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Dispensary Message.

IMPORTANT CHANGES RECOMMENDED BY GOV. EVANS.

He Suggests that the Board of Control be Composed of Five Members and All Purchases be First Approved by Them—A State Inspection of All Liquors Shipped in the State in the Interest of Health.

The following is the special message of Governor Evans on the dispensary, which was read last week to the Legislature.

Gentlemen of the General Assembly: In 1892 the dispensary law was enacted as a solution of the vexed and much discussed whiskey problem. All reasonable men acting in the light of the experience of other States acknowledge that prohibition is impractible so long as whiskey is regarded as a legitimate article of commerce by the national government. It can only be cherished as an ideal theory and must be classed with other Utopian ideas. The drinking habit is recognized by all civilized governments as an evil and one that is peculiarly within the province of legislative action. This action must be from the nature of the evil directed to the removal of the cause as we can not prohibit men from gratifying their tastes and thirses. We can punish men for destroying the life, limb or property of others and to some extent restrain their actions, but we can no more legislate the taste for whiskey out of an old toper than we can jealousy out of the human heart. As long as a stimulant is craved by the human appetite and whiskey is distilled in North Carolina the drinkers of South Carolina will have it law or no law. I have never dreamed of reforming a drunkard by law or moral suasion. For the habit once formed is a disease, a physical condition which legislation can not cure. We must address ourselves then to the condition that confronts us and not theorize on government. The first object should be to prevent this habit from being formed by the young citizens. Second. To eliminate drunkenness; third. To so gratify the thirst of the old toper as to make him unobjectionable to sober citizens.

We claim the dispensary law has practically accomplished the first and second objects; the third can only be fully accomplished by the death of the subject.

When death occurs and the national government outlaws whiskey and alcoholic beverages, then and not till then, will prohibition be practicable. The law in this State has had a hard road. It has been opposed by the United States Courts with partisan judges and by a few of our own citizens with rifles and shot guns, but so far it has prevailed and is now written in the organic law of this State and better on the hearts of the people. It may be said now to be the settled policy of the State. Its experimental stage is over and I am happy to inform you that in only one city of the State have the people refused to accept it as such.

I have been requested by a representative of the Gospel Temperance League to ask you to amend the law so as to allow whiskey to be sold only for medicinal, pharmaceutical and mechanical purposes or in other words to repeal the dispensary law and adopt what was rejected by your honorable body and known as the Nettles bill. I can not do this for reasons that must be apparent to you and which I stated while a member of the Senate, and for the further reason that the dispensary is succeeding beyond the expectations of its friends, and to pass such a law as requested would not accomplish what the dispensary is now doing, but would simply increase the crime of perjury and false representation in the State. I would not be understood as objecting to the agitation of prohibition nor to restricting the sale of whiskey by any means. It is beneficial to all governments to have idealists, for if not we might lose sight of the principle and cease striving for the coveted goal.

As a moral reform measure the dispensary must commend itself to any unprejudiced mind. The temptations to the youths of the State offered by saloons has been swept away and with it has gone the games of billiards, pool, the faro banks and the corrupt influences of the barkeeper; in municipal and State elections. During the late holidays there occurred only one homicide in the State and this was not from whiskey, but an old feud. This record has never been known before, not a case of crime for which lynching is resorted to or attempt at such has occurred within the past year. Two circuses traversed the State during the past year, visiting large towns of importance and with the exception of Spartanburg not an arrest was made for drunkenness or disorderly conduct. In Greenville one arrest was made for drunkenness and he was exhibited as a curiosity. It was the invariable practice of the colored population to drink on circus days, but it passed away with bar-room days. I dispatched four constables to follow the circuses in their tour through the State, but they were not needed to preserve the peace and not an accident of any kind was reported. I addressed to the various mayors of the towns of the State the following circular letter:

Dear Sir: You will greatly oblige me by answering the following questions at your earliest convenience. This is important:

1. Has drunkenness and crime increased or decreased in your town and county since August 1, 1894, to the present time; if so, by what per cent?

2. Has the number of plain cases of drunkenness tried before you, mayor or intendant, increased or decreased since August 1, and if so, by what per cent.?

