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THE JOHN ALLEN CIRCUS.



THE so-called Aberdeen Group association case filed before the Inter-State Commerce Commission against the M. & O. Railroad, was given an opportunity to air itself fully at Columbus, this state, last week, where one of the Commissioners, Hon. John C. Clemens, opened his court to take the evidence. Thursday and Friday was consumed in the hearing of, principally, John Allen, of Tupelo, who was fortunate enough to get himself hired as attorney by the group to bring the case named, as their attorney.

Our readers are already aware of the issues involved in this controversy, which in our judgement, can only result in Mr. John Allen securing a big attorney's fee without returning to his clients anything more than a sore disappointment for their trouble and money expended.

It will be remembered that a couple of years ago, the towns of Tupelo, West Point, Aberdeen, and Columbus obtained a concession from the railroad for a special rate on some kinds of freight, under the plea that they were competing points, that is had other railroads, and because their merchants desired to do a jobbing business. This rate operated seriously to the detriment of other towns of equal importance, of which Okolona was numbered, and the railroad officials at once found themselves against a serious proposition from the other towns. Okolona, Macon, Booneville and other points which had only the one line of road, complained that to give these towns lower rates and withhold the same concessions from them was an injustice to towns which were giving the M. & O. all their business while the others were naturally dividing their business with other lines touching them. The matter was taken up for re-adjustment by the railroad officials, and as they could not afford to lower all the other points to the same basis given to the first towns named, the rates were equalized by putting all on the same basis, at a higher rate than had been charged the complainant in the controversy now before the Commission.

The raise in rates, or in other words, the placing of Tupelo, West Point and Aberdeen, especially on the same rates with Okolona, caused these towns to have a serious attack of that which is known as howl. John Allen saw an opportunity to secure a good law fee and he at once counselled the dissatisfied town and was employed to bring a case before the Inter-State Commerce Commission. This was not brought however, until after Mr. J. C. Kincaannon, a member of the Mississippi railroad commission, who resides at Tupelo, had sought to frighten the railroad people by making a motion before the state board of which he was a member to insist upon the attorney general bringing suit to annul the sale of the M. & O. railroad to the Southern. The first proceeding met the fate, of course, that might be expected, as Mr. Kincaannon was unable to get his colleagues to see their way clear in interfering just to please the whims of a few schemers at Tupelo, West Point and Columbus. (The facts are that very few people at Aberdeen have taken any noticeable interest or stock in the position taken by the group bearing the name of their town.)

Sifted to a plain a, b, c basis, and purged of all the grand stand plays of John Allen, there is simply this in the issue: With the low rates enjoyed for a time, the towns of Tupelo, Aberdeen and West Point were able to draw a little trade from territory that has been supplied for many years by Okolona, provided the Okolona merchants were compelled to pay a higher rate of freight, as they were for a time. This was an injustice to Okolona which the M. & O. officials soon discovered when their attention was directed to it, and as this town had been paying their road more direct freight than either of the other points named, it was naturally soon remedied. Okolona asked only for an equitable adjustment of freight rates and this was only afforded. Some of our neighbors who have organized themselves into an association known as the Aberdeen group were seemingly not satisfied with such an adjustment, and hence must stand branded as asking for the best of the bargain with their neighbors. Because of this position, the hearing of last week was finally brought on.

We have from time to time called attention to the progress or rather the efforts made by this Aberdeen group. The further it is advanced, the more every honest minded individual must be convinced of the selfishness and unfairness of those who are

pushing the issue. Much stress is placed upon an attempt made by Mr. John Allen to play upon the differences between the freight schedules made for the interior points along the railroad and such points as Mobile, St. Louis and Cairo. This, in short was the point upon which John Allen treated the court with a harangue lasting two days last week at Columbus. Officers of the railroad were of course summoned as witnesses, and were placed on the stand, but instead of being content with asking them questions and leaving them to answer them, Mr. Allen distorted his questions, and endeavored to suggest his own answers in whatever manner he divined would make the best showing for his complaint. About all the testifying in fact, was done by John, and whether he wins his case or not, it is probable, from the showing he made, that his employers will be willing to pay him his fee even though he may never have had a ghost of a show of making anything out of the case more than a grand stand play.

