

THE TRUE DEMOCRAT

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Tallahassee, Friday, Dec. 8, 1905.

That first edition, it was neatly "bound in boards."

Winter weather is not unwelcome, even after such a royal series of fine days as we have had during the autumn.

All ex-Confederates and their friends are interested in the State re-union, which occurs at Jacksonville, December 14th.

No handsomer "special edition" has appeared in recent years than that of the Gainesville Sun, issued a few days ago. It is a gem.

Secretary Kettle of the Florida College for women has inaugurated a scheme of weekly correspondence by the pupils to their home papers. It is an excellent idea, and we shall be glad to hear from Leon county's representative.

State Attorney George W. Walker, in speaking of the work of the circuit court in the several parts of the circuit, remarked upon the large number of murder cases, nineteen in all thus far, in which sixteen convictions occurred. This is a remarkable record.

As almost everyone in Florida knows one Thomas J. Appleyard, of the Florida Index, published at Lake City, and his many and varied peculiarities, we do not feel called upon just now to give him any further notice. We had our say as to his charges connecting us with other people's "dough" last week, and we stick to it.

The thanks of The True-Democrat are due and are hereby tendered to the Lake City Index for the publication in full in its last week's issue of our editorial entitled "Sticking to the Text." It was the most sensible thing that newspaper has done for a long time, and we respectfully suggest that it "get the habit."

Consult the House journals of the last session of the Legislature if you care to size up the merits of the Capitol candidate for the State Senate from Leon county. You will find that upon almost every important question before that body Mr. Rawls voted one way and Mr. Robison, his colleague from this county, voted the other way. Both could not have been right. Which was most likely to be right?

A "special edition" of the Arcadia News gives a graphic account of the recent disastrous fire in that thriving town, in which property estimated in value at a quarter of a million dollars was destroyed, and in which both of the newspaper offices were victims. The enterprise and grit of the Arcadia people will rebuild the wasted places, but in the meantime the inconvenience of property loss will be great, and all Florida sympathizes with them therein.

Another West Florida jury has convicted Williams, the slayer of John White and Edwin C. Dansby, in Pensacola, and recommended the murderer to the mercy of the court, which, under the law, calls for a sentence of life imprisonment. No more deliberate and cold-blooded murder was ever committed, yet the juries in these two cases against Williams appeared to be so reluctant to impose the legal penalty that the result amounts to a practical failure of justice. What is the matter with our juries?

In another column we reproduce from the Crawfordville Breeze the decision of Hon. R. Don McLeod, county judge of Wakulla county, declaring that the prohibition contained in the statute law of the State against the catching of fish between certain dates cannot be held to apply to the waters belonging to the territory in that county known as the Forbes Purchase. We don't know whether Judge McLeod's decision is right or not—the Supreme Court may have to decide that—but we hope its effect will not be found to separate the inhabitants of the Forbes Purchase and their territory from the rest of the State. Florida can't spare such a lot of good people.

Mr. William Hudson, of Atlanta, who several years ago, was connected with the telephone exchange in this city is visiting Tallahassee friends.

SELECTING GOOD MEN.

Not long ago The True Democrat suggested the imperative necessity of choosing the best men of every community for the duty of representing the people in the next Legislature. Several of our exchanges have commented on the matter, and we rejoice at the interest that is being taken in the subject. Among those that have given expression to their views we gladly quote the following from the Arcadia News:

Several papers of the State are urging that care be exercised in selecting members of the next Legislature, special stress being laid on the need of men possessing purity and integrity. As to that nothing may be said. At every election men, corrupt in every sense, are entrusted with the duties of legislation, yet they are exalted both by press and public as the "finest," etc. At least one point should be noted: Choose men of sufficient intelligence to enact laws which will stand the test of constitutionality, and who will pass measures that will not be repealed by the next succeeding Legislature.

To the same effect is the following, from the Gainesville Sun:

There is one thing certain, and that is that the people of Florida will have to be more careful in selecting members of the Legislature, or else submit the measures brought before that body to a committee of investigation, before they come up for passage.

Some years ago a special joint committee on the style and substance of bills was created, the effect of which upon the legislation of the session was decidedly marked. Why not try the experiment again?