3. Has the consumption of whiskey increased or decreased since the establishment of the dispensary, and if so, by what per cent.?

4. What has been the effect of the dispensary law upon the general good order and peace of your town or city?

Some time ago we had replies to these queries from your board of control; but the letters have been disposed of and it is important that we hear from you. Please number your answers to conform to the number of the questions above.

The replies received in some cases were unreliable as the mayors were unworthy of belief. In such cases, however, I took the precaution to address a letter to one of the aldermen of the town and they are submitted herewith and I trust will be published it full as they speak for themselves. In appears from these reports that drunkenness has decreased for the entire State fifty-seven per cent. The number of cases tried in mayors' courts for drunkenness and disorderly conduct has decreased sixty-six and nine-sixteenth per cent.

3. The consumption of whiskey has decreased forty-seven and six-sevenths per cent.

It must be observed that this decrease is not for the entire period since the enactment of the law, but for the past year. Compared with the preceding year 25 per cent. may be added as a reasonable estimate for the preceding year. It is quite encouraging to the friends of the law to note the general change of sentiment of most of the towns in its favor. The country has always been a unit in favor of the law, and has demanded its strict enforcement. The bitterest enemies of the system now admit that morally speaking it is a grand success.

THE DISPENSARY AS A BUSINESS.

In 1892-93 there were in the State sixty-nine dispensaries.

Total amount purchased by them	$ 671,555 99
Sales at invoice price	573,578 38
Total sales to consumers	679,222 88
Gross profits	165,355 40
Expenses	88,580 15
Net Profits	76,775 25

The operation of the State and county dispensaries for the past year have been peculiarly successful. The volume of business has greatly increased. The sales of the county dispensers for the eleven months ending December 31, amounted to nearly one million one hundred thousand dollars. It is not to be inferred from the increased sales of the dispensaries that the consumption of intoxicants is on the increase, for the statistics which I have already given clearly prove the contrary, and go to show that the intemperate use of intoxicants is on the decrease. That the dispensary is a potent factor in the great moral reformation I venture no unbiased mind will dispute. The increased sales by the dispensaries are accounted for from the fact that the fierce and bitter opposition to the dispensary law which has hitherto existed has largely subsided in its intensity and the sober second thought of law-abiding citizens has disclosed the fact that their unreasonable opposition to a law designed for the protection of the morals of the State was grounded more on prejudiced and a misconceived idea of personal liberty than aught else. With this return of reason and the exhaustion of the supply of barroom whiskey came in a large degree a cessation of the bitter hostilities to the law, and as a result the traffic in liquors was directed to its legitimate channels, and public sentiment crystalized about the dispensary law as the wisest and most practicable solution of the whiskey problem. The sales of county dispensaries for the eleven months ending December 31 amounted to $875,530.20; the sales by county dispensaries for the same period amounted to $1,076,963.65 at a gross profit of $201,383.45. The net profit that has accrued to the State from the operation of the State dispensary for the eleven months ending December 31 amounts to $133,467.77, and the net profits to the towns and counties from the operations of the sub-dispensaries for the corresponding period amounts to $106,131.28, making a total of accrued profits to the State and towns and counties for the eleven months of $239,599.05. Adding the $25,571.85 unearned profit due the State on goods in hands of county dispensaries at the close of the past year it would swell the total of earned and unearned profits to the State and towns and counties for the eleven months to the amount of $265,170.90.

The net profit accruing to the State as revised to December 31 from the beginning of the operations of the dispensary to the close of ex-Commissioner Traxler's term on January 31, 1895, amounted to $110,348.80. Added to this the net accrued profit of $133,467.77 for the period of eleven months from February 1 to December 31, 1895, makes a total of net accrued profits to the State from the operation of the State dispensary to the amount of $243,816.57.

