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## Letter from Mr. Chamberlain.

### To the Public:

It is now nearly two years since I ceased to be a State officer. During this interval I have closely followed my profession, taking no part whatever in public or political affairs, and seeking no return to official position. No man living has ever heard me, directly or indirectly, solicit office; nor can a single act of mine during the last two years be pointed out which could reasonably indicate that I sought any office in this State. Notwithstanding my constant and studious avoidance of politics, many friends have, from time to time, expressed their desire that I should be a candidate for the office of Governor. Within the last few months a large number of prominent gentlemen of the Republican party have urged that candidacy upon me as a matter of grave and urgent duty which I owe to the State as well as to my political party. I have laid before them my reasons for not wishing to share in political affairs at the present time, and have earnestly endeavored to show them that others could serve the public better than I in the office of Governor.

Their judgement has apparently remained unchanged, and I have, up to the present time, simply maintained this position: that if the Republican party should, when duly assembled in State Convention, tender me its nomination for Governor, I should not decline it.

In that sense, and to that extent only, I am a candidate now. I have not sought or desired the office. It is a burden from which I shrink, and which I shall take up only at the unsolicited call of the best men of my party as expressed in the coming State Convention.

Such being my unvarying attitude towards this question, I have, as I think reasonably, felt no solicitude to repel adverse criticisms, or to deny or disprove charges made against me for the purpose of defeating my nomination. I have now lived in this State for nine years, and for the last six years this community has had full opportunity to note my personal character and to estimate my worth as a man and a citizen. I am one of those who still believe, amidst the fiercest storm of detraction, that an honorable and correct personal life is the best answer to all such charges as are now hurled at me. Of this I have constant and touching evidence in the numberless assurances which come to me from those who are in strenuous political opposition to me, that the charges now made against me and the attempt to drag me down to the level of others whom I might name, are regarded by all who know me as a temporary expedient to accomplish a political end. Personally, I am wholly indifferent to the charges recently made against me. Those who care to examine them will find them to be baseless, and those who do not care to examine them are not objects of anxiety to me. I am sufficiently an egotist to firmly believe that no man who knows me believes that I am, in public or private affairs, a dishonest man.

I have yielded to the wishes of my friends in this case, however, to the extent of now setting forth, briefly and emphatically, my answer to the charges which have recently been put forth against me as a candidate.

The charges, so far as they have taken an answerable shape, concern my actions as a member of various public boards or commissions from 1868 to 1872. During that period I was, *ex officio*, a member of the financial board, of the board known as the commissioners of the sinking fund, of the advisory board of the land commission, and of the board to take charge of the congressional land scrip for an agricultural college.

In connection with the first named board, one of the charges most constantly repeated is, that I was specially responsible for the appointment of Mr. Kimpton as the financial agent of the State in New York. Beyond the single fact that Mr. Kimpton was a college classmate of mine, there is not the slightest ground for such a statement. Mr. Kimpton came to this State without my knowledge, and without any

reference to me or any employment by the State. I had not seen him nor communicated with him since leaving college. He brought his own recommendations, made his own impressions, and was never urged by me upon the other members of the board. Acting upon what I regarded as good evidence of his capacity and character, I voted for him, in common with the other members of the board, and that is the full extent of my responsibility for his appointment. That the financial board acted reasonably in this matter can now be shown by numerous commendations of Mr. Kimpton's management during the first three years of his agency, by the highest financial authorities in New York, as well as by the very great success which he certainly achieved in many respects during those years. I am not called upon, in this connection, to defend the entire transactions of the financial agent, but I do affirm that the financial board were warranted, by good and sufficient evidence, in the appointment of Mr. Kimpton, and that I had no larger share of influence in his appointment than each of the other members of that board.

Another charge made against me is, that as a member of the financial board, and as Attorney General, I am specially responsible for the issue of what are known as the "conversion" bonds. This charge seems to rest chiefly on the fact that I was a member of that board, and it is, therefore, needful to refer to the constitution and powers of that board.

The financial board were never charged with any duty in connection with the issue of bonds of any kind.

By the act of the General Assembly to issue bonds to redeem the "bills receivable," the Governor was authorized to borrow a certain sum of money. The bonds were to be signed by the Governor and countersigned by the Treasurer, and sealed with the seal of the State. The only duty placed by this act upon the Attorney-General was to fix, together with the Governor and Treasurer, the price at which the bonds should be sold, and the time for the redemption of the "bills receivable." Every bond issued under this act was signed by the Governor and the Treasurer, and sealed by the Secretary of State, and the Attorney-General had no part or duty in the issue or execution of a single bond.