The declaration of peace between the British and Boers is indeed a source of gratification to the civilized world. No matter at what cost to either party to such a controversy, it is better that an end be found to the slaughter and waste that has been going on for more than two years in one of the finest sections of country the sun shines on in its daily course. The terms of the negotiations are not of course all that the patriotic Boers could desire, yet they retain their identity far enough to gratify the soul of even as brave a people as they have proven themselves to be, for in summing up the controversy, with the unmeasured odds that have been against them, they are in a much more congratulatory attitude than are their foes, who can scarcely take refuge behind any claim of humane concessions made in the adjustment. The world knows that England never concedes a point if it is possible to crush a foe, hence it will understand that whatever rights in the premises the Boers have been able to secure have come from their unquestioned courage, their tact and bravery, all of which have combined to demonstrate to the powerful foe, they have confronted that even little powers in the right must sometimes be respected.

There are few people who reach their majority but down deep in their heart actually believe they could do any given piece of work they observe in the hands of another better than he who is handling it does the work. Especially is this true of the view people generally take of the newspaper. Almost anyone not in the business could give the editor pointers how to run the paper. THE MESSENGER realizing that there may be more truth than is generally believed in this position, is always willing to make a test. For this and other reasons, the editor of THE MESSENGER has offered to permit the three resident ministers of Okolona to edit the paper for the four issues in June, writing whatever they desire to print, the only restriction placed on them being that each sign his name to his own articles, and that if the start is made that they continue the work for the full four weeks. Whether the offer will be accepted, we feel that there are three ministers in this state who cannot in future contend that the secular press is unfair with them.

The Republicans of Kansas, in state convention the other day, nominated a man for state treasurer who had been branded as a thief by the commissioners of his own county, by the Republican paper of his own county and by the records of the office of the county clerk, which office he held for years before pushing himself forward for the state nomination. Since the fusion in Kansas has practically destroyed all formidable opposition to the Republican party, the managers have again become daring and propose to reward their workers, no matter what sort of records they must confront. It is this kind of abuse by political parties which must ultimately cause the people to take matters of state into their own hands and cease to blindly follow partisan leaders.

It really seems strange that the Democrats in an hour like the present, when their opponents in congress are sadly plunging in the dark, have not the genius and statesmanship to come forward with some logical solution of some of the knotty questions involved and score a victory for the honor of their time serving party organization. But the Democrat of today is not a deep planner, except to hold his job and his salary, just like a Republican plans and figures to hold on to what he has secured in the same line.

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIDED INSTITUTION.



CHURCH and state have been interested in all ages in the educational institutions of the day. Since the discovery of a system by which information could be made manifest through the use of characters or letters the masses have been enthusiastic for the highest possible methods of obtaining the advantages of education. In former years the education of the man, without much attention being given to the woman, was the principal thought, but since the rapid growth of the idea that women are not merely daughters of men, the importance of their higher knowledge of letters as well as of affairs has inspired the growth of institutions fit and especially adapted to their demands.

It remained, however, for Mississippi, a state making perhaps the least pretensions of any one of the sisterhood, to step forward with the leading institution of the day for the reception, care and education of the young women of the land. The Industrial Institute and College, located in the handsome little city of Columbus, on the banks of the Tombigbee River, stands today the peer if not the superior of any educational institution for young ladies, in this or any other country.

While the improvements for the accommodation of the pupils in this great institution are still wholly unequal to the demands made upon them, the seventeen years of successful work of the institution has demonstrated that, in good hands, the institution is one which must inspire the heart of every Mississippian, and command the respect and most cordial support of the legislature and the state generally.

When the Industrial Institute and College was established, the city of Columbus presented the state with buildings and grounds worth a greater aggregate sum than the state has since expended in the enlargement of the great college, yet the rapidity with which the institution is growing in popular favor, the efficiency of its broad educational courses, and the constantly increasing demands made upon it by the best people of the state, without regard to location, is sufficient to brush aside any prejudice that may have existed in the past and assure the managers of the great school that in future years there will be no occasion for complaint at the meagreness of the appropriations for its maintenance. Pig headed politicians, even, who have imagined in the past that they might score a point with the taxpayers by opposing liberal appropriations for this and other institutions, will not dare in future to resort to any such cheap work. The people are for the institution, because of the good work it performs, and to further stand in the way of its growth is the most suicidal piece of political jugglery to be imagined.

In this great school there have been enrolled the past year in round numbers 500 young ladies. There they are cared for and guarded as carefully, if not more carefully, than in most of their homes. The course of study offered them is so thorough, so ably adjusted and in the hands of such competent instructors as to warrant each and every one who will give the requisite application to the work, an education fitting them absolutely for any position in educational life.

