

The True Democrat.

ELRIE ROBINSON
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Official Journal of the Parish of West Feliciana, the Towns of Bayou Sara and St. Francisville, and of the School Board.

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FINANCIALLY INTERESTED.

An exchange intimates that it is asking too much, even of a newspaper friendly to President Frank Miller of the Game and Fish Commission, to read the commission's newly published report to the General Assembly. For our part, we take issue with this view. The report well repays perusal, imparting some information, and incidentally much amusement. And nowhere does the latter feature more boldly and suggestively than when the Commission shows restiveness, regarding criticisms of its warden service "by those" it says, "who do not hunt or pay for a hunting license. This is a never-ending source of surprise to the members of your Board. This whole movement for the conservation of game was started by the sportsmen, who earlier than the members of the General Assembly realized that without a paid warden service there never could be enforcement of the game laws, and who willingly assess themselves this tax to carry on the work, and thus save the State from appropriating from the General Fund a sum of money sufficient for same. We therefore respectfully urge upon the members of the General Assembly the reasonableness of ignoring the criticisms of those who are not financially interested in the problem."

"Financially interested" is good. The honorable Game and Fish Commission would make this a close corporation, confined only to those who are "financially interested in the problem." Conservation is not then an undertaking for the benefit of the whole state and all its peoples, now and for generations to come, but a scheme only for those financially interested! Game wardens are not then the servants of the people as a whole, and therefore amenable to them for the proper performance of duty, but only to those "financially interested" and who pay a hunter's license!

On the other hand, it will be quite a gem in itself for either the General Assembly or the Game and Fish Commission to decide who are the persons financially interested in the problem. Is it only the sportsman who pays his dollar, or the pot-hunter who gets returns a hundred fold for his, or the land-owner, whose preserves are protected? Is not every citizen, irrespective of any direct interest in game conservation, financially benefited in various ways by the conserving of this, as any other natural resource of the State? So that after all, the financially interested are so numerous as to make it incumbent upon the legislators to listen to all complaints, as well as all suggestions, concerning improvement of the service.

VOTING BLANK ON HARRIS.

The resolve of many Democrats to vote blank for Thos. H. Harris, the nominee for state superintendent of public education, on account of his course during the campaign, in order to make him run far behind on the ticket, if carried out, will be effective as a political object lesson to men of pride, but it is doubtful if Mr. Harris will care, so long as he has the office.

However, to vote blank for him will necessitate the marking of every other Democratic nominee on the ticket. One cannot stamp the rooster, and thus vote the ticket straight, while if one (who has the habit) should stamp the rooster and then attempt to vote blank on Harris, it would invalidate his ballot. For this reason, it is probable that most ballots will be simply rooster stamped, and Mr. Harris will claim the result as an endorsement of his course. It is interesting to speculate on what the average Democrat will do.

The Drainage Congress in session at New Orleans means much for all places where land reclamation is desirable. It means much to Louisiana. The press has however devoted space so largely in advance to this congress, that its plans are all forecasted and known.

THE STATE ELECTION.

The State election takes place on Tuesday, and as the result is a foregone conclusion, it will probably show a great scaling off in the popular vote. The only new question that comes up is involved in the primary in some parishes, including West Feliciana, for delegates to the State Democratic Convention at Baton Rouge, June 4, and this is hardly of such moment as to call out a big vote.

It is to be hoped however that the weather will be propitious and that the farmers will not let their field or other business interfere with their going to the polls and casting their ballots for Judge Hall. We particularize farmers, because it is due to them that the majority was piled up in the country that overawed and overwhelmed the city vote.

It is desirable that the majority vote should be maintained as an indication that the people have not lost interest in the issues for which they so grandly gave pronouncement in January, but are still determined to have these necessary reforms carried out.

Judge Hall should go into office with a big vote. It will be an endorsement of him, a guarantee of public confidence. He will be badly enough handicapped by some of the men who will go into office with him, without being depressed by a half-hearted vote.

Go to the polls, Tuesday next, and do your duty in the work of relieving the State from leech laws and sinecure barnacles.

