

The Punta Gorda Herald

A. F. JORDAN Editor
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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1902

Editor Isaacs, of the Fort Myers Press, may now be addressed as 'Squire'; he is a justice of the peace.

Judge William A. Hoeker, a lawyer of the highest ability and probity, is a candidate for the supreme bench to succeed Judge Mabry, who declines re-election.

The Miami News came out nine days ahead of time last week, being dated February 21. Those Miami folks are resolved to keep ahead of everything regardless of the calendar.

Tom Sawyer, which is the nom de plume of ex-State Treasurer Clarence B. Collins, is waxing peevish in his old age. He indulges in much ill-natured reflection upon some of Florida's leading men.

The West Palm Beach Sun keeps "things stirred up" over in Dade county. It is fighting the East Coast Railway, the county commissioners and the ring politicians. Brave paper.

The Tampa Tribune gets off this good one, which is founded on fact: "A large quantity of 'unknown mineral' has been discovered near Tavares. It is probably the surplus gall of some of the politicians of that section."

Baptists, as is known, are opposed to bestowing public office upon Catholics. This may handicap Mr. Mallory in the coming primary for United States senator. THE HERALD, however, belongs to all the churches and has the privilege of supporting any able Democrat of good character regardless of his denominational affiliations.

Presumptive congressional candidates are budding out here and there in the district. It is reported that one is sprouting at Bartow. The field is broad and open and promises to be free. Opinion is crystallizing to the effect that Mr. Sparkman will run for the Senate, in which event Mr. Frank Adams will not be a candidate. But there will be plenty of room also in the senatorial primary.

Palmetto News: Governor W. S. Jennings is coming nearer carrying out his campaign pledges than any governor Florida has had for a long time. He stated from the stump that if elected governor he would see to it that the tax assessments of the State were more justly equalized. This he has accomplished at one stroke, by notifying the assessors of the several counties to assess all real estate at its real cash value, and all personal property at its actual cash value.

The Florida Christian Advocate is against the dispensary; it argues strongly for outright prohibition in preference. And the Advocate is correct. But in wet counties, a local option dispensary would seem an excellent substitute for bar-rooms. In discussing this question, it should not for a moment be forgotten that Florida does not want the South Carolina dispensary system, which is too much of a political machine and a cause of trouble.

The DeSoto News and the Bradenton Journal censure their people for going hunting on Sundays. Those who thus break the Sabbath surely do not stop to think seriously about it. Leaving out the possible question whether their conduct in itself is sinful, it may be said that the example they set counteracts in a measure the teachings of parents who are conscientiously trying to impress their children with the sacredness of the Sabbath. Good people, good neighbors, should do nothing to offend the religious scruples of those by whom they are surrounded, especially when the offensive act is wholly unnecessary.

Gainesville Sun: Governor Jennings is making an excellent chief executive. He is studying hard and has a frank and open manner in commanding a strict enforcement of the law. There is not a county in the State which will applaud him to such an extent as will the people of Alachua, and the justices of the peace will thank him for instructions which he gives. In this one case he may not have had all the information, but his letter about justices of the peace was a good one if it only had the effect to tell the people of Florida that the State has a Governor who will understand any and all circumstances in relation to the proper recognition of the law and just punishment for those who make themselves liable by its violation.

A LEGAL ERROR.

The county commissioners evidently made a mistake at their last meeting when they awarded the county printing to a company in which they have a financial interest, but we believe it was done thoughtlessly and that the gentlemen will correct it at their next meeting. We do not believe the gentlemen even thought of any financial gain when they voted to give the printing to the News. It is a small matter at the most, yet it is doubtful if the transaction is lawful.—Wauchula Advocate, Feb. 14.

Concerning this matter, the Champion publishes Chapter 4020 of the Revised Statutes, approved May 19, 1891, which, if any of the commissioners own stock in the DeSoto County News, shows that their action of February 5th in awarding the public printing to the News was clearly illegal. But, as the News will do the printing gratuitously, no trouble is likely to arise over this particular feature of the contract.

Where the trouble is likely to come in is when the commissioners undertake to designate the newspaper in which the delinquent tax list is to be published. The publication of this list must be in strict compliance with all the terms of the law. Any error in any particular relating to it would render the whole thing illegal and might put the county to considerable expense.

You cannot sell a man's property for taxes unless it has been legally advertised; and if the commissioners award the publication of the delinquent tax list to a newspaper in which they are financially interested, the advertisement will be illegal, null and void, and, under the Act of 1891, the commissioners will be guilty of a misdemeanor and liable to fine and imprisonment.

