

THE TRUE DEMOCRAT

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Tallahassee, Friday, Sept. 29, 1905.

The Madison Recorder says: "Gilchrist's okra recipe is all right. And that leads us to the conclusion that the DeSoto county statesman would make a better cook than governor."

No duty, however difficult, should be feared half so much as that we fail to recognize it, and that we will be unfaithful when it comes. It should be a great deal easier to do what comes than to face the responsibility of having not tried.

Patrick A. Collins, mayor of Boston, who died in Virginia a few days ago, was a native of Ireland, and one of the most popular Democrats in Boston. He had served in Congress, as consul-general in London, and held various other offices.

Public money and public lands belong to the people, and he who wastes it, or gets away with it unless it be for the betterment of the whole, wrongs the people as a whole. Spending public money for purposes not necessary is grafting, and grafting is the new and polite name for stealing.

More than \$15,000,000 of gold from the Alaskan and Klondike fields has already been deposited in the United States treasury this season, and, based on the output of prior years, it is probable some \$7,000,000 or \$8,000,000 additional will be received before the close of navigation.

No man is independent of all other men; no man can work for himself alone. Every action, every stroke of work, every word, affects his fellow mortals in some degree. Humanity (like bees in one great hive) is bound together in a common brotherhood whose links cannot be dissolved by individual choice. Let us, then, be true to one another, and see that we furnish to the world our just share of honey!—Maxwell's Talisman.

It is within the power of the farmer's to enforce the 11 cent minimum for cotton. There are certain difficulties in the way, but the experience of last year has shown that these difficulties are by no means insurmountable. The matter rests largely with the farmers themselves. All they have to do is to say 11 cents is the price and refuse to take any less. The spinners are bound to have the cotton, and they will certainly pay 11 cents for it if they can not buy it cheaper.

There was no "certified check" restriction hitched on to things when the Internal Improvement Board of the State of Florida was selling one large body of its lands to J. M. Barrs (?) at 30 cents an acre, and another large tract, or tracts, to other East Florida parties (?) at a very low price. It was just simply a straight, but cheap deal, that the Board, or some members of it, now feel proud of, as the other board must over the "certified check" trick they played so successfully.

Several anonymous communications have been received this week in reference to the employment by our school board of third-grade teachers in the high school. It is our wish to stand ever on the side of right, and to give condemnation, or commendation, when it is justly due; but we require that communications for this paper be signed by the writer. If our patrons have just room for complaint they should not hesitate to sign their names, and then we can afford to devote some attention to them. Speak up boldly; sign your queries. Probably the school authorities are able to make satisfactory explanation of the situation complained of.

People and papers who are upholding the Governor and the Pardoning Board for their late action in the Cooper case can learn something by going to Tallahassee and reading the evidence which caused twelve good men to say on their oaths that Cooper is guilty. Upon this same evidence the Pardoning Board has twice refused to interfere in Cooper's behalf. Yet there are newspapers which, in defending the Governor and the Board, talk as if they knew more about the case than the twelve men who tried it, than the Supreme Court which affirmed the verdict, and the officials who have twice refused Cooper a commutation of sentence.—Punta Gorda Herald.

A BOUSTFUL POLICY.

The True Democrat has no desire to criticize the present administration unless it is clearly shown that such criticism is not only merited, but in the interest of the public, which this paper is endeavoring to serve. In that event it would be called upon to do so and would have no choice but to obey the summons. The purpose of this article, however, is not to criticize, simply to call attention to what appears to be a glaring inconsistency—in the hope that it can be satisfactorily explained.

Everybody in the State who has kept pace with events of a public nature are familiar with the nauseating subterfuge resorted to by the Jennings administration, when on its "last legs," to have itself regarded as an economical administration, while, unless all signs fail, it was ruthlessly plundering the people and turning its most sacred trusts into machines for graft, the magnitude and infamy of which was never before known in the State—not even during the Harrison Reed administration.

They recall how Jennings went off to Brooksville, and the Comptroller wrote him at that place, employing his most jingoistic platitudes, informing him that his "wise and economic administration" had so increased the surplus in the treasury that it were possible at that time to reduce the rate of taxation for general revenue purposes to a figure much lower than had ever before been known in the State—one mill.