The same is true of the bonds issued under the act to authorize a loan to pay interest on the public debt. By this act the sole duty of the financial board in connection with the bonds was to fix the price at which they should be sold.

The next act which authorized the issue of bonds was the "Act for the relief of the treasury." Under this act the sole duty of the Attorney-General was in conjunction with the Governor, Comptroller-General and Treasurer, to give directions for the use of the bonds issued under this act as collateral security, and to fix the price at which they should be sold.

The "Act for the conversion of State securities" imposed no duty on the Attorney-General, who was charged with the work of conversion, and the Governor, who was to sign and the Treasurer to countersign the conversion bonds.

The four acts now specified are all the acts under which it is pretended that the financial board had any powers, or has exercised any functions.

The Attorney-General had no duty or power in the issuing of bonds; neither had the financial board.

But it has been said that I gave an opinion, as Attorney-General, to Mr. Cardozo, then Secretary of State, in which I claimed authority for the financial board to issue bonds without limit. As this alleged opinion has recently been made the ground for fixing upon me the "sole responsibility for the issue" of the conversion bonds, it is necessary for me to state precisely what that opinion contained.

Mr. Cardozo applied to me to know whether his action in sealing bonds was merely ministerial or not, and whether by sealing bonds he incurred any legal responsibility for the use made of such bonds by the Treasurer or the financial agent. To those inquiries I replied that I thought his duty in the matter of sealing bonds was merely ministerial,

and that he was not in any way responsible for the issue of bonds to the financial agent, or the use he might make of them. In that opinion I asserted no authority in the financial board to issue bonds at all, nor did I say a word which could be construed into a claim, as has been recently charged, that it was Mr. Cardozo's "duty to seal as many bonds as the Treasurer, instructed by the financial board, requested."

I can further say that I believe from all the knowledge which I possess that the action of the other members of the financial board, both as members of that board and as individual State officers, in connection with the bonds of the State, was dictated by honest motives, and was intended to avoid the very results which finally took place.

Another charge is that, as a member of the financial board, I joined in directing the financial agent to make fictitious entries in his books so as to disguise the affairs of the agency. I take it upon myself to say that the financial board never gave such instructions, nor any instructions which were intended to deceive or mislead the public in regard to the affairs of the agency. So far as I am aware, the books of the financial agent have at all times been truly and faithfully kept. If they were not, it did not arise from any instructions to which I was a party, or of which I had any knowledge.

In connection with the sinking fund board, it has been charged that I was a party to a fraudulent sale of the State stock in the Greenville and Columbia Railroad Company. This charge I deny in every particular. In the first place, there was no fraudulent sale of that stock, so far as my knowledge or belief extends. The sale was made at a price fully equal to the value of the stock at that time, and was made to a party wholly without connection with me, or so far as I know, with any member of the sinking fund board. The statement, by whomsoever made, that I joined in a sale of that stock to any person who acted for me, or under any arrangement or agreement with me, tacit or expressed, that I was to have any interest in the stock when purchased by him, is wholly false, and utterly incapable of being sustained by any evidence.

Another charge is that I engaged in a disastrous sale of the State in a Blue Ridge Railroad Company. The truth is that I was not present when the sale was made, and never in any manner took part in it. My views as to the proper terms and conditions of a sale of that stock were laid before the board in writing but they were not adopted by the board.

The purchases of bonds made by order of the sinking fund board were made in good faith, and the funds in the hands of the board were applied in payment of such purchases. It is true, I think, that the second purchase of \$100,000 of State bonds was ordered before the funds were in the hands of the board; but this was done in the expectation, on the part of the board, that sufficient funds would come into the hands of the board to pay for the purchases as rapidly as payment should be necessary. This may have been an imprudent act, but it certainly has no element of dishonesty or fraud in it.

To all other statements which impute to me any improper action in connection with this board, I give an unqualified denial. I was never a party to any one given for purchases made from this board; I never received a fee for any service done in connection with this board or as a member of it; and I have never been a party to any disposition of the proceeds of sales, either in money or bonds, made by this board, which was not strictly in accordance with law. If any illegal disposition has been made of any property in the hands of this board, it was not done with my consent, as the present Attorney-General, who was directed to institute legal proceedings to recover property illegally disposed of by the sinking fund commissioners can testify.