FISCAL AGENTS APPOINTED.

By a vote of four to two, Attorney General Guion's motion, seconded by Lieutenant Governor Lambremont, for the State Board of Liquidation to postpone action indefinitely so that the ensuing administration might dispose of the State funds, was defeated at a meeting Wednesday morning. The fiscal agents chosen were: City of New Orleans, the Hibernia Bank and Trust Company, Whitney-Central National Bank and New Orleans National Bank. Third District: Bank of Assumption, Napoleonville, and State National Bank of Iberia, New Iberia. Fourth District: First National Bank of Shreveport and Commercial National Bank of Shreveport. Fifth District: Central Bank and Trust Company of Monroe and the Ruston State Bank. Sixth District: Bank of Baton Rouge and the Louisiana National Bank of Baton Rouge. Seventh District: The Rapides Bank of Alexandria and the Union Trust and Banking Company of Opelousas.

In answer to criticism, Gov. Sanders in a lengthy speech before the Board of Liquidation showed that the law by which each outgoing administration has the appointment of the fiscal agents for the ensuing term comes from the Blanchard administration, extra session of 1907, was introduced by Mr. L. E. Thomas, and voted for by many who are now Good Government League men. Beyond reminding Gov. Sanders that Mr. Thomas was not at that time an anti-Sanders man, it is only necessary to remark that many other things, besides chickens come home to roost.

ONLY DEMOCRATIC WAY.

Mr. Zach Spearing's attempt by circular letter to poll the vote of Hall and Aswell men for the speakership of the House, in advance of the convention of the General Assembly, is rigidly opposed by Hon. F. C. Claiborne, one of the three G. G. candidates. Mr. Claiborne says that he proposes to fight for this honor on the floor of the House, regardless of faction, and thinks that the only Democratic way. While most reform movements have gone out like a lighted match after the first victory for the lack of organization, it is patent that such efforts as Mr. Spearing is making would soon tend to over-much organization from which Louisiana has been already too great a sufferer. If the reform men want "to get together" when they meet at Baton Rouge that is another matter, from having it all cut and dried beforehand.

THAT OTHER DISTRICT.

Times-Democrat:
It is taken for granted that there will be but little if any change in the North Louisiana districts, because the increase has been in the south and southwestern parts of the State. That being the case, Judge Looney need have little fear but that he will have Judge Watkins for his competitor in the Fourth District, and McGregor, Elder and other folks in the Fifth District can make plans for the undoing of each other and Fauntleroy without diminution of disarrangement of what may be done at Baton Rouge.

THE POLICE JURY A LEGISLATIVE BODY.

In another part of the report of the Game and Fish Commission, reference is made to the abortive efforts of the police juries of the State to protect the game and fish, under former laws. The Commission overlooks, as most people do, that police juries are legislative and not executive bodies. Theirs is the duty of making parochial laws, not executing them. Hence, they are frequently blamed for non-execution of their own ordinances, though that work lies with the executive officers of the parish.

We fell into this error not long ago in suggesting that the police jury of West Feliciana should fine, or otherwise punish delinquent road-oversers. The president of the Police Jury called the fact to our attention that it was not that board's province to do more than appoint the road-oversers. It is then left to the people, acting through the grand jury, to secure punishment for neglect of duty. It is no more correct to expect the police jury to do this work, than to look to the State Legislature to enforce its own laws.

All must admit the justice of this position, and we would have earlier avowed our error in the premises, but during the past heated campaign the matter was overlooked.

Likewise, while we do not favor special parochial legislation for game and fish conservation, deeming state laws better adapted for the purpose, yet it is nevertheless unfair to charge the police juries with the non-execution of these laws in the past. The fault lay in the provisions for their execution, and the carelessness, or lack of moral courage on the part of individual citizens.

TO OBSERVE APRIL 30.

