

GIVES HIS PROOFS.

Hon. T. E. Watson Makes Reply to Hon. Grover Cleveland.

MAKES OUT A VERY CLEAR CASE.

Says He Made His Charges on Statements Made in a Book Written by Fred Douglass Nine Years Ago.

Representative Bartlett, of Georgia, has received the following letter from Grover Cleveland, blistering Thomas E. Watson for his charges concerning Cleveland's attitude on the negro question:

PRINCETON, March 4, 1904.

To Hon. Chas. L. Bartlett, Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bartlett—I have received a number of inquiries similar to yours touching my invitation of Fred Douglas to a wedding reception and signing, while governor of New York, of a bill providing for mixed schools. I do not suppose that Mr. Thomas E. Watson believed, or had any reason to believe, either of the allegations when he made them. At any rate, they are both utterly and absolutely false. I cannot afford to devote a great deal of time to denying such foolish tales. I shall, therefore, attempt to cover every phase of the subject now for all. It so happens that I have never in my official positions, either when sleeping or waking, alive or dead, on my head or on my heels, dined, lunched or supped or invited to a wedding reception any colored man, woman or child. If, however, I had desired to do any of these things, neither the fear of Mr. Watson or any one else would have prevented me. When I was governor of New York a movement was made in the legislature to abolish separate colored schools in New York city. I opposed this measure and it failed. I do not find that I interposed a veto and I have forgotten the course the matter took, but I know that whatever I did was in favor of maintaining separate colored schools instead of having them mixed.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) GROVER CLEVELAND.

WATSON IN REPLY.

The following letter from Hon. Thos. E. Watson in reply to the above is hot stuff and will be read with interest:

THOMSON, Ga., April 5.

To the Editor of the Augusta Chronicle.

Sir: In your issue of yesterday you publish a letter written by Mr. Cleveland to my friend Hon. Charles Bartlett.

This letter is dated March 4th. Just why it was kept from the press for an entire month, is not stated.

Mr. Cleveland says that he does not suppose that I believed, or had any reason to believe, that my charges were true when they were made.

The intimation that I would willingly charge upon him things which I knew to be false, does both himself and me an injustice.

To publicly make against a man so prominent as Mr. Cleveland serious accusations which were known to be untrue, could only be the act of a knave who was at the same time a fool. A slanderer who is simply a knave may whisper falsehoods which he knows to be falsehoods; but such slanders are never published over the signature of the man who makes them, unless the author is a fool as well as a knave.

When Grover Cleveland assumes that I am either a knave or a fool he will find no respectable man who knows me to agree with him. The gentleman to whom he addressed his letter would tell him quickly enough that any such construction put upon my act, or any such imputation cast upon my character, would be repudiated by both the Democratic senators from Georgia, and by at least a majority of the Democratic delegation from this state to the lower house. People of the state in which my life has been passed do not endorse my politics, but they do not doubt the honesty of my convictions nor the purity of my character; and Mr. Cleveland will not strengthen himself in this state by reflecting upon either.

Now let us see what Mr. Cleveland's letter amounts to, as a reply to my charges.

I beg to remind your readers that the issue arose out of the controversy which raged around the Booker Washington incident.

A Republican member of congress, to offset Mr. Roosevelt's treatment of Booker, had alleged that Mr. Cleveland dined C. H. J. Taylor at the white house. Mr. Cleveland denied the statement; and his card, when published, was headlined in such a way as to carry the impression that he had never practiced social equality at the white house.

In an article which was published in the Atlanta News, I pointed out that Mr. Cleveland had confined his denial to the negro Taylor, and that the head lines went further than the letter—as is often the case.

Furthermore, I added that Mr. Cleveland had practiced social equality in three particulars:

- 1. In appointing a negro to be minister to one of the South American republics.
- 2. By signing the bill for mixed schools in New York.
- 3. By inviting Fred Douglass and wife to his wedding reception at the white house.

Upon what grounds were these charges made?

Necessarily, they were based upon current and contemporaneous newspaper reports which were not contradicted. How else is a citizen to have knowledge of public affairs? The newspapers are the source of our information; and if a public man allows the newspapers to make general and repeated statements about his conduct, he must expect such statements to be credited, unless denied.

How do I know that Mr. Roosevelt dined Booker Washington? I was not there. I did not see it. I have not spoken to any one who did see it. But the newspapers made the charge, and it was not denied—hence I believe it.

How do I know that Grover Cleveland made a private and almost secret sale of United States bonds to J. Pierpont Morgan, and by this private deal made it possible for the voracious Wall street financiers to pocket about ten million dollars of the money of the tax-payers of this republic?

