"Let the Blessed Sunlight Of Publicity Shine In"

The Mississippi Senatorial Campaign, by L. P. S.

HOBBS STARTED THE CRUSADE.

The people of Mississippi are now thoroughly aroused against allowing white men who have forfeited their constitutional right to vote by failure to pay their poll and other tax, as required by the fundamental law.

The collection of poll taxes was not made compulsory by the constitution because it was hoped and believed that over 100,000 negroes in the State would default, thus disfranchising themselves and bring tranquillity and prosperity to the Commonwealth. Time has amply verielid this hope. But, and the admission is a humilating one, hundreds and thousands of white men have defaulted for poll tax, and yet in many counties they have been allowed to participate in the Democratic primaries. This evil has grown year by year until at the State and Senatorial primary four years ago it had become so flagrant and so impudent that god men were startled at such an extraordinary spectacle and cried out against the iniquity.

Chief among these was Hon. B. T. Hobbs, the lamented editor of the Brookhaven Leader. Mr. Hobbs was the ablest newspaper champion of the Senatorial aspiration of Vardaman in Mississippi. He loved his friends. But he was more devoted to law and order; and he never hesitated to stand for the right as he saw the right, even to his financial and political hurt. This will not be gainsaid by the dead editor's fiercest adversary, now that he sleeps the sleep of the just in the silent city of the dead in the beautiful town of Brookhaven. Nor is it improper to say, for it is the truth, that B. T. Hobbs is mourned by his legion of friends, and respected by those who differed from him, from the center to the circumference of Mississippi.

Last April, under the caption of "Whither Are We Drifting?" the Brookhaven Leader sounded the warning against poll tax delinquents voting in primaries in a most vigorous editorial. This editorial was reproduced in the Clarion-Ledger of April 30th, 1910, and editorially commended. Later in a signed communication to this paper the Hon. J. A. P. Campbell, the self-retired Mississippi Gamaliel, full of honors—with no enemies to punish save the enemies of good government—not only commended the Leader editorial, but laid the law down in the premises. Judge Campbell's communication appeared in the Clarion-Ledger of May 4th, 1910. It was reproduced by Editor Hobbs in a later issue of the Brookhaven Leader.

Editor Hobbs evidently had the idea that the constitution was made to be obeyed; that it was the duty of all good citizens to stand by the sacred instrument, which had freed Mississippi from pillage and misrule, and to stand by all who stand by that sacred instrument. This, regardless of who is or is not a candidate for United States Senator. A candidate may be only a primrose by the river's brim, but the constitution is no plaything. While stands the constitution, the State shall sand; when falls the constitution, the State shall fall. In short, the constitution is the supreme law of the land. To nullify it is to invite red-handed anarchy. So believing, the Brookhaven Leader, a year ago, cried out against poll tax delinquents voting in primaries, and to the Leader, therefore, under the fearless and conscientious control of the lamented Hobbs is entitled the credit for leading what has now become a successful crusade against this violation of the fundamental law of the State.

Following is the editorial appearing in the Brookhaven Leader of last April:

"As one native and to the manner born, who loves Mississippi, the editor of the Leader desires to sound a note of warning. It is a notorious fact that in many places in the State poll tax delinquents are allowed to vote in the primaries. A poll tax delinquent who votes in any primary subjects himself to the same pains and penalties as if he voted in the general election. The violation of this law will forever mar the perfume of the primary election law, dear to the bone and sinew of Mississippi.

"Ten years ago it was published from the official record that there were 29,600 poll tax delinquents in Mississippi. This was just ten years after the adoption of the constitution of 1890. If the same ratio of delinquents has kept up for the past ten years, the white poll tax delinquents of Mississippi agregate 60,000. To allow such delinquents to vote in primaries, the real elections in Missisippi, aside from the violation of the law, is unjust and unfair to those citizens of the State who pay their poll taxes. In short, the way things are drifting, the State is in danger of being governed by the non-taxed, or at least through the votes at the primaries of those who fail and refuse to pay their poll taxes. The people are patient and long suffering; but endurance has its bounds. Those Democrats of Mississippi who pay their taxes are justly resentful of the fact that men who do not are permitted, in violation of the law, to vote in primaries and thus nullify their votes.

