl, of Detroit, Mich., president; William L. Dickinson, of Springfield, Mass., treasurer; W. S. Crandall, of New York, secretary; Martin Dodge, of New York, director of public-road inquiry.

It is the aim of the organization to agitate the proposition of having macadamized roads constructed between the capitals of all the States of the country, to be constructed at the expense of the States, the various communities through which they run, and the Federal Government.

Colonel John L. Polk Dead.

KANSAS CITY, MO., February 13.—Colonel John L. Polk, aged 53, a cousin of President James K. Polk's, died in this city to-day.

Colonel Polk was in the commissary department of the Confederate army during the civil war.

New Site for Johns Hopkins.

BALTIMORE, February 13.—One hundred and fifty-six acres of land in the northern suburbs of Baltimore have been unconditionally donated as a new site for the Johns Hopkins University.

Madison Square Walking-Match.

NEW YORK, February 13.—The midnight score of the six-day walking match, showed Hegelman and Cavanaugh in the lead, with 561 miles, 5 laps, to their credit. Shelton and Guerrero come next.

Colombian Naval Fight.

PANAMA, COLOMBIA, February 13.—The Colombian Government fleet left Panama yesterday morning, met the insurgent warship Padilla off Agua Dulce, at 4 P. M., and fought her for one hour. The government gunboat Boyaca was struck and slightly damaged. The Padilla was hit three times, and sought protection from the insurgents guns ashore.

Oil Struck Near Mobile.

MOBILE, ALA., February 13.—A telegram from Cintronelle, Mobile county, says that at a depth of 300 feet, in sandstone formation, a small stream of petroleum, of Beaumont oil character, has been struck. The boring will probably pass through the sandstone to-morrow, and it is said that the well will be a gusher.

No Ultimatum for Venezuela.

BERLIN, February 13.—The Foreign Office here pronounces as incorrect the statement cabled hence that Germany is on the point of presenting an ultimatum to Venezuela. On the contrary, the outlook is improving, and a friendly settlement of the questions in dispute is more probable.

Asphalt Officers Made to Resign.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., February 13.—The receivers recently appointed for the National Asphalt Company have required the officers of that company and all the officers of subsidiary companies to resign their positions. This action of the receivers, it is said, has no special significance, and was taken to enable them to more easily straighten out the affairs of the company.

Advance in Price of Cotton Goods.

FALL RIVER, MASS., February 13.—M. C. Borden's brokers advanced their bid for regulars again to-day, the price now being 3 1-4 cents. This makes a total advance of 3-16 of a cent in the market price within forty-eight hours.