

BLEASE HAS REMOVED THE NOTARIES PUBLIC

Those Who Furnished Data in Belton Incident Have Commissions Revoked.—All Notified That Their Part Met With Disapproval.

"Some time since you were commissioned a notary public by me, under the constitution and law (at the pleasure of the governor.)"

"Your commission is hereby revoked and any further act performed by you as such official is illegal and in violation of the law."

This was the answer made by Cole L. Blease, governor of South Carolina, in letters written James M. Alexander, J. H. Merritt and John A. Horton, notaries public, to affidavits taken as to the governor's conduct at Belton last week. Letters were sent the secretary of State and clerk of court of Anderson county notifying these officials of the removal of Messrs. Alexander, Merritt and Horton.

Under the law the governor has the right to remove at pleasure a notary public.

Statement by Governor.

Gov. Blease was asked what had moved him to revoke these commissions. He said he had not intended to volunteer any statement, but in anticipation of such an inquiry had dictated to his stenographer an expression on the subject, and had the copies before him. He said he wished it understood that his language applied only to the "editors of the newspapers that have taken part in this business."

The statement is as follows:

"I have no further comment to make on the Belton matter at this time. What I stated in my letter to Mr. Harris is absolutely correct. I was perfectly sober; was feeling good; had just left a crowd of my friends; was on my way home in the best of spirits and remember very distinctly what took place. Any man or woman who lives in South Carolina who does not know that I am governor is indeed in the lowest mire of ignorance; hence, when I say to any one that I am 'Cole L. Blease,' it is absolutely useless to add that I am governor of South Carolina, and I did not say so on that occasion, if my enemies do swear to it.

"I have canceled the commissions of the three notaries public taking part in this dirty transaction and some other people will hear from it later. Every one who has known me from my childhood up, both men and women, will certify to the fact that I have at all times and on all occasions been polite and courteous to everybody, and particularly so to ladies; and this is the first time in all my life that I have ever been charged or accused of showing the slightest disrespect to any lady, and I am satisfied that my friends do not believe that I was disrespectful on this occasion. My enemies, of course, will say they believe it, even if they don't, and the liars who are editing the newspapers of South Carolina will endeavor to use it to injure me, because they will go to any depth in the filthy bog holes of vituperation and abuse to do me harm. However, the people know me and I am governor; the pimps and skunks who use the pens for newspapers to the contrary notwithstanding, and I'll be reelected in spite of their lies. Watch me."

How They Received the News.

Anderson, Aug. 10.—J. H. Merritt, superintendent of the Pelzer Manufacturing company's mills, Nos. 1, 2 and 3, at Pelzer, said over the telephone to-night that he received the following letter from Gov. Blease this afternoon:

"Some time since you were commissioned a notary public by me under the constitution and laws and during the pleasure of the governor. Your commission is hereby revoked and any further act on your part as such an officer will be illegal and in violation of the law. I have furnished a copy of this letter to the secretary of state and have notified the clerk of court to cancel your commission."

Had Nothing to Do With It.

Mr. Merritt said that he had nothing whatever to do with the incident at Belton, that he was not in Belton at the time. His connection was merely taking the affidavit of J. M. Alexander, who was present. Mr. Merritt said Mr. Alexander came to him voluntarily and asked that he swear him and accept the affidavit and that he complied with the wish and that the affidavit was forwarded to the Belton Times.

J. M. Alexander, who is superintendent of mill No. 4 of the same company at Pelzer, said over the phone to-night that he was present at the time Gov. Blease purchased his ticket from the lady at Belton; that he voluntarily went to Mr. Merritt and asked him to swear him and take the oath and that Mr. Merritt

complied. As to any statement further he had nothing to say other than that he would bow to the will of the governor. He has not received his letter of dismissal yet.

"Politics Not a Woman's Game."

Hunnell, Kans., Aug. 8.—"Politics is not a woman's game."

This is the decision of Mrs. Ella Wilson, mayor of this town, who since her inauguration has had a continuous fight with the male city council. They have not confirmed her appointees for city marshal or city clerk and she has not signed any of the ordinances they passed.

Mrs. Wilson to-day, for the first time, admitted she would quit if she could, saying politics is not the place for a woman, but at the same time she turned on the members of the city council and forced the members to listen to her. She will not quit unless forced to do so, she says.

During the last week Mrs. Wilson has conferred with Gov. Stubbs and he told her, she said, that if to-night's meeting of the city council was not satisfactory he would aid her in having members of the council ousted. On the other hand the element which is fighting Mrs. Mayor Wilson is talking of bringing proceedings to force her out of the office.

Farmers Getting Less.