I was not there; yet I know it happened, because the newspapers made such a row about it that Cleveland was afraid to sell any more bonds that way.

In like manner, I believed he signed the bill for mixed schools in New York because it was so charged in the newspapers, and he never denied it at the time.

papers, and he never denied it at the time.

As to the White House reception, I had precisely the same grounds for belief that the public had in the case of Booker Washington. It was so charged; and no denial was made.

It has not only been charged in newspapers, but appeared in book form.

The book to which I refer is "The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass." The author was Douglass himself. In this book Douglass glorifies Mr. Cleveland for the reason that Cleveland had treated him and "Mrs. Douglass" as social equals.

This book was published in 1895 near where Mr. Cleveland lives, and nobody has challenged its statements so far as I know.

Douglass was an ardent admirer of Mr. Cleveland. The Democratic president had, for a considerable time, allowed the Republican negro to continue to hold one of the fattest offices in Washington City. But it was not for this that Douglass loved Cleveland.

"What won the heart of the negro was the fact that at a critical time when both whites and blacks were condemning Douglass for his marriage with a white woman, Mr. Cleveland was brave enough to defy public opinion and to extend social recognition to the negro and his white wife.

Some extracts from the Douglass book were published last Saturday in the Atlanta News, but as Mr. Cleveland's letter was written a month ago, it becomes necessary for me to go over the same ground a second time.

Douglass says that his "false friends" both colors were leading him with "approaches because he had recently married a white woman."

"Popular prejudice" among the blacks as well as the whites had been aroused by this act of miscegenation. But Fred says that Mr. Cleveland, in spite of all the clamor about the white wife, singled him out for special attentions.

What these attentions were he proceeds to state.

He says that Mr. Cleveland never failed to invite him and his wife to all of the grand receptions; and Douglass says that "myself and my wife never failed to attend them."

At these receptions Douglass states that Mr. Cleveland invited to himself and "Mrs. Douglass" a bearing "not less cordial and courteous than that extended to the other ladies and gentlemen present."

Douglass call this conduct of Mr. Cleveland a "manly defiance by a Democratic president of the malignant and time-honored prejudice."

What was the malignant prejudice which Mr. Cleveland was defying in so manly a manner?

Obviously, undoubtedly, Douglass meant to give Mr. Cleveland praise for his "popular prejudice or the subject of social equality. What else was Cleveland's "manly defiance" aimed at?

Again, to show more clearly how Douglass understood the true meaning of Mr. Cleveland's conduct, the negro goes on to say that the cordial and courteous treatment accorded him and "Mrs. Douglass" by Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland was extended while he was "surrounded by distinguished men and women from all parts of the country, and by diplomatic representatives from every part of the world, and under the gaze of the late slaveholders."

Now, if there ever was anything clear in a book it is clear that in this book Fred Douglass meant to give Mr. Cleveland credit and praise for defying malignant prejudice on the social equality question, and for treating himself and "Mrs. Douglass" as social equals in the presence of the representatives of the white race throughout the world.

What made this "manly defiance of malignant prejudice" the more exultingly gratifying to the negro was that it was done "under the gaze of the late slave-owners." In other words, Fred says, in effect, that Southern ladies and gentlemen were present and were compelled to witness in silence the social triumph of himself and "Mrs. Douglass."

Oh, how full the cup of Fred's joy must have been! And what a sliver of gleam of victorious insolence there must have been in the negro's eyes as he looked at the late "slave-owners" to whom Mr. Cleveland was giving his "manly defiance."

This spirit is shown in his book, and I have no doubt it was shown on his countenance in those blissful hours when he and "Mrs. Douglass" were being treated just as "the other gentlemen and ladies" were treated in the white house.

Heaping up his gratitude and his praise, the negro goes on to say (page 648) that the Democrats of the South derelictly and bitterly reproached Mr. Cleveland for his social recognition of Douglass and wife, but that he (Cleveland) "never faltered or flinched" and "continued to invite Mrs. Douglass and myself" and "often wrote the invitations with his own hand."

Then, to show conclusively what Douglass understood by Cleveland's conduct, he adds:

"Among my friends in Europe a fact like this will excite no comment. There color does not decide the civil and social position of a man."

Now I ask all impartial, intelligent men if these extracts from Douglass' book do not prove that he understood Grover Cleveland to have defied the malignant prejudice of Southern Democrats by treating him and his white wife as social equals?

If it does not mean that, what in the name of common sense does it mean?