They also recall how eagerly the Governor (Jennings) "grasped his pen to write the Comptroller directing him to make the reduction 50 per cent lower than recommended by his Comptroller—one-half of one per cent—and how he labored in the said communication (of course, the laboring was all done before he left the capitol) to make the "dear people" understand that this condition of affairs had been brought about solely by the wise administration of their affairs, and—inferentially, at least—congratulated them upon having one of his ability to so manage for them.

These two worthies knew at the time, too (which the people were not expected to know), that these "flush" times had been brought about by the work of other administrations for years back, and only culminated or bore fruit at this particular time. They also knew that these conditions were only temporary and that the levy would not be sufficient and would have to be increased this year.

What they did not know, however, was that the present administration would add to the general revenue fund at the expense of the pension fund. That was a revelation to be made to them by the letters (familiar in tone) passed between the Comptroller and Governor a short time ago.

In these communications, which we have published in full and which are yet too fresh in the minds of the people to make it necessary to do more than refer to them here, it will be recalled that the Governor was informed that he would be justified in reducing the pension tax and that he so ordered.

Now, to the point! What are the facts in the case? Is it not a fact that a great many pension claims are lying in the capitol unacted upon because there are no funds to pay them? Is it not a fact that this very excuse is given for not allowing them?

We assert most emphatically, and upon unquestionable authority, that such is the case.

Then why is it so? Is it right to try to gull the people "a comin' an' a gwine?"

If the old soldiers and their widows are entitled to a pension, give it to them, instead of filching the provision made for their maintenance by a wise Legislature to cover up political juggling with tax figures.

If they are not entitled to these pensions, is it not due them that their claims should be passed upon and they be informed why they do not get the pension?

A cabinet officer recently remarked in our presence that a clerk was provided for the pension board, but that claimants could not get information from him as to why their claims were hung up, and had to write to other people in the capitol for the information.

How sad! Those old soldiers who "tore their shirts" for the present executive during the last campaign must needs ask themselves now if it is not possible they made a mistake.

The whiskey element of Putnam county carried the election "wet" on Tuesday by a majority of 65 votes.

"OPEN" COMPETITION VINDICATED.

On August first, when a "certified check" was required, Supreme Court report printing was awarded to the Capital Publishing Company at \$1.50 per page. On August second, when no "certified check" was required, the same kind of printing was awarded to the St. Augustine Record Company at 72 cents per page. The first arrangement kept out competition and placed the work in chosen hands, while the latter, allowing real competitive bidding, saves to the taxpayers of Florida 78 cents on each page. Besides, all printing that comes from the St. Augustine house is neat and clean and will compare favorably with the best law work done anywhere. Again, the same kind of work, reprinting several volumes of Supreme Court reports, was awarded to the Painter Company, of DeLand, last week at 70 cents a page—a saving of 80 cents a page—under the system of honest, unrestricted competition. They also have a reputation for doing good work. That neither of the lower bidders will get rich at such prices is a fact, but the price to be paid under the "certified check" plan is exorbitant. These comparisons serve to illustrate the quality of the friendship for the people possessed by their servant who conceived this certified check plan of competition as applied to State printing contracts.

FLORIDA SCHOOLS.

The wheels of free school education have again commenced to turn in Florida, and all over the State the great work of teaching the youngsters and equipping them for the battle of life ahead is in progress. The future is full of progress for any people who believe with all their hearts in education and insist that every child in the community shall have the opportunity to get it, for it is education alone that differentiates the civilized man from the savage and makes progress possible along every legitimate line of human endeavor. The surest badge of inferiority, either in a State or an individual, is opposition to education; and the best test of the promise and progress of a people is found in the number and character of their schools. Hail, all hail, the great school system of Florida, full of "the promise and the potency" of a higher and better life for this and succeeding generations of our people! And all honor to the army of splendid men and women who, with earnest purpose and conscientious hearts, are giving themselves to the work of instructing the youth of Florida and laying the foundation for a useful citizenship! The teacher's life is not spectacular; and his emoluments never put him in the capitalistic class, but when he loves his work and brings to it the spirit and methods of true instruction, he yields to none in usefulness to the State.—Suwannee Democrat.

The Dade City Star says Jeff Davis, of the Live Oak Crescent, knocked the bottom out of that Croom gubernatorial boom. Hard-hearted Jeff.

Will Governor Broward now let the Democratic Executive Committee of his own county have a say as to who shall be Duval's Sheriff. We shall see what we shall see.