Washington, Aug. 10.—The problem of the high cost of living apparently is being solved, at least so far as farm products are concerned, for the farmers are getting lower prices for their produce this year than they received a year ago, according to official figures issued to-day by the department of agriculture. Potatoes were the notable exception, their price having more than doubled. The department's statement says:

"Prices paid to farmers in the United States on August 1, compared with August 1, last year, for potatoes average 109.6 per cent. higher, hay 29.9 per cent. higher, barley 26.7 per cent. higher, buckwheat 1.6 per cent. higher, rye 1.5 per cent. higher, corn 2.1 per cent. lower, oats 3.6 per cent. lower; flax seed 5 per cent. lower; cotton 7.7 per cent. lower, chickens 8.2 per cent. lower, butter 8.8 per cent. lower, eggs 11.9 per cent. lower, wheat 16.4 per cent. lower; average for all produce above named 2.9 per cent. lower.

"Similarly prices on July 15, 1911, compared with same date last year for sweet potatoes averaged 40.7 per cent. higher, clover seed 29.7 per cent. higher, cabbages 29.1 per cent. higher, apples 23.4 per cent. higher, onions 16.2 per cent. higher, honey 4.6 per cent. higher, milk cows 0.9 per cent. higher, milk cows 1.9 per cent. higher, beans 4.7 per cent. lower, horses 6.1 per cent. lower, veal calves 9.5 per cent. lower, beef cattle 11.6 per cent. lower, lamb 19.2 per cent. lower, sheep 23.4 per cent. lower, and hogs 27.4 per cent. lower. wool 18.9 per cent. lower. Average of above products 10.8 per cent. lower."

True Reformers Indicted.

Richmond, Va., Aug. 9.—The grand jury to-day indicted the "big five" general officers of the Grand Fountain of the Order of True Reformers, the negro fraternal order, for alleged complicity in the looting and wrecking of the True Reformers' bank.

The officers indicted are: W. L. Taylor, grand master; Edward L. Ellis, Jr., vice grand master; W. P. Burrell, grand secretary; J. C. Robertson, general attorney, and Reuben T. Hill, cashier of the True Reformers' bank, who is now a fugitive under indictment for grand larceny of indefinite sums. The grand jury estimates the amount of shortage at \$290,000. The membership of the order of True Reformers is spread over 28 different States.

All of the indicted men except Hill, the fugitive from justice, were bailed this afternoon in the sum of \$3,000 each for their appearance for trial.

No Bonds for Court House.

Greenville, Aug. 8.—The proposition to issue \$100,000 bonds for the erection of a new court house for Greenville county was defeated at the polls by a vote of three to two.

Less than 1,500 votes were cast out of a normal of 6,000.

Agitation will start at once for an increased tax levy to erect a new building.

The old court house on Main street will probably be sold to augment funds raised by taxation.

LAWYERS ARE A MENACE.

Perkins Urges Change in Anti-trust Statutes.

Washington, Aug. 10.—George W. Perkins, financier and director of the United States Steel corporation, made some striking recommendations today with reference to the government's control of corporations. A witness before the house "steel trust" investigating committee, he declared that existing laws were seriously threatening big business interests and their rigid enforcement was rendering it impossible for corporations to continue operations in conformity with the statutes.

Mr. Perkins touched on needed reform in the laws, discussed the existing condition of corporations and pointed out changes that should be made by congress in the financial system of the country. Some of his observations follow:

Trusts Can't Exist.

That great corporations, grown up under demands of existing conditions, could no longer successfully exist under the Sherman anti-trust law as now rigidly enforced.

That the government's dissolution of the Standard Oil company served as a waving of a "red flag" of warning to every corporation in the United States.

That something of a constructive nature must be done by the government with reference to the control of corporations and rather than for present conditions to continue it would be better to go to the limit of permitting government regulation of prices.

That the very reason subsidiary companies of a great corporation can violate the law without knowledge of the officers of the holding company is the law which prevents such a corporation from operating and ruling the subsidiary concerns instead of merely advising them.

Prevent Concentration.

That one great stride toward averting financial panics in New York could be made if the government would prevent banks in Chicago and the Middle West loaning money on call in New York during the summer at cheap rates and suddenly calling it back in the fall for the crop movement, making high money and trouble in the New York market.

That the establishment of a government bureau which could give accurate information to the public as to the condition of corporations would be an active inducement to the people to make wise investments.

That one of the most striking developments of the present system of conducting business on a large scale is the dividing of great interests into the hands of many investors rather than concentrating them in the hands of a few.

Mr. Perkins will take the stand again to-morrow.

Too Much Alarm.

Mr. Perkins also said there was too much alarm over the cry of an ore monopoly in the country. The witness denounced as an "infamous falsehood" the charge that the panic of 1907 was precipitated for the purpose of ruining certain bankers.

One of the questions of wages the witness declared it always had been the policy of the steel corporation to maintain wages. He related how in 1909 he and Judge Gary, with the acquiescence of J. P. Morgan and H. C. Frick, had refused to cut wages when William E. Cory, then president, and other directors urged a cut because competitors had slashed prices and reduced wages.