I am charged with responsibility for the losses arising to the State from the transactions of the land commission. Upon this point I frankly say that I have always regretted exceedingly the action which I was led to take, in some

instances, as a member of the advisory board of that commission, but I deny that in any instance I acted carelessly or dishonestly. I was as a member of that board, charged with the duty of consenting to the purchases of land recommended by the land commissioner. Of course, I could have no personal knowledge of the lands. I never in a single instance had any personal knowledge of any tract of land purchased for the State. I acted from the necessity of the case solely upon the information and representations of others. Subsequently I learned that some of the lands purchased were not worth the price paid, but no member of that board can be charged with dereliction of duty on that account, unless it can be shown that he had some knowledge or had some reason to believe or suspect, that the information presented to him was incorrect, or that the purchases were improper or undesirable at the time they were made. In the case, for instance, of the Schley purchases, so called, the board was informed by persons who were certainly competent to judge, and who were directed by the board to make inquiries concerning those lands, that those lands were desirable. In that case I acted upon evidence which I was as well warranted in trusting as any evidence for any other purchase.

If there be a man anywhere who can say that I ever had any personal connection of any sort with any purchase made by this board, or that I communicated or acted with any party to any sale, or with a view to promote such sale, or that I was ever remotely interested in any sale of land to this board, let him be named. Once for all, I say there is no shadow of foundation for such charges or insinuations. No man can prove them, and no man will undertake to prove them.

Of the charges made against me in connection with the board appointed to take charge of the agricultural land scrip, little need be said. Every act of that board was in strict accordance with law. The sale of the scrip was made at a full and fair price, and after careful consideration and inquiry by the board. The proceeds were immediately invested in State bonds as directed by law. Subsequently, those bonds while in the hands of the agent of the board, were pledged for State loans, and are still held in New York as collateral security for about \$57,000 lent to the State. Of the legality of this use of these bonds it is not now necessary to speak. They were pledged by the agent under a claim of authority conferred by an act of the General Assembly. The board were not consulted in this matter, and never in any way consented to the pledging of these bonds.

The thousand other idle tales born of the personal and political malice and mendacity with which this community is so remarkably afflicted—such as my reported partnership with Mr. Kimpton my present or past pecuniary interest in various schemes which were intended to draw money from the treasury, and the pecuniary benefit derived by me from my connection with the State government—do not deserve even a denial. They are, each and all, false in every particular and every sense. Not only have I not received pecuniary profit from any transaction in which I have had an official duty to perform and not only have I never been interested in any scheme which was hostile to public interests, but I can say, with honest pride, that no man ever yet in South Carolina approached me with a bribe in any form, or solicited my official or personal consent or cooperation in any dishonest measure or action. Such a degree of respect has at least been shown me. While denouncing me in public as a corrupt official, my defamers have never ventured to solicit me which they would now covet; the public I have been swift to extend to all corrupt and fraudulent measures. The little property which I now possess I have acquired neither by corruption nor speculation; but I have earned it by honest and honorable labor, and I defy the world to produce evidence sufficient to excite a shadow of a presumption to the contrary. I acknowledge mistakes and I regret the consequences of some acts in my official career. I desire to see those consequences repaired; and I

desire it all the more because they have resulted in part from my acts; but to every specific and every general charge involving moral delinquency or conscious wrong in my official action in this State, I give my absolute and solemn denial.

D. H. CHAMBERLAIN.  
Columbia, August 19, 1874.

## A New and Wonderful Kind of Cotton.

Gustave Adolphus, a correspondent of the *Chronicle and Sentinel*, who has been ruminating down in Southern Georgia and a few miles beyond the Florida line, tells a wonderful story about a new kind of cotton, which he thinks is destined to put all others to flight and revolutionize the entire cotton culture.

I rode several miles over the line, to see a new specimen of cotton, and I assure you of my astonishment when I predict an entire revolution in the present growth of that article, growing out of this Asiatic species, now being raised upon a small scale by Mr. Hyack Bellminger, at Soap Floating Springs, six miles from the Georgia line. Two years since, Mr. Hyack received in a letter from his brother-in-law, Mr. Michael Grigie six seed. They were obtained in the far famed Cashmere Valley, in Central Asia; two years since—this being the third year of cultivation, resulting in ten acres the present season. I at once suggested a name, which was prompted by its similarity to our orange tree, and the owner, Mr. Hyack Bellminger, being pleased with the same, it will hereafter be known as the Asiatic orange cotton. This cotton tree, having now its full growth, is about eight feet high, and will about match its size at the butt end with the leg of an old-fashioned split-bottom chair, tapering gradually to the top, and is of very enormous strength and elasticity, and which enables it to sustain the heavy weight of fruitage to which it is subjected. It is planted in hills, fifteen feet equidistant, to give room for its spreading branches, which run out on all sides six or seven feet. The leaf is the only feature closely resembling our common plant. I must reserve, however, for another letter, much that I desire to say, and speak only of the grown bolls. They resemble very much in size and color a large green orange, only much larger, and are attached to the limbs by a strong stem, from one to two inches in length. When open, it contains at the base of the boll, in small cells, four or five seed; which might be mistaken for small buckshot. The lint, in picking, leaves the seed in the bar, which, of course, avoids the necessity of ginning, and is thrown, as picked, into packing machines, so that each day's gathering is compressed into bales the same evening. When within 100 or 200 yards of this field, I asked Mr. M., for a shot gun to kill one or two white cranes, as it seemed to me there was an uncommon number of them perched about on small trees. "You will not have any use for a gun," he replied. "What you see is the few open bolls of cotton, and you are not alone in supposing them to be our beautiful coast birds; and, sure enough, nearer observation proved him correct. The cotton hung pendant from the boll, three to four inches in rolls, as large as a full-grown Bologna sausage, five rolls to the boll. I looked in amazement, and could scarcely believe in the reality of what I saw.