The books of the State Commissioner as is shown in his annual report, and also by the special legislative examining committee, show that at the close of the past year the total assets, at cost price, of the State dispensary were $314,070.24, and the total liabilities $70,253 67. These assets consist of:

Cash	$ 54,107 03
Wines and liquors at the State dispensary	55,631 56
Teams and wagons	800 65
Machinery and office fixtures	2,656 47
Bottles, corks and cooperage	26,581 43
Cash loaned to the State Treasurer	50,000 00
Wines and liquors at sub-dispensaris	116,235 65
Personal accounts	8,057 45
Making total available assets of	$314,070 24

Outstanding against these assets are liabilities to the amount of $70,253.67, which is due by the State for wines and liquors purchased, making a net balance of assets above liabilities of $243,816 57, which amount represents the net earned profit to the State at the close of the year, and this profit has been placed by the Commissioner to the credit of the general fund of the State. In conformity to a clause in the new constitution, providing that all future earnings of the State dispensary shall go to the schools of the State, the Commissioner will place to the credit of the school fund all net earnings which shall hereafter accrue. From a careful analysis of that provision of the constitution, it will be seen that the school fund will not be entitled to any portion of the net earnings to December 31 of $243,815.57 shall have been covered into the State treasury to the credit of the general fund. Hence it will be eighteen months at the earliest before we may expect any increase in the school fund from this source. I am happy to state that the State appropriation of $50,000 has been refunded to the State from the net earnings of the dispensary and an additional $50,000 surplus covered into the State treasury to pay the expenses of the constitutional convention.

From the following tabulated statement you can gain an idea of the heaviest items of expenses incident to the running of the business:

Supplies used for eleven months	$93.864 70
Freight charges	50,953 14
Cost of constabulary	43,032 01

I found that the system of bookkeeping in vogue at the dispensary was most unsatisfactory, and I employed Mr. Seth W. Scruggs, an expert bookkeeper, to devise a system especially suited for this business, for which I paid him $250, and I regard it as the best investment the State has ever made. The system as inaugurated by and now in charge of Mr. Scruggs, its originator, has received the endorsement of many of the leading business men of the Union. It is a most satisfactory check on the county dispensers, and is so simple and comprehensive that any one of any business knowledge can understand it. A record of the gallons, value and brand of all liquors bought and sold is kept at the office, as is also a record of the number of gallons of all kinds dumped into and bottled from the tanks. The county dispensers are required to send a weekly statement of their sales at invoice and consumers' prices and a weekly statement of their cash transactions, and a check covering the State's share of all sales.

At the end of each month they are required to send to the State Commissioner a copy of their merchandise purchases and sales and remittances and a copy of their cash transactions for the month and also a copy of their sales at invoice and consumers' prices for the month and an itemized statement for the month. They are required to take stock at the end of each month in the presence and with the assistance of one member of the county board of control and to send to the Commissioner an itemized inventory of all merchandise on hand signed by the dispenser and the member of the board of control who assisted in the stock taking. At the end of each quarter they are also required to send to the State board of control a quarterly statement of their purchases, sales, expenses, gross and net profits, and stock on hand. A duplicate statement is also sent to the board of control. Under this system we have been enabled to dispense with the inspectors. The expense of the constabulary has been more than met by the the value of the contraband whiskeys and wines seized and the suppression of the illicit trafic in such. The amount for maintaining the force was $43,032.01. The value placed on contraband dumped was $17,031.70, leaving a net cost for maintenance of $26,000.37. The value placed upon contraband seized does not represent the true value of the articles captured as there is a large amount still on hand of goods unsuitable for the business of the dispensary, and consequently of no actual value. I am satisfied no State officers are entitled to more commendation than these men who do not hesitate to risk their lives and in several instances have lost them in defense and in executing the laws of this State. If it were not for the espionage of these officers the "blind tiger" would be rampant and the dispensaries would not be self-sustaining. If the present improvement in public sentiment in the towns and cities continues I am satisfied the constabulary can be safely cut down to one-half the present force at the end of another year.

THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAW.

The Governor is empowered to employ two chief State constables and as many State constables as may be necessary to enforce the law. Upon my induction into office I determined to reorganize the constabulary and if possible dispense with it altogether. After trying a small force for a month I found that it was impracticable and unless the force was increased the execution of the law would be a failure. Wherever the constables were withdrawn from a town or county immediately petitions would be sent me requesting their return.