The Quincy Times takes a rather novel view of the matter. It says:

The question is, why should people need such advice regarding candidates for office, whether for the Legislature or for constable? Every one should realize that not only this age but every other age requires the best men for any office. Personal feelings should not control votes when personal feelings lean toward the weaker candidate, yet strange to say, in many cases personal feelings are the main issue. In connection with the numerous arguments for strong-minded and honest representatives, we hear that such are especially desirable two years hence, for the reason that matters of great importance will come up for action. Do not matters of great importance come up for action at every session of the Legislature? * * * We see no more occasion for urging the voters to select good representatives in the Legislature than in any other office. Hence, we believe that while all this good advice is being cast out upon the "unappreciative" voters, it should not be confined to one office, but should be sent broadcast down the line, showing partiality to none, neglecting none.

The Jacksonville Times-Union quotes our original paragraph and says:

This is good advice, but the trouble is in getting people to take it. The average elector does not vote for the man because he is the best man. He votes for him because he likes him better than he likes other candidates. This is true of Florida and of every other State. It is true of the Legislature alone. It is true of all offices. And so it often comes to pass that the man who aspires to a position because he has ideas of how he can best serve the people and who intends to leave self out of consideration is often defeated by one who has no ideas at all except the advancement of self. The latter wins some voters by remembering their names and professing great friendship for them whenever he meets them. He wins others by drinking with them or sharing in their vices. Of course the best man is often elected, but he is not often elected because he is the best man. The demagogue has the advantage over the statesman in running for office, unless he is too manifestly a demagogue. This is the evil. What are we to do about it? We confess that we see no remedy. It does not prove the failure of republican institutions, for even the demagogue chosen by the people and responsible to the people is more apt to serve them faithfully than one would be over whom the people had no power or influence. The trouble lies as deep as the imperfection of man, and cannot be remedied until men become perfect.

Rather discouraging and pessimistic, but we do not despair. We have an abiding faith in the concrete virtue and good sense of the people en masse. We believe that, as a whole, they do the right thing. They may be deceived and betrayed, at times, but do they not hasten to correct whatever errors they may make? Do not they generally—and often severely—punish the leaders, or would-be leaders, who deceive or betray them? This is precisely what we believe they are going to do, in several instances, right here in Florida, in the next primary. If we have mistaken their temper and disposition, and they fail to do so, we shall be disappointed, but we shall not lose our faith in them. If not now, the time will surely come when they will see clearly and act rightly and promptly.

Consider the lilies—what a beautiful heritage is theirs; consider man—what an awful heritage is his.

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ANSWERS RECEIVED.

An article entitled "R. S. V. P.," in a recent issue of this paper appears to have excited considerable interest among our brethren of the State Press. It was not intended as a puzzle exactly, although partaking of the characteristics of a "popular puzzle department."

The Quincy Times, under the caption "A Difficult Question" says:

The Tallahassee Democrat at times places the public in a very awkward position by asking seemingly unanswerable questions. As a matter of course we realize the fact that the best way to solve a problem—an unwritten problem—is to ask some one who knows. The Democrat doesn't do this; but unmercifully throws its questions at any and every body, causing all the pain of confessing their ignorance. In its issue of last week it caps the climax in the following manner: R. S. V. P.

Here follows the article copied from our columns, after which the Times generously announces:

All answers mailed to this office will be promptly forwarded to Tallahassee for the information of our friend.

The Plant City Courier also copies the article, commenting as follows:

Editor Collins should not be so inquisitive. He might pursue his research until he found that money which he avers that the governor possessed was probably bequeathed to him by Mr. Flagler out of pure gratitude to him for having signed the famous divorce law.

Thus far, the only brother who has offered a positive reply to the query "Where did He get It?" is the talented editor of the Lakeland News, who presents a quite novel and entirely appropriate solution of the problem, but one which scarcely appears to be broad enough to cover the case. He labels his unique production "Political Finance," and proceeds thus:

The esteemed and erudite editor of the Tallahassee True Democrat, in the last issue of his handsome and ably edited paper, displays an ignorance of high finance—or perhaps we should say political finance—that is positively painful to his admirers.

He refers to the fact that ex-Governor Jennings, who according to his own statement, was practically a pauper five years ago, when he was elected, has since been able to invest or expend thousands upon thousands of dollars—indulging in an expensive senatorial campaign, costly trips and a beautiful Jacksonville residence, and yet having a barrel or two to invest in "million dollar bank" stocks, naval stores enterprises, etc.; "and all," exclaims the Democrat, "on a salary of \$3,500 for four years!"

Why, goodness gracious me, what is there surprising in all this?

We have known better results from smaller opportunities.

We have heard of a legislator whose friends paid his campaign expenses, and bought his ticket to the State Capitol, the embryo statesman not having a red cent to his name. At the close of the 60-day session he came home clad in broad-cloth and fine linen, and one of his first acts was to buy the prettiest place in town.

