

Abbeville Meridional.

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An Echo from The past.

Good old Dr. B. F. Ward of Winona, Miss., delightful old fossil that he is, has consecrated himself to the impossible task of keeping alive the dying embers of secession and the other dead things which were once so dear to the Southern heart. His latest sort is a criticism of Lieutenant Governor Shands of Mississippi, for a speech delivered the other day to the Confederate veterans at Water Valley. The gravamen of Shands' offence consisted in telling these gallant old war horses that it was about time to wake up to the fact that they were frequently "worked for their votes" and that they needed to acquire a broader vision of public affairs.

To the dear old Doctor this is high treason. He would have every one look out of his regulation knot hole under penalty of being cast out into utter darkness. This peculiar style of reasoning has hung around the neck of the South like a mill rock for three-quarters of a century. But thank God! it is passing away as has human slavery which was responsible in a large measure for this choke bore reasoning. Let every man think for himself. Better that he should err in an honest search for the truth than be compelled to accept as truth the dictum of some man who assumes to know it all. It is the South of today, with the quickening pulse of awakened energies and the bright vista of a glorious future which confronts us. The undimmed heritage of the past is ours. God forbid that we should fail to do it reverence, but we must meet new conditions and deal with them intelligently. The new generation of the South has climbed up out of the mental fog which hung around it and with head erect and standing proudly with unfettered limbs in the bright sunlight of Truth and Reason, is ready for the race and confident of winning.

The New Grand Jury.

District Court opened on Monday Nov. 20th and the new Grand Jury was empaneled and sworn for the next six months. Cleomere C. Broussard was appointed foreman. Judge Edwards delivered an able charge to the Grand Jury and we give the following extracts which relate to matters of most interest to the public:

The Court charges you that you are here to indict violators of the criminal law. You are not here to hush up crimes or help friends out of difficulties. The criminal laws are made for the rich and influential as well as for the poor, and throughout all your investigations you are to bear in mind the unfortunate truth that it is an easy matter to indict and convict the poor and friendless fellow, but a very difficult one to get an influential or rich man within the meshes of the law, and almost impossible to hold him there. The reason is simply this that the rich and influential man, as soon as he does wrong, begins to set his influences and strength at work to escape punishment and keeps constantly at it until he succeeds. He and his friends work to avoid his indictment, after indictment to avoid conviction, and after conviction to avoid imprisonment and when at last the penalty of the law is visited upon him, if it be not death, there is a constant pegging away for a pardon.

GAMING

The constitution declares gambling to be a vice and pursuant to its provisions the Legislature has passed laws for its suppression.

It is said there is a class of persons in this parish who do nothing for a livelihood but gamble at cards—that there are places rented or used for the sole purpose of gaming, where you can always find some one ready to play and who always comes out winner—Regular gamblers operate together and divide the spoils after the game; the apparent loser is as much winner as his pal who talks much of his lucky day.

It is unnecessary to tell you, gentlemen, how gambling makes the clerk rob his employer and teaches the fond husband and kind father to forget his wife and children.

You know that every dollar the gambler gets at his game some one else is entitled to, for he does not earn it and gives nothing for it in return. Every dollar he gets at his game, some merchant, doctor, druggist or laborer loses, for the dope he

fools out of it would have spent it where he owed it or for some useful purpose.

Gambling breeds crime and poverty and every species of misery. It is an evil that is denounced everywhere and needs constant putting down.

CARRYING CONCEALED WEAPONS.

I call your attention specially to Sec. 332 of the Revised Statutes, concerning carrying concealed weapons.

A person is guilty of the offense set out, if he carries on or about his person, a weapon which is only partly concealed. It must be fully exposed not to be concealed. The object of the law is to protect the orderly and well disposed citizen from the treacherous use of weapons so frequently resorted to by evil disposed men, who seek an advantage over their antagonists in the disturbances and breaches of the peace, which they are prone to provoke. 11 Ann. page 683. Late Chief Justice Manning, in the case of State vs. Blas, 37 Ann. 260, says: "The manifest object of the statute was to prevent the carrying of dangerous weapons—to stamp out a practice that has been and is fruitful of bloodshed, misery and death—and yet so to prohibit the carrying as not to infringe the constitutional right to keep and bear arms."

The constitutional right is to bear arms openly, so that when one meets an armed man there can be no mistake about the fact that he is armed."

Wherefore if one carries about with him a dangerous weapon, not fully exposed to view, he violates the law; he must carry it so any one meeting him can make no mistake about his being with a weapon.

I charge you particularly, gentlemen, if the sheriff or any of his deputies, or any constable, policeman or town marshal shall carry about him any weapon concealed, except in the actual discharge of his official duties, he violates the law; and the violation is graver than if committed by the ordinary citizen, for they are officers whose duty it is to see that the law is observed and not violated.