For the year ending the first of June, 1895, there were issued by the United States Internal Revenue Collector 805 licenses to retail liquor. This includes as Dispensaries which leaves for illicit dealers 730. For the year ending June 1st, 1893, there have been issued so far 387 licenses, this includes 88 Dispensaries, leaving a total of 299 for illicit dealers. Of this number 167 were taken out in the city of Charleston, ten of which were for the Dispensaries, which being deducted leaves a grand total of 157 illicit dealers in this city. It will be seen from these figures that over fifty-two per cent. of the illicit traffic in whiskey is carried on in the city of Charleston. It will be further observed that the number of United States licenses issued for the State has decreased over forty-one per cent. for the past year.

The illicit sale of liquor had almost been starved out and dwindled to a minimum when we were paralized by a most unexpected decree by the United States Circuit Court, through Judge Simonton. This Judge it will be remembered was the first to sustain the constitutionality of the law; but he has now completely reversed his former decision and under the guise of interstate commerce he nullifies every section of the law intended to prohibit the illicit traffic. This law seems to be the bete noir of our distinguished United States Judges, Brawley, Simonton and Goff, but so far we have reversed them and I feel satisfied we will continue to do so. The case before Judge Simonton was brought by a citizen of Charleston named Donald, who claimed that whiskey had been ordered by him from without our State for his personal use and had been seized by the constables and confiscated by the State to his damage $6,000. After able arguments the Judge declared that the Dispensary law no where declares that the use and consumption of alcoholic liquors in themselves are injurious to the morals, good health, and safety of the State or of her people. Alcoholic liquor is declared to be contraband and against the morals, good health and safety of the State only when it is not imported by the Dispenser or is not in his hands. He winds up by saying: "If all alcoholic liquors were excluded from the State or if all persons were prohibited to import alcoholic liquors or if the laws of South Carolina had declared that all alcoholic liquors were of such poisonous and detrimental character and that their use and consumption as a beverage were against the morals, good health and safety of the State other and different questions would arise."

Let an injunction issue as prayed for in the bill.

The following injunction was issued: "Ordered and decreed that a writ of injunction, be awarded and do issue out of this court commanding and enjoining and restraining the defendants M. T. Holly, Sr., as Chief Constable of the State of South Carolina and all other persons acting under him, his and their successors in office, and also the defendants J. M. Scott, R. M. Gardner and E. C. Beach and all other State constables of the State of South Carolina and all county sheriffs and their deputies and municipal officers, chiefs of police, and policemen and all other officers of the State of South Carolina or any county or city or town of the said State of South Carolina and all persons whomsoever acting or claiming to act under the authority of the Act of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina, approved January 2nd, 1895, or any warrant issued by or under authority thereof from seizing or attempting to seize in transit or to seize both before and after arrival in the State of South Carolina and at any place in the State of South Carolina take, carry away, or confiscate any package whatsoever of ales, wines or spirituous liquors or any intoxicating liquors the product of any other State or foreign countries imported into or brought into South Carolina by any means of transportation whatsoever by complainant James Donald or any other person whomsoever for his own use and consumption, and from entering and forcibly searching or attempting to search the premises or dwelling of the complainant James Donald or any other person in the State of South Carolina, or any railroad depot, railroad car, or steamboat or sailing vessel or other vehicle of interstate commerce, or any vehicle whatsoever within this State for transporting such intoxicating liquors as aforesaid imported or brought into this State for his use or consumption from hindering or preventing by any means whatsoever the complainant, James Donald, or any other person in the State of South Carolina as importer and consumer of the ales, beers, wines and spirituous liquors of the other States and foreign countries from importing, holding, possessing, using and consuming the said intoxicating liquors as aforesaid so imported for his use and consumption." I incorporate this injunction here in order to perpetuate it as a legal curiosity and to show the extent to which a partisan judge can be swayed by unreasonable prejudice. It will be seen that he enjoins everybody from unborn babes up to the high sheriff from interfering not only with Donald's whiskey, but from interfering with any citizen in the State who had not even asked his gentle protection. Courts of Equity sometimes legislate for parties before the court, but this Judge has assumed the power of our General Assembly to make a law for the State and also of Congress of the United States. Under contempt proceedings he has incarcerated men in jail who were absolutely without notice of his injunction and when brought to his notice that the sheriffs were treating the jailed constables as men charged with contempt and not as ordinary criminals he ordered them removed to city jails with instruction that they be treated as the commonest criminals.