"This is a matter that cries out for prompt correction, and district and county attorneys should do their duty in having those who violate the primary election law indicted and punished. Democratic excutive committees, city, county, congressional and State, should take cognizance of this abuse and order, by resolution, the making of lists of qualified electors to be furnished the judge of primary elections as a guide for legal action.

"The fact that a man is registerd does not necessarily mean that he is a qalified elector. Thousands of men register and then default for taxes, and while their names remain on the registration lists, they cannot vote at any election under the law, and are liable to severe punishment if they do.

"Unless steps are speedily taken to stop illegal and fraudulent voting in primaries, the primary election law of Mississippi will become a reproach, the State governed by the non-taxed, and the ship of state will flounder amid the breakers.

"Whither are we drifting?"

As above stated, Judge Campbell was so impressed with the timeliness of the editorial just quoted from the Brookhaven Leader, that he addressed the following communication to the Clarion-Ledger. This communication was handled at the time by the Jackson correspondents of the Memphis and New Orleans papers. It follows in full:

"Editor Clarion-Ledger:

"The article appearing in the Clarion-Ledger of April 30, copied from the Brookhaven Leader, is on a subject of very great importance, and therefore worthy of the attention of all who feel an interest in Mississippi.

"None but qualified electors should be allowed to vote at primary or other elections. The constitution of the State declares who is entitled to vote, and among the prescribed qualification is payment, 'on or before the first of February of the year in which he shall offer to vote, of all taxes which may have been legally required of him, and which he has had an opportunity of paying according to law, for the two preceding years (not merely poll taxes, but all taxes), and who shall produce to the officers holding the election satisfactory evidence that he has paid said taxes.'

"Primary elections have become the real elections in this State. Only those qualified to vote at the final elections (those prescribed by the constitution) are entitled to vote in the primary election. It is a sad commentary on the capacity and fidelity of those officially connected with elections, if it is true that those delinquent for any taxes are permitted to vote.

"ALL WHO VOTE, NOT BEING QUALIFIED, INCUR A PENALTY OF $200 OR IMPRISONMENT FOR SIX MONTHS, OR BOTH. The constitution requires the voter to produce to the officers holding the election satisfactory evidence that he has paid 'the taxes required of him.' In practice the requirement is rarely, if ever, complied with, and it occurs to me that the great evil of allowing non-qualified men to vote has arisen from the practice of reciving the ballots of all whose names are found on the poll books.

"Managers of elections accept the poll books as evidence of the right to vote. This shows the great importance of an intelligent and faithful performance of duty by county commissioners of election. It is their duty to revise the registration books at times prescribed and to erase the names of all who have died, removed or become disqualified as electors from any cause.

"In order to perform this duty they should compare the list of delinquents for all taxes and all other sources of information in the sheriff's office, the city tax collector's office, advertisements of lands to be sold for taxes, and every available source of information, as to non-payment of taxes, before the 1st day of February, and every name of persons who have not paid poll tax and property tax, as required, should be erased as required by law, and the poll books, thus purged, would not mislead the managers of elections.

"To permit one not qualified to vote is a great wrong, and every safeguard to prevent this should be employed. It is an outrage on decency, as well as the constitution, to permit the vote of one not authorized to cast it to balance that of the qualified voer.

"It is to be hoped that grand juries, justices of the peace, county attorneys and district attorneys, as well as circuit judges, will be astute to secure conformity to the constitution and laws in the matter of elections, and that all who violate them in any particular shall be made to suffer the prescribed penalties.

"It might happen that a good citizen would some time be deprived of the right to vote by a strict enforcement of the law; BUT NOTHING CAN JUSTIFY A VIOLATION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF THE COMMONWEALTH. LAX ADMINISTRATION OF LAW IS A GREAT EVIL, AND WHEN IT AFFECTS PURITY OF ELECTIONS IT AIMS A DEATH BLOW AT THE COMMONWEALTH.