No doubt the commissioners will proceed cautiously and be sure that they are right before they go ahead.

NOT ABOVE CRITICISM.

The esteemed and lively Tampa Tribune of Sunday has the following:

Editor Jordan, of the PUNTA GORDA HERALD, has enshrined Governor Jennings among his political gods, and has a series of fits because the Tribune has indulged in a number of fully deserved criticisms of the Hernando county statesman and his papa-in-law. Since what recent date has the governorship of Florida become such a sacred post as to make newspaper criticism sacrilege? Editor Jordan surely does not subscribe to the monarchical doctrine, "The King can do no wrong."

No, he does not, but he thinks it wrong to charge directly or indirectly, without sufficient proof, that the Governor of Florida, no matter who he may be, is under the political control of his father-in-law. Especially is it wrong when the evidence is to the contrary, as in this case where it is shown that at least one of the executive appointees was and doubtless now is the father-in-law's political foe.

The Tribune's alleged criticisms being founded upon a very erroneous assumption touching the father-in-law, cannot justly be claimed as "fully deserved."

The Tribune's gist, however, in its last analysis is to the effect that it is discreditable to a man to have a father-in-law. Such being the case, and fathers-in-law in most matrimonial transactions being unavoidable consequences, the argument need not be pursued any further.

THE PEACE EXPLAINED.

Thomas Baxter Wellington Lanier, the accomplished Tavares correspondent of the EUSTIS LAKE REGION, accuses the editor of THE HERALD of sarcasm in saying that political peace had been declared in Lake county. But he does it himself, clerically intimating that the peace is founded upon a division of "the loaves and fishes," as the following from his last letter will show:

"If we did not know Bro. Jordan of the PUNTA GORDA HERALD so well, we would think he was poking fun at our promises of peace and hominy in Lake county. In a short notice in his splendid paper he speaks of our peace and harmony as if he did not think we would have it. As he was a citizen and editor of Lake for many years, he must know that about the time a tax-list is being let there is a feeling of fraternal love that pervades the whole atmosphere, and we often hear rumors of peace, and see nice things in our press about matters in general, and we think of the old saying that 'a fellow feeling (or a piece) makes us wondrous kind.' And all is peace until the proceeds of the sale is pocketed, and then we settle down to our old accustomed feeling. But we wish we had Bro. Jordan with us again; he is a live and progressive editor and can make the far fly when he wants to, unless he took a notion to want a piece."

The dispensary issue is a live one. It is already attracting great attention all over Florida. As a tax reducer, the local dispensary is without an equal, and that fact will give the issue immense strength. But it must be carefully remembered that we do not want in Florida a fac simile, so to speak, of the South Carolina state system. Only the local system as in operation in Georgia and Alabama will suit Florida; any other will produce literary and actual riot.

Some papers appear ignorant that Gen. Patrick Houston is no more in the land of the living. They continue his name as Adjutant-General in the list of State officers.

A FAIR PROPOSITION.

In as much as three subscribers to THE HERALD have objected to the advance in the subscription price, the following fair proposition is submitted:

Anyone who will say that he really thinks the advance unreasonable or that he cannot afford the increased price, may have the paper at the former rate of \$1.00 a year. THE HERALD is resolved that a bagatelle of 50 cents in a whole year shall not debar from getting it any one who really wants the paper.

To a village publisher there is no profit in a subscription rate of \$1.00 a year. That rate was adopted in a just attempt to compete with the metropolitan papers.

A STEER STORY.

The steamship Panita recently took on a cargo of cattle from the West India dock. Amongst them was a steer belonging to Mr. T. S. Knight of Charlotte Harbor. This particular steer proved so unruly and cut up such outrageous capers that he was turned back into the pen at the land end of the dock and the steamer sailed off without him.

Suddenly realizing his abandonment and the loneliness of his position, the steer bolted out of the pen, rushed headlong to the outer end of the dock, plunged into the briny deep and swam after the steamer. He continued to pursue the vessel until he was lost to sight in the distance.

Some days afterward, as Capt. K. B. Harvey in his mail launch Lorraine was cruising about half a mile from the West India dock, he met this identical steer coming back on the billowy surface. He had failed to catch the steamer and was very much exhausted, but the veracity of THE HERALD is still in prima condition and must never be doubted.

Reference: Capt. K. B. Harvey and other eminent citizens.

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