You are familiar with the state of affairs that followed his injunction. Whiskey was imported into the State by every quondam barkeeper for personal use and the barrooms of Charleston were virtually thrown wide open. They became so bold under the protection of their judges as to violently resist the efforts of the constables to close their hell holes. I found it impossible to do anything with them on account of the sentiment of the city being overwhelmingly in their favor. I ordered the constables to confine their efforts to seizures that they had reason to believe were not for personal use and they accomplished a great deal although the results were quite unsatisfactory. I appealed to the mayor, and he promised co-operation; but shortly afterwards the city council refused to pass an ordinance prepared by the mayor which provided for the punishment of the keepers of blind tigers. I called upon the mayor and he endeavored to have the ordinance enacted; but in vain. They were joined to their idols. The chief of police was a friend of the law but he had neither the moral nor the legal support of the council or the community and his appeals were only partially successful. I gave the city notice that unless the law was better enforced I would have to resort to the metropolitan police law. This had slight effect; but it soon wore off. I again gave warning several months afterwards and the chief of police asked me to give him a little more time and he thought matters would be in a better condition. He succeeded in making several cases against illicit dealers; but the grand jury, of the best citizens, so we are informed, refused to take the oaths of men who they placed in charge of their homes and lives and unceremoniously threw out all bills against illicit dealers in whiskey. This emboldened the illicit dealers and I again invoked the aid of the courts and succeeded in obtaining charges of venue in several cases; but the question is still in the Supreme Court as to our right to such change. My patience became exhausted and I appealed to the State Board of Police Commissioners and they did not hesitate to place the police of the city of Charleston under the control of a commission. I regret that this was necessary, but it was simply a question of whether we should abandon the Dispensary in Charleston or first exhaust every means in our hands for the enforcement of the law. I am satisfied that the police can do more than all the constables in the State towards enforcing the law in our cities, and if the city authorities will not allow them to do so it is the duty of the State to take change. If the next year does not afford better results then a new law must be made for Charleston. I am satisfied, however, from present indications, that we will have nothing to complain of.

Convictions of violators of this law have been promptly had in nearly every county of this State where tried, except in Charleston. This is encouraging and shows that the stubborn resistance to the law has gradually subsided. You will readily see that the protection given by Judge Simonton to persons importing liquors into this State for personal use and the burden of proof being placed upon the constables to show that the same is not for personal use, makes our task indeed a hard one, in fact it prevents us from seizing imported liquors except where it is consigned to persons convicted of violating the law, and even these can always find a friend who will allow the use of his name to shield a criminal.

In order to comply with the interpretation of the interstate commerce law by this United States Judge I would respectfully recommend that the law be amended by declaring that all alcoholic liquors, except when analyzed by the State chemist and found to be chemically pure, are detrimental to the health, morals and welfare of the citizens of this State, are contraband and liable to seizure wherever found without a warrant, and when seized shall be forwarded to the State Commissioner and by him destroyed. This would cover the objection of Judge Simonton and would relieve the law of a continual warfare by the "whiskey ring."