"Did the United States Steel corporation ever trade in its stock?" asked Representative Beall of Texas. "Not in the sense of speculation," said Mr. Perkins. "It has purchased stock for the purpose of its profit sharing plan, and it has purchased bonds for sinking fund purposes. The corporation has scrupulously avoided anything resembling speculation in its securities."

In discussing the organization of the steel corporation Mr. Perkins said that it had more than 200,000 stockholders and that more than 35,000 employees were interested as stockholders under the company's profit sharing plan.

Suit for Large Amount.

The Charleston Union Station company has been notified that suit will be brought for about \$10,000 for taxes due the State under the corporation franchise tax law. When the law went into effect in 1905 severe penalties were attached for failure to comply with the requirements. Had the penalties been strictly enforced in this particular case the sum would have amounted to several hundred thousand dollars. However the company claims that it is not operated for profit and has protested on payment of the tax. At a meeting of the railroad board of assessors it was decided to request the attorney general to bring suit, certain deductions being made. The papers will be filed in a few days.

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FIRE AT ST. GEORGE.

Residence of Col. Utsey and Grain Establishment Destroyed.

St. George, Aug. 10.—St. George was visited by a disastrous fire about 12 o'clock last night when the two-story building on Main street, occupied by Col. W. B. Utsey and the hay and grain establishment of S. L. Johnston, were completely destroyed. What caused the fire is not known but it originated in the residence of Col. Utsey. Col. Utsey's family is out of town and he has not been staying there during their absence. The loss will approximate several thousand dollars. It is only partially covered by insurance.

The building occupied by Col. Utsey was one of the historic landmarks of St. George. It was known as the temperance hall, having been built by the Sons of Temperance more than half a century ago. The heirs of James George, from whom the property was purchased and for whom the town of St. George was named, began a suit for the recovery of the property because of some stipulation in the deed of conveyance which had not been complied with and the matter is now in the supreme court.

Down With the Notaries!

In ancient times when a messenger brought ill tidings, the king caused his head to be cut off. It was a sure way of preventing that messenger from bringing ill tidings again. So, in this day with a notary public, an officer before whom an affidavit may be sworn to. Upon reading this morning of the terrible fate that has overtaken Messrs. Alexander, Merritt, and Horton, it will occur to thousands that were all the notaries public, justices of the peace, and magistrates, removed, abolished, disrupted, smashed, dissolved, and their miserable dust scattered to the four winds, there could be no more affidavits discrediting the governor. What a fine thing that would be! The reputation of the chief executive would be unassailable. The confusion of his "enemies" would be complete. What men and women had to say against him would be idle gossip—no one could swear against him and so he would be secure.

The removal of the Belton notaries was easily the most brilliant stroke of state policy that has ever been executed in South Carolina. Obviously, the abolishing of the notary destroys the oath that was made before him—cancels it, wipes it off the slate. As in other acts betokening genius, its beauty was in its simplicity. It will have place with Alexander's cutting of the Gordian Knot and with Columbus's standing the egg on end. Any governor can do it, if he knows how.

Nevertheless, governors, plainly, will not be safe, until the whole notarial breed be exterminated, root and branch. So long as an official, authorized to attest oaths, remains some evil-minded enemy of a governor may be inclined to swear. Governors will be universally upheld in resorting to this direct and certain method of protecting themselves against the makers of affidavits. Abas, the notary!—Columbia State.

Insult Cost Nugent Dear.

Asbury Park, Aug. 10.—Fourteen members of the Democratic State committee—the exact number necessary for a quorum—voted this afternoon to declare vacant the chairmanship of the organization occupied by James R. Nugent, who was recently asked to resign because of alleged reference to Gov. Wilson as "an ingrate" and other opprobrious terms. The meeting of the Democratic State committee called to investigate the alleged insult placed on Gov. Wilson by State Chairman James R. Nugent, broke up in a riot this afternoon when Mr. Nugent refused to recognize the credentials of one of the committeemen and the latter was ejected after a desperate struggle.

The police were called out to quiet the disturbance. The trouble began when Chairman Nugent, who presided, refused to recognize the credentials of James C. Kraft, who declared he held a proxy from William F. Davis, of Camden. Several men, whom his opponents asserted were a "strong arm gang," brought by Nugent from Essex county, finally ejected Kraft, but not until after he had made a desperate resistance and fought them all over the room.

When the police arrived the excitement had subsided and both Kraft and the men who had hustled him out had disappeared. The riot caused an adjournment of the meeting.

Falls Dead in Court Room.

Wilmington, N. C., Aug. 10.—F. R. Cooper, aged 59, counsel for the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad company at Clinton, N. C., died suddenly in the superior court room there early to-day as he was about to call a case for trial. He was seen to lean forward at a table soon after court convened and a fellow attorney shook him to find that he had expired suddenly.

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