We hold in our possession information that will show up something startling in relation to another Internal Improvement land sale, if we succeed in securing a few more points, accompanied by one or more affidavits we are after.

Hon. William Bloxham Pickett, Sheriff of Duval county, died at his home in Jacksonville Wednesday morning at about 1 o'clock, after an illness of several weeks, of abscess of the stomach. He was a most popular and useful citizen, and numbered his friends, throughout Florida, by the thousands.

An effort to have Sheriff Knight, of Tampa, removed from office on the charge of drunkenness is the latest sensation down South. Of course there will be no trouble to find a dozen or two to succeed him. Governor Broward, however, knows a thing or two about removing sheriffs. He learned it by experience, and no hasty action will be taken in the Knight case.—Jacksonville Metropolis.

An article in Wednesday's Times-Union, headed "Five Billion Feet of Lumber in One Pine Belt," in Taylor and Lafayette counties, shows conclusively that the Internal Improvement fund sold its lands in these counties, as we stated in our last issue, at figures (?) far below their value, and we will copy the article in full in a future issue of this paper, so that our readers may know something of the lands' true value.

SIFTING TEACHERS.

Seymour A. Myrdars, State superintendent of public instruction of Tennessee, is rendering the school children of that State a valuable service, according to the Nashville American, in his efforts to raise the standard of efficiency among the school teachers of the State.

As a result of his instructions to county superintendents and examinations of teachers, 1,200 teachers, so-called, have failed to pass the examinations necessary to secure certificates this year. Some of these had been professing to teach for years.

One East Tennessean, who had been a "teacher" for fifteen years, was asked to "describe the alimentary canal," and his confident reply was: "The French tried to build it and failed. Now the United States has got her, and Roosevelt will put her through." Another submitted a list of twenty words as a test of his spelling, and every word was misspelled. He headed the list "Speling." He therefore misspelled twenty-one words, although given a list of only twenty to spell.

VIOLATORS OF LAW.

It is a common thing to see empty bottles and flasks lying around on the streets now-a-days, bearing bright, new labels, showing that "Blind Tiger" men are nightly pushing their unlawful business, and, as the skeletons are mostly seen early in the morning, that they are working as most evil-doers do—in the dark hours of the night. Who is responsible for this state of affairs? Is it not reasonable to expect that our city and county officials shall be a little more vigilant, and put forth enough effort in an attempt to capture these vile violators of law, or to frighten them away? Again, are not patrons of these lowest of law-breakers also encouraging law-breaking by patronizing them. Watch every one whom you see under the influence of liquor, and you can trail down and bring to justice at least some of them.

We are told that the "Big Boss King Bee," of the Capital, pays his typewriter \$1,200 per annum. How many business people in Florida pay their lady typewriters any such a salary for a few hours work?

Among the suggestions handed to us this week is that "it will spoil good fishermen to drain some of the Internal Improvement lands which have been sold so cheap(?) in recent years, and that it would be better to keep the balance for a while and leave the poor man this additional chance of a livelihood in Florida a little while longer.

"It is of course gratifying to the grafters to know there is a billion and a quarter in the United States treasury which they can scheme for." Of course it is, and is it not also a fact that "grafters" are scheming for the few thousands that remain in the treasury of this State, and may be in some of the county treasuries. Those grafters are scheming everywhere.

President McCall is another example of the bad habit of talking too much. When he wanted to justify his contribution of \$150,000 of his policy-holders' money to the republican campaign fund he said the democratic solicitors for funds had made his life weary chasing him for money. When called upon to name one single democrat who had pressed him for funds, he was unable to respond. It would probably be impertinent to call the president of the New York Life a liar, but that inference will be drawn by a disrespectful public. However, a man who pretends to be a democrat and who votes and gives up \$150,000 of trust funds belonging to others in aid of the republican ticket, won't be hurt any by having it proved and published that he is a falsifier.—Pensacola Journal.

Acceptance of campaign contributions from life insurance companies says a dispatch from Washington of the 26th, may deprive Postmaster General Cortelyou of the chance of succeeding to the Secretaryship of the Treasury when Secretary Shaw retires next February. President Roosevelt's anger over the matter necessarily makes Cortelyou one of the objects of his indignation, and it is now confidently asserted that the latter will receive no promotion, but, on the other hand, may be forced to leave the Cabinet. Cortelyou has a genius for secrecy, and it has become obvious that as Chairman of the National Committee he refrained from taking even the President into his confidence respecting all matters concerning the campaign management.