I asked how much cotton will these ten acres produce. I was answered promptly, 100 bales, or a bale to each row of fourteen stalks. This, he continued, was the average production last year. I continued by desiring to know how much to the hand could be picked in one day, and was informed for grown men 450 pounds of lint, (there being no seed,) or one bale, was regarded an easy daily task. Now, gentlemen, if what I have said is true, are we not rapidly approaching a new epoch in cotton culture? Five years will suffice to spread universally over the cotton area of the South this wonderfully productive species, and if it should prove lasting and not subject (as many now kinds have proven) to deterioration, it would not be unreasonable to estimate the American

crop of 1880 at 12,000,000 bales which could be more easily raised and saved than a crop of 3,000,000 at the present time. What mighty changes will necessarily follow, I leave for solution to more fertile imaginations than my own. One thing is certain—the poor will rejoice over all the earth, when a full suit of cotton clothes can be had at fifty cents.

## Reported Earthquake in New York State.

The Hudson Star relates the following which is certainly remarkable if true:

"Residents in the vicinity of Goodrich Hollow, Columbia County, have been startled since Monday by a quaking of the earth at intervals. The water in a brook near by has doubled its flow, and the temperature has been increased to 118 degrees. A man living on the east end of the hollow says that he had discovered the same sudden rise in the stream as it rushed down the side of the mountain, and had also observed that it was smoking hot. This stream is the outlet of a natural lake of about twenty five acres extent, situated on the very top of the mountain east of the hollow. The lake is in the town of Hancock, Berkshire County, Mass., and is about three miles distant from Ledanon Springs, and has always been considered a natural curiosity by visitors. It is nearly circular and very deep. Many persons have taken lines there and made attempts to reach the bottom, but without success. Being upon the highest point of the mountain, without any visible brook or stream to feed it, the wonder has been from what source a supply of water has been constantly furnished to keep this lake always overflowing without any visible inlet. A gentleman who visited the locality several years ago, and had been a great traveler in foreign lands, gave it as his opinion that the lake was now occupying the crater of an extinct volcano.

A party of ten on arriving at the lake, found the surroundings almost concealed by a thick mist arising from the surface of the water, and on approaching the shore were wrapped in steam, which on first entering was oppressively hot; but they in a short time accustomed themselves to the surroundings. Mr. Otlander ventured down the bank to the surface of the lake, and for a moment placed his hand into the water, but finding it almost in a boiling condition, he quickly withdrew it. The explorers, therefore, retired a short distance and seated themselves with a determination to see if some change would follow. They had remained about an hour here, when it was discovered that the body of water flowing from the outlet of the lake was evidently diminishing, and shortly afterwards the water and the mist disappeared leaving there was a short time before the surface of the lake, nothing but an immense cavern of unfathomable depth.

"In the space of fifteen minutes after, the party felt a shock beneath them, and all were startled by a trembling of the earth beneath their feet. The shock was followed by a dense column of steam and directly afterwards the rushing jin and filling of the chasm with boiling water. The party remained upon the mountain several hours and saw several ebbs and flows of this remarkable valley below. All the fish in the lake have been killed, and the timber in the vicinity injured."

MAKING A FOOL OF HIMSELF.—There was an old couple at the Central depot yesterday, waiting to go to the West, and they seemed loving enough until he went out and returned smoking a five cent cigar and with his hat slanting over his left ear. The wife looked at him twice before she could recognize him and then opened her mouth and said; "What'd I tell you, Philetus Remington, before we left New Jersey? Didn't I say you'd go and make a fool of yourself the first chance you got?" He tried to pacify her by saying that the cigar only cost five cents, but she shouted: "You teased and teased until I let you git your boots blacked; and then you waited some soda water; and then you bought some apples on the train; and here's another five cents thrown away! It all counts up, and if you don't die in the poor house, then my name hain't Sary!"—*Detroit Free Press.*