His friends were puzzled. They sought him out and recalled to him the circumstances under which he had left them, and begged for an explanation. "Show us," said they.

He replied: "My friends, you ask how, out of the small salary of \$300 I have managed to scrape and save enough to buy this nice home, and yet have a few quids to burn. It's a secret; but if you will promise to let it go no further, I don't mind telling you:

"I had my washing done at home!"

Now, doubtless with just so plain a tale the ex-Governor could put Bro. Collins down!

Other solutions of the problem will be welcome.

Oratory at Jackson's Bluff.

Quite an extended and decidedly self-laudatory account of the speech of Hon. W. A. Rawls at the Jackson's Bluff bridge celebration last week appeared in the Daily Capital of last Sunday.

Although we were not present on that occasion—greatly to our regret—we are quite prepared to believe that Mr. Rawls said all of the nice and wise things that he is thus reported to have said; but we are reliably advised, upon the authority of some who were present, that the account referred to, full as it appeared to be, lacked much of containing all that Mr. Rawls actually said.

From the best information we have been able to obtain, from parties who stand ready to verify the facts whenever called upon to do so, Mr. Rawls, in the course of his speech, took occasion—went out of his way, in fact—to denounce such men, and such fellow members of the last Legislature, and such fellow citizens, as Hon. W. A. Blount, State Senator from Escambia county, Hon. Fred T. Myers, formerly our State Senator, and others of equally honorable and distinguished character.

Why did not the Capital's account of his speech contain these features? Was Mr. Rawls willing to say things before an audience of country people that he would not care to see in print? If so, why? Did he overestimate the credulity or the simplicity of his hearers? Did he not know, or could he not realize, that those same simple (as he evidently thought them) country people are accustomed to see as far and think as wisely as himself?

FOLEY'S KIDNEY CURE
Cures Kidney and Bladder Trouble

GOVERNMENT RATE-MAKING.

Congressman Lamar recently "rushed into print" in a Washington newspaper interview, with the somewhat threadbare statement that he did not think there could be "any doubt about the constitutional powers of Congress to legislate upon the subject of railway rates and regulate the same." Of course not. The mere existence of the interstate commerce law and commission demonstrates this. But the question that is to confront Congress does not involve the regulation of transportation rates. It is, whether Congress can, or should, confer upon the interstate commission the power to make rates.

This is a prerogative which the commission has long desired to exercise. It has endeavored to do so on several occasions, but has been invariably turned down upon the proposition by the courts. Now it proposes to go behind the courts and seek from the Congress, by arbitrary enactment, that which the courts have heretofore uniformly denied.

Which is right, the courts or the commission?

Which is right, the courts or Congressman Lamar?

Commissioner Prouty, in arguing for the enlargement of the powers of the commission, announced as the concrete attitude of that body on the subject the creation of a fourth branch of governmental authority—in addition to the executive, legislative and judicial functions of government under our existing system—"a Dispensing Power in the United States;" and his definition of this unique element shows it to consist of an arbitrary and irresponsible organization, absolutely independent of the three existing branches of government, and having imperial power to dominate the entire business of interstate transportation at will, uncontrolled by the courts and responsible to no superior.

"There is no business in this country which is more completely the subject of legal restraint than is that of railroad transportation," says a recent writer, Mr. Joseph Nimmo, Jr., of Washington, D. C., in a thoughtful and convincing brochure, a copy of which has just come to our hands. "The railroads are regulated by States, by cities, counties, towns, village boards of trustees, school districts, and by almost every other political subdivision of the State. The law of the common carrier and of the public highway and the decisions of the courts also embrace volumes of regulation applicable to the conduct of railroad transportation, while the act to regulate commerce as amended amplifies, extends and particularizes the regulative principles of the common law as developed in its application to the railroads."

While the aggregate freight transactions in the United States during the eighteen years of the existence of the Interstate Commerce Commission number approximately three thousand millions, the total number of cases considered by the commission was about 8,770, of which 45 were appealed to the courts, and in only 8 of these appeals was the position of the commission sustained. The overruling of the commissions' decisions in the other 37 cases appears to constitute the entire grievance of the commission. It takes no account of the 8,293 cases in which its decisions on questions of transportation were not disturbed or complained of—370 of the total never reaching final hearing.

With such a record, can it be said that regulation is a failure? Or that new and unheard-of elements of governmental control should be injected into our traditional system for the sole purpose of enabling this commission to ignore the courts and all other established departments of government and "get even" with the courts for the 37 errors that it attempted in the administration of the interstate commerce law?