Gov. Sanders has requested that April 30, the centennial anniversary of Louisiana statehood, should be made a school holiday. In this connection, it is timely to remark that all great events are poorly commemorated by non-attendance at school. The child takes and enjoys the holiday with little or no thought or real knowledge of the occasion. Much better is it to devote the forenoon of such a day to a full program, concerning the event to be celebrated, or the person to be honored, so that the child is informed about it to the greatest possible extent, and then give a half-holiday in the afternoon, preceded by a nice lunch or other treat. The celebration will then stand out in his memory as something worth remembering. This fact was impressed upon us by an old citizen of St. Francisville, the late Thos. Raynham, a native of England, who told us that he could well remember when William IV was crowned, in 1830, because the schools were given a half-holiday and a treat of cake and ale! On such small delights does the memory of children dwell.

We should like to see Louisiana Statehood honored by a celebration in every school that would include a literary program that would at once depict the leading events of the State's history, and inspire patriotism and resolve for its future greatness. After such a program there could be refreshments and the half-holiday that would mark the date with a white stone forever in the minds of the young.

TEN THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH.

- Progressive Farmer:
1. Plant cotton and corn—but not until your land is thoroughly prepared, and not until you have secured good seed and seen to it that your planter does perfect work.
 2. Plant seed patches of both cotton and corn so as to have good seed of your own next spring.
 3. Plant some pasture lots for the hogs, rape early in the month, cowpeas, soy beans and peanuts after the ground becomes thoroughly warm.
 4. Look after all the livestock, put them on pasture but don't cut off the grain feed at once. See that work stock are properly fed, and that all young things are freed from lice.
 5. Arrange for plenty of both Irish and sweet potatoes; keep the garden going.
 6. Look after the orchard—spray, plow, fertilize.
 7. Prepare land for hay crops, and be sure that the acreage is liberal.
 8. Start the cultivation right—that is with harrows and weeders, and at the right time—that is, before the grass starts.
 9. Screen the house; drain all puddles near it; see that all garbage is removed from about it.
 10. Open the windows and let the sunshine in the house during the day; open them at night and let the fresh air into the bed-rooms.

THE INTERESTS OF LOUISIANA FORESTRY.

The first session of the forestry conference held in connection with the Nashville meeting of the Southern Commercial Congress was opened on the afternoon of April 8th. The presiding officer was Henry S. Graves, Chief Forester of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. In opening the conference Mr. Graves spoke as follows:

"In any consideration of the industrial development of the South, the problems which stand out as most important are those connected with agriculture and forestry. The South is favored with climate and soil especially advantageous both for agriculture and for the production of forests. Its cut of lumber aggregates some 24 billion feet a year, or over half of that used in the entire nation. Other industries bring the value of the products of the forests to-day to upwards of 550 million dollars.

"Louisiana now stands second only to the State of Washington in the production of lumber, while Mississippi, North Carolina, Arkansas, Virginia and Texas are all ahead of any other State. The lumber industry of the South employs some 217,000 persons, and the allied industries require over 200,000 more. We are dealing with a problem of gigantic proportions and one which touches the welfare of the entire nation.

"It is of vital importance to the South that the land suitable to agriculture be devoted to that purpose and just as rapidly as possible be actually used for the growing of crops. There is, however, a vast area of land, some of it in great blocks in the mountains and which is suited only to the growth of trees. Many persons point to great floods like those we are now having and insist that forests absolutely prevent large floods. They are, however, only one factor and may be entirely overbalanced by other factors like long-continued rainfall or sudden thawing of snow in the mountains. The Geological Survey is developing some very important and interesting facts regarding the influence of forests on erosion in the South.

"Our problem touches the method of handling the forests in a way to benefit the South permanently. The bulk of what is put on the market is from timber 150 years old and upwards. The cutting takes place without reference to a new crop of trees and we still have that greatest enemy of the forest, fire, which prevents the establishment of new growth. Moreover, the forest fires are primarily responsible for the damage resulting from erosion and disturbance of streamflow in the mountains. Unless there is a correction of the existing conditions the supply of forest products will not be maintained, local industries will decline or vanish, land values will be permanently reduced, and the benefits arising from the mere existence of well managed forests will be lost, with unfortunate results.