"It is hoped that commissioners of elections will faithfully perform their sworn duty by ascertaining, as they can, the delinquents, and purging the poll books of their names; and that, in all cases where names of unqauified persons remain on the poll books, they will be challenged at the polls; and if such challenge is disregarded, that the managers of primary elections, as well as the guilty voter, will be presented to the grand juries for prosecution and punishment.

"J. A. P. CAMPBELL."

—Clarion-Ledger, April 16.

A representative of the Clarion-Ledger asked Mr. J. R. Bingham of Carrollton, member of the Red Cross Society for Mississippi, about funds gathered for famine sufferers in China. He replied that a simple notice in the papers had brought in a generous response throughout the state, and even beyond, in sums ranging from 25c to $100, the total to date aggregating $1,049.33, which had been forwarded, through Major Millsaps, to those in such dire distriess.

Asked if he would give an expression on Mississippi politics, Mr. Bingham readily responded: "I have never held nor sought political office, but have always taken a deep interest in matters that affect the welfare of Mississippi. Among the proud possessions of my memory is the fact that, from its inception, under the leadership of the peerless Charles B. Galloway, I was associated with the movement to rid our state of the saloon curse. National affairs, also, engaged my careful consideration. Association with the great bishop, in his home and in my home, gave me a broader appreciation of our national government and an intenser love for Mississippi. Of all the men I've known, Bishop Galloway was the finest example of a broad nationalism and state pride, wide hospitality and intense local attachment.

"As I was a neighbor of J. Z. George and H. D. Money, these great men gave to me their friendship. Frequently, I was in their homes, and they have been in mine. From them I learned to have exalted ideas as to the character and ability which should unite in a United States Senator from Mississippi. None but the loftiest should ever sit in the seats which have been occupied by Davis, Lamar, George, Walthall, Money and McLaurin.

"When conditions—that brought on the present contest for a seat in that great tribunal of the nation's destiny—the world's greatest forum of debate, where a weak or timid man of poor equipment should never have place—revealed the fact that Mississippi was face to face with a crisis, I gave earnest attention and careful thought as to my course. The conviction grew on me that Senator Percy should be returned. His career in the Senate abundantly vindicated the choice of the legislature. Within my knowledge, no man did so much there as has been accomplished by Mr. Percy, in the same length of time. This statement does not disparage his colleagues nor his predecessors. A peculiar opportunity presented itself to Mr. Percy, and gloriously did he meet it. Possibly, never before was there a time when a Southern Senator would have been justified in opposing a bill to pension Federal soldiers. In the recent session the time was ripe for such opposition. Senator Percy was quick to see and seize it. That such opposition was proper is proven by the fact that it was successful. A less wise, less practical, less resourceful, less tactful man would have bungled it. The bill had passed the House, with no show of opposition from any source, and was well-nigh through the Senate when Mr. Percy, with consummate courage, with infinite tact, with rare resourcefulness, challenged its passage and accomplished its defeat—thereby saving Mississippi and the nation from an unwise expenditure of millions of dollars. That incident is characteristic of Mr. Percy's career, and appeals mightily to Mississippians to return him to a field of such wide opportunity and great usefulness.

"But it is not in the glare of publicity that a man is best judged. The temptation is great for a public man to pose and to "trim his sails" to catch popular favor. It is rare for one to go contrary to public opinion, when that opinion is based on reason. It is well-nigh unheard of when public opinion is based on prejudice. Mr. Percy has done that, and did it when there was no sign of a reaction against popular fallacy. Today, as a candidate for office, he is advocating the principles which he espoused a decade ago, when he had no thought of ever being a candidate for office. His consistent and persistent opposition to an unwise agitation of a matter impossible of accomplishment and fraught with direst danger to our people, has rescued Mississippi from a threatened peril, the mischief of which no man could foresee. Thereby, he has justified a prophecy uttered ten years ago, by a man who has been singularly trusted by Mississippians.