I will endeavor to point out to you the amendments to the law which have suggested themselves to the Attorney General and to me in our efforts to enforce it during the last year, and which we believe absolutely necessary for its protection and perpetuation. The Board of Control should be composed of five members, consisting of the Governor, Secretary of State, Comptroller General, ex officio, and two members to be elected by your honorable body who hold no other office and are of the business people. Those two members should be elected for a term of four years, and so arranged so as to require the election of one every two years. The object of this must be apparent to you. As the board is now constituted three of the busiest State officers are required to look after this stupendous business of more than a million dollars a year. They elect a State Commissioner, whose term of office expires with that of the board. Next year the duties of the Secretary of State will be almost doubled by reason of the additional work imposed upon him by your body. The Comptroller General is one of the busiest men in the State House, and is required to be absent from the capital a great deal by reason of his settlements with the County Auditors. Our terms of office expire every two years, and if the two additional members are not furnished the Dispensary affairs are liable to be placed in new, inexperienced hands every two years. The incoming board would in all probability elect a new Commissioner and the institution would be greatly embarrassed by inexperienced officers. By the plan I have suggested there would be two directors always in office who would be familiar with the business and not dependent upon State officers for their appointment. The responsibility for the success of this business rests upon the Board of Control and it is unfair to the Governor and his associates upon the board to compel them to vouch for every check that is signed and every purchase made and every dollar expended. The duties of their offices render it impossible for them to do justice to this business and to even know of what is going on. Fortunately we have had Commissioners so far in whom we have confidence; but should this officer prove to be corrupt or incompetent he could in a few weeks wreck the entire institution. The inducements to corruption in this business are exceedingly great, and the men with whom the Commissioner is compelled to deal are often unscrupulous. It is useless for me to enumerate the many ways in which the Board of Control may be imposed upon and unless the most stringent regulations are thrown around the business to protect it, I fear the result. It is made the duty of the Governor as Chairman of the Board of Control to approve every warrant drawn by the Commissioners upon the State Treasurer, and I have approved as high as thirty thousand dollars in one day without having any evidence as to how it was to be applied except the signature of the Commissioner and the draft of the firm for whose benefit it was drawn. This is too much responsibility to place upon the Governor, and he should be relieved of it. I would, therefore, recommend that all accounts of the State Commissioner be first approved by the State Board of Control and the consent of the board be first obtained before the Commissioner is allowed to incur any debts, and that such bills when so approved be presented to the Governor for approval and payment. I would further recommend that the clerk of the board be paid a salary of fifteen hundred dollars per annum and his duties enlarged and he be required to certify all bills approved by the board and check off the merchandise purported to be covered therein. In this manner the board will be enabled to know what they are doing and the Governor relieved of a responsibility that should not be placed upon him. This would also relieve the Commissioner of any insinuation or charge of favoritism and remedy the weakest feature of the law, and thus place it beyond the criticism or reproach of its enemies. Of one thing you may be certain, if any degree of corruption is ever discovered at this institution the people will destroy it as quickly as they inaugurated it, and should such corruption be practiced it will be sure to be unearthed sooner or later. It is your conscientious duty to so frame this statute as to guard against any contingencies that may arise in the future by the election of State officers hostile to the law or from its careless enforcement by its friends. There are amendments of minor importance, but which are necessary for the enforcement of the law, but I am sure they will appeal to your good judgment without further hint from me.

The system of operating the County Dispensaries since the inauguration of the Scruggs form of bookkeeping is as near perfect as you can make it. During the past year we have discovered three defalcations among County Dispensers. They have been reported to the Attorney General, and he had entered suit upon the bonds and commenced criminal process against the Dispensers. It is but just to state that these defalcations occurred during the year previous to the inauguration of the Scruggs system of bookkeeping. I apprehend no further trouble on this line.

I would recommend that the County Supervisors be taken off the County Board of Control as under the new Constitution he is ineligible, and besides the duties of his office are inconsistent with those of the Dispensary, and if he attends to them properly he will have but little time to devote to the business. I desire to impress upon you the advisability of divorcing the Dispensary from any other office or State institution. So that no responsibility for its management and success may not be divided, but rest entirely upon the shoulders of officers appointed to look after in exclusively.

In conclusion, permit me to say that I feel a peculiar anxiety and interest in the success of this institution by reason of my connection with the enactment of the law while a member of your honorable body, and without any hesitation or apparent egotism on my part I do not believe that any future Governor will feel towards the law and guard it as scrupulously as my predecessor and myself. For these reasons I have endeavored to talk to you plainly and point out what I sincerely believe necessary to perpetuate a law so wise and salutary.

AWFUL TRAGEDY AT BLACKSBURG.

A Stranger Assassinated in the Heart of Town—A Woman in the Case.