Mrs. A. A. Murphree and children have returned home, after a very pleasant several weeks' visit at Brevard, South Carolina.

EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS.

"A Citizen," in last week's Kissimmee Valley Gazette, talks out in meeting as follows:

I have something to say about the recent examination, and I wish to say as a preface that I am not a teacher and have no aspirations in that direction. And I wish to say further that I have no son or daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt or cousin who is so engaged, or who wants to be. Moreover, I am not writing in defense of some disappointed aspirant, or by request of anyone; but a matter of simple justice to those whom I honestly believe are unjustly imposed upon.

I lay some claim to intelligence, and think I understand the qualifications necessary for teaching school. But if the questions used in the recent examinations were intended to ascertain the fitness of the applicant for such positions, they missed the mark completely. I do not know the author of the questions; but I do not hesitate to pronounce them, for the greater part, unreasonable and absurd. Very few, if any, of the best teachers we have could, on the spur of the moment, write satisfactory answers to such questions. It is quite doubtful, if the county superintendents were assembled in a class and subjected to such an examination, whether half of them could make the required per cent. And I do not believe the State Superintendent, himself, could answer those questions if taken from the books from which they were selected. And to refuse to grant a certificate to a young lady who is teaching nothing but the elementary parts of education, and take away her school and deprive her of the means of support, because she cannot immediately elucidate these abstractions, with which she would have nothing to do for years, if ever, is as unjust as it is unwise. Such action ought to receive the unqualified condemnation of every fair-minded person.

If we are to maintain a system of examinations of this character at heavy expense and without any real advantage to our common schools, the best thing to do will be to haul away the whole thing and dump it when people have nothing to do but to deal in conundrums. And then let another system of examinations be invented, in which common sense shall have a place. That this quality was greatly deficient in the questions recently used is too obvious to need any argument.

Never while elective franchise remains with me will I ever again vote for a man to be a State Superintendent of Education who does not distinctly promise to adhere to things that are reasonable and practical. I put the blame where it belongs, and not upon our county officers, who have shown themselves gentlemen of due consideration. Let the odium of this stupendous injustice rest with the originator of the questions, and let him be retired to the shades of eternal innuendo. I have no favors to ask and no apologies to make.

That Veto.

Last week the Crescent published the bill passed by the last legislature requiring the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund to pay into the State Treasury all money now in their possession, or that may hereafter come into their possession for the said improvement fund. We also published Governor Broward's veto.

The office of State Treasurer was established for the care and custody of the State's finances; it was created that all money paid into the State government might have a safe and secure guardian, and be accounted for honestly. The State Treasurer is under bond for the faithful performance of that duty. Why, then, should he not have the care and custody of all the money belonging to the people of the State?

The funds which go into the Internal Improvement Fund belong to the people just the same as any other money, and should be in the possession of the State Treasurer.

Why did Governor Broward withhold his veto until after the legislature had adjourned? The bill passed both houses practically unanimous, and if Governor Broward had vetoed it while that body was in session it would have been passed over his veto. This he knew; hence his delay.

There was another bill passed by both houses practically unanimous requiring an investigation of the receipts and expenditures of the Internal Improvement Fund. Governor Broward also vetoed this bill after the legislature adjourned. Why should not the affairs of this Fund be investigated? It is a part of the State government. Have we in Florida a piece of machinery separate and apart from all the other wheels, which is above and beyond the knowledge or control of the people? If so, it is time it was abolished.

The Crescent is going to publish the other bill passed and vetoed. In fact, we are going to try to show to the people some of the methods now in vogue at Tallahassee, and which have been going on for the past five years.

It is time for the people to demand that the lights be turned on.

Where is the Internal Improvement Fund money? If it is safe and secure, why is an investigation harmful or out of place, and why should not that money be in the State Treasury?

These questions are pertinent and timely; and are of such a nature that every tax-payer is directly interested. Live Oak Crescent.

We note great improvement in the general get-up of the Florida Christian Advocate. Editor J. B. Ley and the publishers, Messrs. Sherwood and Pound, deserve much credit. The Florida Christian Advocate should visit every Methodist home in Florida; in fact, it would be the best reading matter in any home.