"If I were called upon to name one of the most promising and gifted young men in the Third Congressional District, I should unhesitatingly name LeRoy Percy of Greenville. As a lawyer he is profoundly and accurately learned; as an advocate, he is adroit, ruggedly eloquent, tactful, and as resourceful as a Texas bronco is full of tricks. His vocabulary is ample, illustrations pointed, strikingly pertinent and invariably find fitting lodgement in the minds of the jury or the court. The truth is, he never opens his mouth without saying something. There is a nugget of wisdom in every period, and a well developed idea in every conception. He is not what is generally understood as a student, and yet, his information is wide and varied, and he has more sense than anybody. Submit a proposition to him, legal or what not, and his mind goes through it like an X-ray through a window pane. All the abstruse, intricate and difficult points, reconciling, eliminating and adjusting the varient phases until the whole matter becomes transparent. A most remarkable faculty, wonderfully developed. Another strong point in the character of this extraordinary young man is his influence over men. He was born to rule; one of those peculiar characters whose influence is felt and obeyed, and that, too, often when the person exerting the influence, and the person influenced least expect it. That peculiar power is God-given—must be born in the man or woman. It cannot be acquired. Another admirable trait, markedly developed in Mr. Percy, is loyalty to friends and devotion to principle. These latter qualities are paramount and of superlative worth—they are the crown ing virtues of a perfect character. When these qualities highly developed man approaches nearest to God; without them, his tendency and proper place is the other extreme.

"To such young men as Mr. Percy we must look for the future greatness and goodness of the republic. He is capable of doing a great deal for his country, if only his powers are properly employed.

"For reasons herein stated, and because, in the highest order of integrity, he is second to none, and, in ability, learning, courage, tact, resourcefulness, and in capacity for largest usefulness, he presents to Mississippians the best opportunity for a great Senator—I give my support to Leroy Percy. He will begin the next session of the Senate with a prestige that it would require any other man the entire session to win. With an even start, Mr. Percy would eclipse any other man we might elect. With the advantage of the experience he has had, and the position he has gained, it would be the sheerest unwisdom to change."—From the Clarion-Ledger, April 30.

Legal Notices.

Chancery Summons.

No. 1649. State of Mississippi—To Rock Island Plow Company, Rock Island, Illinois.

You are commanded to appear before the Chancery Court of the County of Holmes, in said State, on the 4th Monday of May, A. D. 1911, to defend the suit in said court of W. S. Gordon, Administrator of Estate of T. D. Tucker, deceased, wherein you are a defendant, and to show cause if any you can, why your probated account against said estate should not be disallowed and why the final account of said administrator should not be allowed and approved as stated, same being now on file in said court.

This the 21st day of April, 1911.

PARHAM WILLIAMS, Chancery Clerk.
Boothe & Pepper, Solicitors.

Notice to Contractors.

By an order of the Board of Supervisors of Holmes County, Mississippi, passed at their regular May Term, 1911, I am authorized and directed to advertise for bids to be submitted at the next meeting of said Board, on the first Monday in June, 1911, to repair the Bophumpa iron bridge spanning Bophumpa creek on the Lexington and Acona public road; the bidders to submit their own plans and specifications and said bridge to be completed, ready for public travel, in 90 days, in a good and workmanlike manner. The Board reserves right to reject any and all bids.

PARHAM WILLIAMS, Clerk.

Chancery Summons.

No. 1733. H. F. Gillum et als vs. Jas. H. Hunter et als.

State of Mississippi—To H. F. Gillum, whose postoffice address is 222 Camp St., New Orleans, La., care of I. L. Lyon & Co.:

You are commanded to appear before the Chancery Court of the County of Holmes, in said State, on the 4th Monday of May, A. D. 1911, to answer cross bill filed by M. T. Smith

This the 24th day of April, 1911.

PARHAM WILLIAMS, Chancery Clerk.
Campbell & Campbell, Sols. for Def'te.

Chancery Summons.

No. 1863.—State of Mississippi to Walter Heffner, Defendant; whose post office and place of residence is unknown:

You are commanded to appear before the Chancery Court of the County of Holmes in said state, on the 4th Monday of May, A. D. 1911 to defend the suit in said court of Alice Heffner, wherein you are a defendant.

This the 8th day of April, 1911.

PARHAM WILLIAMS, Chancery Clerk.
Boothe & Pepper, Sols. for Compialnant.