The murder of Chas. T. Williams, a stranger in the town, has created intense excitement in and around Blacksburg. The foul deed was committed in one of the principal streets, and for a time the affair was wrapped in mystery, but the coroner's jury rendered a verdict which cleared up the mystery, as follows: That Chas. T. Williams came to his death by a pistol ball shot from a pistol in the hands of M. R. Reese, and that one Dan Lackie is accessory."

On Thursday night two citizens returning to their boarding house stumbled over the dead body of a man. Investigation showed it to be Chas. T. Williams, of Tunnel Hill, Ga. An alarm was raised and on searching his body three notes were found from Mrs. Anderson, a milliner. Mrs. Anderson has been twice married to her present husband, having been divorced, and then remarried about eight months ago. From these notes it was found that Williams had been sent here by Mr Anderson in the capacity of a peacemaker, and while acting in this capacity was murdered.

There is no direct proof as to who committed the murder, but Marion R. Reese and Daniel Luckie are more than suspected. Reese is one of the richest men in town and has a wife in Greenville County, with whom he has never lived. Luckie is a brother of Mrs. Anderson. Both have left for parts unknown.

The evidence against Reese is this: Reese is known to have been insanely jealous of and almost wildly infatuated with Mrs. Anderson. On the night of the murder there was a party at the house of Marion Moore and on a piazza overlooking the residence of Reese was a Miss Farrington, who testified that she saw two people at the time of the shots run from where the dead man was found. One of these parties she positively identified as Reese and the other went into the house of Mrs. Anderson and is supposed to have been Luckie, he being the brother of Mrs. Anderson. Reese was reported to have been unduly intimate with Mrs. Anderson, and, it is said, furnished a house and supported her, only a few doors from his own residence. Williams, in spite of the warning of Mrs. Anderson, called at her house about 9:30 on the evening of the killing, and was shot a short while after.

The most intense excitement prevails in Blacksburg. Miss Farrington has left for Charlotte, saying that she was afraid violence would be done her if she remained here. The friends of the murdered man and the town council have employed counsel to prosecute Reese. Detectives have been employed, and are now actively searching for Reese, who is supposed to be with friends near here. It is the universal opinion that he committed the murder.

FULLER ACCOUNT OF THE STORY.

The Gaffney Ledger gives a much fuller statement of the troubles which led to the awful tragedy, in the following version of its correspondent at Blacksburg:

The woman whose perfidity inspired this tragic deed is Mrs. M. E. Anderson, who is renowned in this community for her beauty. She is a blonde, not large, but stately, with charming features, and generally wore a smile that would be calculated to drive some men crazy. She came here about two years ago from Georgia. She, with other parties, a man and a woman, opened a millinery store in the Iron City Hotel building. After a few months the man drew out and the two women continued the business a short while. Then Mrs. Anderson run the business alone until January '95. In the meantime she boarded with Mrs. Dempsy, proprietress of the Iron City Hotel, and for awhile had the entre to the best homes of Blacksburg. Mrs. Anderson was a grass-widow. She finally left the hotel and rented a suite of rooms in the rear and above her millinary store. Then it was that her intimacy with Reese became so pronounced as to cause comment. Gossip became so rife she quit keeping house and went to board with Dr. Ramsour, a highly respected citizen. Her divorced husband came to the city about July a year ago. He sought a reconciliation and the pair were remarried by the Rev. Mr. Johnson. The next day after the re-marriage the husband left, and he has not been heard of since. It is thought the woman desired to appear to have a source of livelihood and that she induced her husband to return and remarry her for the purpose of having that appearance, for Reese was wealthy and if he gave her too freely people would be more liable to suspect, but if she was married she could claim her husband was providing her with funds. While Mrs. Anderson was boarding at the Iron City Hotel and before her re-marriage this man Williams called on her one day. After he left Reese quarrelled with the woman. Mrs. Anderson afterwards returned to Georgia. Soon after her departure Reese left and went to Atlanta and then out west. In a few months Reese returned and a few weeks after Mrs. Anderson returned. She then purchased a piece of property. Her home was elegantly furnished and she seemed to have an abundance of wealth, carrying an account with a Charlotte bank. On her former stay here she was financially embarrassed and was generally regarded as being without means. Shortly after she returned her brother, Dan Luckie, came here. He secured a position with Reese and lived with his sister. Thereafter Reese' visits to the Anderson domain were quite frequent, in fact she was generally regarded as Reese's mistress. And so matters went until the night of the tragedy.