It was a pleasure unquestionable to be permitted to personally inspect the Industrial Institute and College, one day last week, in company with Mr. H. D. Morrison, president of the Okolona Commercial Club, Hon. Frank B. Evans, editor of the Meridian Press, and Hon. J. T. Senter, editor of the Columbus Commercial. The party was escorted through the institution by one of the charming lady members of the faculty, Miss and the various departments were made plain through her careful descriptions.

The facilities provided for the living of the attendants as well as the courses of study are all of the most modern and advanced selection. The systematic manner in which so many are housed, fed and cared for in health or in sickness is a guarantee to every parent whose daughter is entrusted to the institution. In addition to the faculty in the educational departments, composed of the best educators that can be secured, a most elegantly appointed hospital stands near the main building, to which pupils are taken and cared for when indisposed, and this, too, is in the most capable hands.

Over the entire institution, Prof. A. A. Kincaannon, as superintendent, has demonstrated his su-

preme fitness for the place, and won a standing, by his good work, in the hearts of the people of the state generally, as well as the parents of the young ladies there, especially, second to none other occupying a similar position in the United States.

There is no well founded plan to ascertain just how many times Governor Davis, of Arkansas, has been drunk and disorderly, nor how much he has squandered in gambling of late, but it is a certainty that the church of which he was a member, has fired him bodily and in such a manner as to practically say to all other churches that he is not eligible to membership in any of them. For his sins he has been turned out of the church, and so far as was in the power of the Baptist organization to which he belonged, he has been besmeared and branded as a sinner of ripe disfavor. Of course, it is impossible for an ordinary plodder on the outside of church affiliation to assume to be accurate in any conclusion in a matter of this kind, but as we read in our own awkward way and as diverse ministers have often declared, if we properly caught their assertions, the church is an organization calculated to persuade sinners to discard their bad habits and wend their way toward Christ. We have often been in sympathy with many church organization because of the persistence of prominent members of their congregations doing the very things for which Governor Davis has lately been fired out of the church, but in our ignorance the conviction could not be suppressed that such tolerance was in keeping with the divine idea that while the light should hold out to burn the vilest sinner might return. It has always been our idea that the church should be tolerant, but in this day, when it is more political than religious, perhaps toleration depends largely upon the political views and surroundings of the accused, when charges for sinning are lodged. But, we make one prediction: this unwarranted position taken by the Baptist church of Arkansas will have more influence to make Jeff Davis his own successor as Governor of that state than any other power that could have been bought to bear, and everybody that knows anything at all about Arkansas politics understands that all this firing out of the church business has been prompted with more of a political motive than in any desire to save a sinking soul for Christ.

The money question is always a live one. While this paper has never changed its views on the contention that the best thing for the prosperity of all the people in this country would be the adoption of a stable and flexible currency printed on paper alone and based upon the credit of all the people of the land, yet it seems that any hope of soon reaching such a solution of the problem is far from view at the present moment. The fellows who manipulate the policies of government continue to find something to engage the minds of the people so as to indefinitely postpone any serious consideration of a question more important to them than all others combined. For a time it was the tariff, later tariff reform, then the burning silver question, and now it seems to be the Philippine and Cuban questions. Next perhaps we will have a re-submission of the fifteenth amendment of the Constitution, asking for its repeal, and then the Lord only knows what will come next. The money question goes over of course under the rules, and yet every hour in the day, every day in the week and every week in the year all of us are dragged from all other callings of life to wrestle against a gigantic fraud of the basic money money principle, to try and find enough to meet bills and keep the cart rolling.

Has any one ever intimated to you that a green-back dollar carrying the stamp of the United States government upon it would not purchase as many pounds of meat or as many bananas or as much flour or meal in the Philippines, as will a piece of gold with the same government stamp upon it? Not on your life. The cry is all against the silver dollar made in Mexico and carrying the stamp of an insolvent country on its face. Wherever Uncle Sam's money floats, whether it be on gold or on paper it is recognized as good for 100 cents on the dollar, mark printed on it. How carefully all the basic money sharks strive to keep this fact from the public, but even now, when the money question is fathoms deep under public consideration, it is just as well to remember this phrase of the situation.

The Government Agricultural Bureau at Washington sent out its monthly report on cotton yesterday at noon, which shows a decrease of 3 per cent over the same month last year. Of growing crop 95.1 as against 81.5 last