

AN OPEN LETTER.

From Hon. George B. Cromer to Senator B. R. Tillman

ON THE DISPENSARY.

Mr. Cromer Appeals to Senator Tillman to Leave Out Factional Politics When he Discusses the Whiskey Question, Which He Claims Is a Moral Issue.

The Hon. George B. Cromer, former president of the Newberry College, has addressed the following open letter to Senator B. R. Tillman: The Hon. B. R. Tillman.—Dear Sir: I protest against the introduction of the tom-tom and the spirit of faction into the movement by which the merits of the dispensary are to be tested. The tom-tom is the instrument of the juggler and factionalism is the resort of the politician. The people of this State have the right to expect something higher and better from you. Your recent letter to Mr. Higgins was a calm, sane and judicial statement of your attitude on the dispensary question, but for this very reason it was distasteful in certain quarters, and you were accused of straddling. You gave that letter out as an expression of your views, and, my name having been kindly suggested by you, I was asked to answer it in the New Voice. I declined to do so for the simple reason that in this county we wish to test the dispensary question on its merits, and, therefore, desire to exclude every possible phase of "Tillmanism."

In the Higgins letter you recognized the widespread and well-founded belief that the dispensary is corrupt in its administration, and that the present agitation is an expression of popular dissatisfaction. But in your Edgefield speech you shifted your ground, and took the position that the movement is political in significance and is a covert attack upon you. In the Higgins letter you said that the remedy for the corruption rests with the Legislature; that in the last Legislature the friends and enemies of the dispensary got together and did nothing but appoint a committee; that ever since you were Governor you have given advice and made suggestions, but that your opinion has had no weight with the Legislature; and that if the next Legislature does not apply the remedy, you will help to kill the dispensary.

BY IMPLICATION. In your Edgefield speech you said that if the next Legislature does not adopt certain suggestions that you intend to make, you will help to elect a Legislature that will. And you said, by implication at least, that you will help to the Reformers for that Legislature.

Appeal from Phillip drunk to Philosopher—From the temper of the Edgefield speech to the tone of the Higgins letter. In Newberry there is no disposition to make an attack upon you under cover of a movement against the dispensary. It is not a political movement. It was begun in an effort year in order that it might be a test of a great moral question, unclouded by personal and political considerations. It is not a movement of the politicians, but a movement of the people. You have doubtless noted that the counties that were strongly "conservative" are not in the movement. I do not question your right to take part in the discussion. Independently of the fact that you are the author of the system in this State, it would be strange if you were to remain silent. By virtue of your high official position your great influence is your duty to speak—but to speak sanely and temperately as you did in the Higgins letter. You owe a great debt to the youth of this State; you owe them the best that you have to give. When the dispensary was first put on trial there may have been good reason for an appeal to a faction, but that reason no longer exists. The system has been on trial more than twelve years. It will soon be voted on by thousands of men who were only eight or nine years old when it was adopted. When you speak now, we are entitled to have you speak from the point of view of statesmanship and not of partisanship.

NO DANGER TO TILLMAN. Besides, you have too much sagacity to fear that this movement against the dispensary can endanger your political future. You occupy a large place in the history of South Carolina for the last fifteen years, and for a number of years no rival has challenged your primacy among the political leaders of the State. Ben Tillman, the Senator representing South Carolina, can well afford to discard the methods of Ben Tillman the partisan political leader. I do not mean to be offensive. You know of my appreciation of the distinguished services that you have rendered this State in a number of directions. But I earnestly protest that you have no right to bring this question before lowering it to the plane of partisan politics.

That the administration of the dispensary system is corrupt in any fool can see as he runs. But I go farther than that, even at the risk of having you charge me with cant and hypocrisy. I believe how high your purpose may be in conducting the system, in

HE DENIES IT.

Senator B. R. Tillman Replies to Dr. G. B. Cromer's Letter.

DEFINES POSITION.

Says He Has Not Done He Intend to Appeal to Factionalism, but Asserts that the Leaders Are Fighting Him While Fighting the Dispensary.