M. R. Reese is a large, fine-looking man about forty-three. He has made considerable money in real estate and trading. He was generally regarded as a good citizen except in this affair. When a Ledger representative saw him Saturday he was faultlessly attired in a becoming suit of black of the cutaway pattern. He looked somewhat nervous and uneasy, but would not be taken for the midnight assassin that his fellow townsmen have pronounced him to be.

The most damaging testimony before the coroner's inquest, and that on which the warrant was sworn out was given by Miss Farrington, a dressmaker from Charlotte, but who is at present in the employ of D. L. Brown of this place. The shooting occurred almost, if not immediately, in front of Miss Farrington's boarding house. She swore in substance as follows:

"I was reading a novel when my attention was drawn by the three shots in front of the house. I turned down a leaf at the place I was reading, laid the book on a trunk and went to the window. I heard voices and the shuffling of feet on the outside, and a man say 'Don't say a d—n word about this.' Two men then went into Mrs. Anderson's house. As the door opened I could see from the reflection of the lamp in the hallway that they were M. R. Reese and Dan Luckey. The figures were about their size."

THE EVIL OF FOOLISH TALKING.

Practical Remarks from a Preacher About Gossipping.

Rev. J. C. Hiden, D. D., of Richmond, Va., preached a very practical sermon not long ago, in which he dwelt with great force upon the danger of gossip that tends to impair public confidenbe.

The text was the first verse of the 127th Psalm: "Except the Lord build the house: they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

In discussing the last clause of his text, Dr. Hiden said that the word "keep" meant to guard. "In this connection," said the preacher. "I have a few words to say which may impress some people as being too secular; but my theory of a preacher's duty is that he ought to help his people at every point at which he can do them good. I do not recognize the hard-and-fast line which is drawn between the secular and the sacred. If a man if engaged in an indefensible business six days in the week, he cannot keep Sunday holy If I see my people conducting their business in a way that must end in disaster, I feel it my duty to speak out, and in no uncertain sound.

"One of our evening papers had an editorial in yesterday's issue, calling attention to a matter which is of real importance to all our people just now. We are living in hard times. The experts in finance tell us; and the recent bond sale justifies the view, that those hard times arise, not from lack of money, but from lack of confidence. Without confidence credit is impossible, and without credit business dissolves.

"Now, if you go about town with your head hanging down like a bulrush, predicting financial disasters, saying that this and that and the other firm are shaky and must soon go by the board, then you are helping your neighbors to fail, and you may well look out that this does not cut short your own rations. Paul says profoundly, 'None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.' Your business depends largely upon the business prosperity of your neighbors. Your living is made here in Richmand, and largely out of Richmond people. Their success means your success. Their failure means short rations for you.

"Some people run off to New York and pay for some article as much as the same or perhaps a better article will cost here at home. Is this wise? My rule is never to go or send out of Richmond for anything I can get on reasonable terms in Richmond. It is plain, common sense, that as my living is to come out of Richmond people then Richmond people must live, and if the money which they pay out is all spent somewhere else how can they thrive? Well, but the Lord is to 'keep the city.' Yes, but it was a wise man who said, 'Trust God and keep your powder dry.' It is not faith, but presumption in you, if you say you trust God, and then fail to do your part. The Devil tried to tempt Christ into this kind of sin, when he told Jesus to leap down from the pinnacle of the temple, because he could trust God to protect him. The Master refused, and said it would be tempting the Lord God. It is foolish and wicked presumption for you to embark your own and your friend's money in a business which you do not know how to conduct. The whole land is full of bankrupts who have failed because they have gone beyond their means. The political economy that was ever put into English is, "Pay as you go; and if you can't pay don't go."

—Many a man has lost his reputation by talking too much.