Douglass alludes to the newspaper criticisms which were leveled at Cleveland because of that very thing. Did not Cleveland see them? If he did not, where were his eyes? If he did see them, why did he not deny them?

Douglass was alive then. Proofs were easily accessible then. The Southern negro was still a political power, then. The ballot which ought never have been promiscuously given to him, had not been taken from him, then?

Why, oh why, did not Mr. Cleveland say then that never on his head or on his heels had he extended to any negro that boon of "social equality" which such negroes as Fred Douglass crave and which is denied them by a "malignant and time-honored prejudice?"

Some rather peculiar pictures pass through my mind as I try to fancy what Mr. Cleveland means by standing on his head, but, as the preachers say, "I must not dwell."

The point is this: Did Fred Douglass tell us in Cleveland in that book, "He had no motive for doing so? He evidently did not intend to do so? He, a man who was a Republican, was praising the white Democrat for conduct which the black man considered heroic. He did not mean to injure Cleveland or to misrepresent him. He was eulogizing

LAST WEEK'S FROSTS.

Gardens Were Affected Curiously Plants Being Killed in Spots.

There was a frost of freakish variety last week. Its blight fell in spot and Mr. J. W. Bauer, section director of the weather bureau, is unable to say just what damage has been done. It all depends upon the amount of moisture. Plants surrounded by dry soil were not affected as seriously as where there was dampness.

In gardens which came under Mr. Bauer's observation the frost seemed to attack the young vegetables without any regularity. One plant appeared to be killed while those around it were unharmed. No news from the peach crop in the ridge section could be learned Tuesday, but as the frost was not altogether destructive here, it is hoped that the peach crop is not hurt—and indeed a slight pruning would not be harmful as there is such an abundance of blooms that if all should mature the trees would be unable to bear the load.

Mr. Bauer last week issued the first of his weekly bulletins as to the growing crop. This one, under date of April 5th, says:

"The week ending 8 a. m., April 4th, had nearly normal temperature, having been cooler than usual during the first and warmer than usual during the second half. There were light frosts over the eastern portions on March 29th, increasing in severity to killing, with this ice, in the western parts, but aside from causing some corn that was up to yellow slightly, no injury resulted. The week closed with abnormally cold weather prevailing, and frost threatening the interior sections."

"There was practically no precipitation during the week. On March 29, 27th the rainfall was general over the State and was excessive in places, greatly delaying farm work. Unbroken lands are becoming hard in the north and western counties, but generally the soil is in fine condition for tillage."

"The preparation of lands is reported to be somewhat backward in a few western counties, but is generally normally advanced, and made rapid progress during the last week, especially the preparation of lands for cotton, and the placing of fertilizers in the ground."

"From one-half to three-fourths of the proposed acreage to be planted to corn has already been planted in the eastern sections, the percentage decreasing toward the northwestern counties, where this work has only been begun. Corn planted early in March is, with few exceptions, up to fair stands, and some has received first cultivation."

"A little short staple and considerable sea island cotton has been planted, but this work cannot be said to be generally under way, although soil and weather permitting, will make rapid progress during the coming week in the rice of the State."

"Rice planting has progressed favorably in the Georgetown district and was impeded with heavy rains and a freshet in the rivers in the Colleton district, where, previous to March 26th, a considerable area had already been sown."

"Tobacco plants are small in the beds, but look healthy and vigorous, none have as yet been transplanted."

"Wheat and oats continue small, but have improved, except that oats have thin stands in places. Spring-sown oats look well."

"Fruit trees have about finished blooming in the eastern sections, and are now in full bloom in the western counties. Apple trees are late in blooming. The prospects for all kinds of fruit are excellent. Cabbage, beets, peas and strawberries are being shipped from the coast truck farms. Pasturage is scant and does not afford grazing in the western counties. There is widespread complaints of a scarcity of farm laborers."

Criminal Statistics.
We have received the following from the division of vital statistics of the department of commerce and labor:

"Few social questions are asked more frequently than, what is the increase of crime? The national census bureau is seeking an answer to this inquiry. It is undertaking to secure a record of all the persons who are sentenced to the various jails, penitentiaries and other prisons during the year 1904. 'The wardens of the state prisons and the sheriffs of the counties are being requested to act as special agents to report certain facts concerning every person delivered into their custody. Some counties have not been heard from. In some, perhaps, there are no jails; in others, perhaps, the local jails are no longer in use; in still others the sheriff has possibly neglected to secure a record of all the persons who are sentenced to the various jails, penitentiaries and other prisons during the year 1904. 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