The desperate need of the Republican party for an "issue" may invoke the official influence of the President in the adoption of the purely populist and utterly revolutionary theory involved in the demand of the Interstate Commerce Commission for "more power" to work its own will with the transportation interests of the country, but why should a Democratic Congressman—and especially a Southern Democratic Congressman, and more especially a Florida Democratic Congressman—with the very apparent, though utterly mistaken purpose of making himself "solid with the masses" in view of his own approaching campaign for re-election, deliberately repudiate every essential, fundamental doctrine of time-honored, Jeffersonian Democracy?

Even President Roosevelt appears to have receded from the radical position which he was reported as intending to

GOVERNOR BROWARD'S CHARGE.

The accusation contained in Governor Broward's article in the Jacksonville Sun, that Florida editors sell editorial space at "so much an inch," has attracted the attention of newspapers throughout the State.

The Titusville Star says: Here is a direct charge made against the State press by the highest official of this State, the Governor of Florida. Governor Broward must be well informed that the charge is founded upon fact, otherwise it would be mere child's play to make such a statement. If there are Florida editors "who sell editorial for so much an inch" the Governor should, for the welfare of the State, and for the best interests of the State, make known their names and furnish the evidence upon which to condemn them.

The Lake City Index flatly denies the charge, and challenges the Governor to "give names."

The Quincy Times says: In this the Governor is very uncharitable. We do not deny the truthfulness of the statement. We confess our ignorance in the matter, and give way cheerfully to one who has just been through such a long and heated campaign in State politics. He should know, and probably does, but if he does know of an editor in Florida who is so deceitful to his readers, so dishonest in his conduct and who resorts to such low means as selling his editorial space and sentiment, he, who appears to have been made to suffer thereby, he, who would have the atmosphere of the State press purified and brought up to the high plane which he claims an editor should occupy, and which in reality he should occupy, and he, who is at the head of an honest government and evidently wishes to see honesty prevail in the papers of the State, should not hesitate to expose the dishonest ones who sell their influence and disgrace the profession which should stand aloof from dishonesty and untarnished. He has made this declaration and now in fairness he should single out the victims of temptation and flash the searchlight of publicity upon their brows.

Broward Starts Something.

From the Jacksonville Sun. "We are afflicted with a sprinkling of editors who sell editorial for so much an inch—sentiment thrown in." Governor Broward in the Sun, November 18, 1905.

We thought that this statement from the Governor of the State would cause some of the brethren of the press to sit up and take notice.

The Governor boldly states what others have for some time been whispering in selected corners to discreet acquaintances.

The Monticello News, commenting on this charge of prostitution of the press, made by the Governor, suggests the compiling of a list of the guilty ones.

The Tallahassee True Democrat, shocked by this charge of baseness, demands publicity and punishment for those whom the cap fits.

Far be it from us to judge our brothers, but we agree with the editor of the Monticello News that a list should be prepared, and we agree with the editor of the True Democrat that those guilty of this corruption should be exposed and punished.

So young are we in this journalistic life, that we are not disposed to take up this cudgel against those who are so much stronger than we are, when the evils are of past committing and no particular good can be accomplished by laying them open to the public gaze.

Of evils that have been we will not speak, unless by keeping silence we should become a party to their continuance and their menace to the future.

Collier's Weekly, in its great expose of the patent medicine fraud, has shown how advertising contracts have influenced the editorial expression of the press of the country, as to the merits of bills introduced in State Legislatures to regulate the sale of, and to prevent the use of harmful ingredients in, these nostrums.

Our beloved primary law, under the operation of which the press has become a prime factor in political campaigns in this State, has opened wide the door of temptation to the editors, to throw their editorial columns on the bargain counter.

Some have not put this Satan behind them.

But, as we have written, this is a past evil and will not be made to feed the mill now grinding, unless the good of the future is threatened by it.

We have a little list which we will keep in a safe place, and if we see those whose names are on it sinning again, we will give it to the editor of the Monticello News, and to all others who read this journal.

Come, brothers, let us not do a merchandising business.

Let us print the news, and keep our editorial page like the wife of Caesar.

assume on this subject, and his message to the Congress contains the following significant paragraph:

In my judgment, the most important provision which such law should contain is that conferring upon some competent administrative body the power to decide upon the case being brought before it, whether a given rate prescribed by a railroad is reasonable and just, and, if it is found to be unreasonable and unjust, then, after full investigation of the complaint, to prescribe the limit of rate beyond which it shall not be lawful to go—the maximum reasonable rate, as it is commonly called—this decision to go into effect within a reasonable time and to obtain from thence onward, subject to review by the courts.