The Sheriff, his deputy, policeman and constables are considered in the actual discharge of their official duties, as contemplated in this section, only when they are actually engaged in the service of some process to which resistance might be suspected or offered, and a weapon might be required by such officers to enforce the law; for instance; the arrest or conveying of a prisoner, the attachment of a person and the seizure of property and the fact that such officer has a warrant for the arrest of a person in one pocket is not a permit for him to carry a pistol concealed in another. The exemption is good only when he is bona fide in the actual discharge of some duty as above set out.

SUNDAY LAW

You are requested to make investigations into violations of the Sunday law, not because its violation is a heinous crime but because of the evil which results from a disregard of this law.

If one man is allowed to sell whiskey on Sunday, why another will soon claim the right to sell it without license. Some will think they have a right to shoot craps, others to get drunk and whoop and halo along the public high way and so on, simple because they see one man doing what he wishes to do in violation of law without being punished.

The way to have law is to enforce all laws at all times and against all persons. I am informed that this law is not openly violated in this parish, but that there are some suspicious cases. Look into the matter well because when the law is observed by all, there is always a tendency on the part of some one to open up on the quiet and make sufficient money out of the violation of the law to pay the fine usually imposed. If imprisonment be required to enforce the law, that punishment is provided in the statute and the necessity of preserving the dignity of the State of Louisiana and respect for the laws, will suffer, the imprisonment of the richest or poorest man in the district.

Another unfortunate truth is, gentlemen, that those who are charged with the execution of the laws are too often hampered by good men, who do not know where the boundary lies, between loyalty to friend and kinsman on

one side and duty towards 'self and government on the other. Men who contribute more in way of taxes for the suppression of crime and the maintenance of order, than they give to the church, charity or education, are frequently seen, hand in hand, with the criminal.

You will see these good men fighting for the law at one term of Court and fighting against the law at the next and they always mean well and believe they are right.

Thus you find the stockman, whose wild herds graze in the marsh, much in favor of the enforcement of the laws against trespass and larceny.

He thinks it a good law which provides a penalty for stealing a fat steer or shooting ducks which cost some one a cow apiece.

The man who works hard all day can not sit up at night to watch his property so he ardently supports all laws against thievery.

And although these men are always quick to convict for the unlawful taking of property, you frequently find among them some who are as quick to acquit for the taking of human life without sufficient provocation or excuse.

They have learned by experience that the law is the safest protector of property and can be relied on, but they refuse to recognize that the law, if enforced, is just as safe a guardian of our lives and personal rights. There are too many good men who believe in the right of one to protect his person and feelings at all times at any cost. That may do, in a country where there is no law to protect you, and where your only rights are those you maintain by force, but in communities where thousands and thousands of dollars are expended yearly for law, law ought to be had. The way to obtain this is to punish severely every man who takes the law into his own hands; no man's life is safe in a community where stabbing, shooting and the use of deadly weapon in a manner calculated to produce death, go unpunished and it is not one case in fifty that their use is justifiable. Still we often see good men, who consider themselves lovers of law, exerting their influence to save from punishment those who justly deserve it.

We of this parish, however, have cause to congratulate ourselves that there are very few men among us who believe that the rights of self defence and of defence of property ought to allow the taking of human life regardless of the necessity. It seldom happens in Vermilion that the use of a deadly weapon with serious results goes unpunished.

But it does frequently happen that we are shocked by the report of some serious crime. The officers of the law arrest and bring the offender before the bar of justice. He is convicted after a fair and impartial trial and sentenced according to law. Sometimes the costs of a single case run from one to five hundred dollars—The parish pays for all for the accused happens never to be a man who can be made pay. And as soon as the culprit is safely lodged behind the penitentiary walls, indeed, sometimes, before the parish has paid the expenses of prosecution an application is made for his pardon. What does the petition show—not that he was unfairly tried and convicted—not that the sentence was hard, but that good men seem willing to have him set free. Men who say they believe in law, men who feel and grumble under the weight of taxes, which are eaten up by prosecutions, not only sign the petition but exert themselves to obtain a pardon.

Your attention is called to these matters, gentlemen, not to discourage you but to cause you to dwell upon the importance of doing your duty. Because some one has been pardoned, or some one acquitted who should have been convicted, can not be an excuse for your failing to indict, where an indictment should be found. Do your duty

as Grand Jurors fully and fearlessly and then as citizens go out into the Community and help uphold the efforts of those who are to carry your good work to completion and the comfort of the thief, the perjurer, the swindler and him who sheds his fellow's blood, will be small in Vermilion Parish.

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FINAL TABLEAU.

State of Louisiana—Parish of Vermilion—17th Judicial District Court, Succession of Theophile Naquin No. 607.

Whereas, Anthony J. Gold-n Administrator, has filed a final Tableau of Debts and Charges in the above entitled and numbered Succession:

Therefore, notice is hereby given to all whom it may or doth concern, to show cause, if any they have, why said Tableau should not be homologated and approved and the creditors ordered paid in accordance therewith, and the official bond of said Administrator cancelled.

Given under my hand and seal of office, on this 16th day of Nov., 1905.

A. O. Landry
Deputy Clerk of Court.

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