"There is no region except the far Northwest where forestry is so simple and the results so sure as in the South. It is entirely practical to secure from the area which should be permanently in forest from 20 to 30 billion feet in the long run, by annual growth, if the forest is properly handled. Much of this very area is in the mountains and the very management for timber production will secure the indirect benefits of the forest.

"The desired end can not be accomplished at once. Our efforts must be organized. We must with all our forces, National, State, and private, endeavor to overcome the fire menace. The public must aid in the matter of a uniform, consistent, and sane system of taxation, while private owners must accept their responsibilities and handle their property in a way which will build up and not injure the interests of the State."

NEW NURSERY RHYME.

Shreveport Times:
Baby-by,
Here's a fly,
Let us watch him, you and I;
How he crawls
Up the walls
In his typhoid overalls.

There can be no doubt that the people have shown that they favor competitive bidding for the selection of fiscal agents, and Judge Guion's contention that the matter should be postponed certainly made the proper moral appeal, but this was a case where "the letter of the law" made a much stronger one.

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For further information, call or write,

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MR HENDON EXPLAINS.

St. Francisville, La., April 10, 1912. The True Democrat,

St. Francisville, La.
I have made it a rule in my public life to refrain from replying to criticisms of my public acts, looking to the results accomplished by those acts to be their defense if any should be needed. It is hard to adhere strictly to this rule always, for sometimes my motives are misjudged and I and the Board of which I am the executive officer are put in a false position. For example, we are frequently charged with placing the interests of the teachers before those of the pupils, when the fact that the children of the parish now have the best schools they have ever had the privilege of attending, ought to be self-evident proof that we put the best interests of the children above every other consideration.

However, this communication would not be written, if in your editorial on "The School Petition" last Saturday you had not read into my actions motives that I never dreamed of, and had not charged me with conduct utterly repugnant to my native instincts and every fibre of my being, and if my silence might not be construed into an acknowledgment of the same.

It is true that the petition was signed by either "residents of, or tax-payers in, St. Francisville." It is also true that I was told Wednesday evening that the opponents of the measure were going to demand that the names of those that were not tax-payers be stricken therefrom. Then to make "assurance doubly sure," I spent considerable time Thursday morning copying from the tax collector's book the names of the tax-payers in St. Francisville just as they appear in said book. I then went to several who had signed the petition as individuals and asked them to sign it again as their property was assessed to them. I asked all the tax-payers that I saw on Thursday to do the same thing, and if any one, except the editor of The True Democrat, took such a request "as a slight" of any kind whatever, I have not been apprised of the fact. How she could possibly construe it as such is beyond my power to imagine, for certainly the thought of so unmanly an act had not entered my mind.

Please give this the same prominence in the paper you gave the editorial referred to.

Very truly,
A. M. HENDON.

Had Mr. Hendon employed the simple courtesy of telling Mrs. Robinson why he wanted her signature as a tax-payer particularly, the above explanation would not be necessary. But his "native instincts" and the "fibres of his being" frequently find but poor expression in his manner, as more than one person can testify. The incident was really too trivial for mention, except that The True Democrat wished to emphasize the fact that no implied slight had had effect as regards its attitude towards school interests.

self) are charged with putting the interests of the teachers before those of the pupils, when the fact that the children of the parish now have the best schools they have ever had the privilege of attending ought to be self-evident proof that we put the best interests of the children above every other consideration." This conclusion is not logical. To argue that the schools being better than ever before is proof that the children's interests are first considered, is absurd in face of the fact that the children are deprived of school days that the teachers may attend institutes and conventions.

If the schools are better than ever before, it must be taken into consideration that more money is spent on them, hence higher-priced teachers are employed from the superior tier down, there are better school houses, more libraries, better equipment. It would be an example of gross incompetency on the part of all concerned if the schools were not better in the circumstances. But the schools are not so good that they cannot be made better, and that it should be considered lese-majesty to criticize them to that end is characteristic of the arrogance of the educational oligarchy in this State.

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