The Hon. George B. Cromer.—My Dear Sir: As your "open letter" appeared in The Sunday News and in today's State I presume you expect an answer through the same medium. I desire, in the beginning, to express my appreciation of your kindly and complimentary allusions to myself. I value them more highly because in the past you have not been my political friend. I have read your letter carefully and have endeavored to judge your arguments and weigh the points you present as sanely as may be. It is not always possible for men to agree, even though both are actuated by the highest and purest motives, and it is therefore natural that you should misunderstand me in some things and disagree with me in others. Now about the appeal to factionalism; I deny absolutely that I have made such an appeal or intend to make such an appeal, and in justification of the truthfulness of this statement let me remind you of what I said at Edgefield. To quote: "I do not wish to revive factionalism and I am sorry to have the appearance of doing so." "I am aware that many of the strongest supporters of the dispensary now are men who were and are yet probably Conservatives, while some of its most bitter antagonists are former Reformers. It, therefore, cannot be charged that I am endeavoring to draw the old lines which rent the State in twain." Again, "I want this matter settled entirely apart from my personal and political fortunes. It is a much greater question for the people of South Carolina as to how they shall wisely and best govern the sale of liquor than as to whether I or some one else represents them in the Senate. I know there are many men who will vote for me regardless of their former political affiliations and of their present attitude on this question, and it is probable that there will be many who will be aggrieved at my activity in dealing with the question."

ONLY A CASE OF SELF DEFENSE. When a public man is viciously attacked with slander and abuse and there is every indication of a purpose to press that attack in the next Democratic primary with a view to his overthrow, it seems to me it is perfectly legitimate for him to give notice of what is going on, and let all understand that he is prepared to fight. This is all I have done and so far from expecting to make a plea to the Reformers as you charge to be my purpose by "implication," I have expressly said that the old lines could not be drawn and I want the issue settled entirely apart from my personal and political fortunes.

When I wrote my letter to Mr. Higgins I merely alluded to the "true inwardness" of this movement, which I then realized was being engineered by my inveterate political enemies. You seem to be aggrieved because I have shifted position from the "sane and judicial attitude of the Higgins letter," and now take the ground that the movement is political and a covert attack upon me. Your assertion is too sweeping, my dear Doctor. The "movement" against the dispensary among the people arises from the dissatisfaction with the management and strong belief in corruption which exists, but while the people are fighting the dispensary either to purify or destroy it, the leaders are fighting me. You may not be. In fact I know you are not, and probably there are many others who have not such feeling or purpose, but look at the numerous evidences of the political purpose and significance of the movement in the minds of the leaders. One of those who attended the Prohibition Conference in Columbia declared it to be the intention to "hit the State up on edge and spill out not only the dispensary, but the existing political status." The Darlington News declared that the "dispensary was so intimately interwoven with Senator Tillman's political fortunes that the destruction of the one meant the destruction of the other."

The mass meeting held at Yorkville on the 7th of this month, under the leadership of the author of the Brice bill, discussed and abused me a great deal more than they discussed the dispensary or prohibition, and each and every speaker opened his mouth in many respects to me in the harshest and most insulting manner. Since it will not be denied that the anti-dispensary forces are an inconspicuous and in many respects anti-religious aggression, ministers of the Gospel, doctors of divinity, advocates of high license, the old bar room system in its essence—blind tigers, who want free liquor for the money they can make out of it, and yet with this army in motion, led by men with all manner of opinions and marshaling its forces for my destruction, you, my dear Doctor, tell me that I must remain

quiet, continue the same "calm, judicial, sane attitude assumed in the Higgins letter" and not let the people know what is going on.

WHAT "CHANGE OF POSITION." I stated in that letter if the Legislature did not apply the remedy for the existing evils in the dispensary management that I would help kill the dispensary. More mature thought and a better understanding of the purpose of the anti-dispensary leaders led me to give notice that if that Legislature did not apply the remedy I would appeal to the people to elect a Legislature that would.

Is there anything wrong in that? Anything immoral, or unstatesmanlike? If I had remained steadfast in that position would not all the influences that are possible be brought to bear to keep the Legislature from doing anything, especially doing things which I suggest? If the Legislature now in office could be thus influenced, coaxed and coerced to resist reformation under the specious plea that it was at my dictation and I had quietly fallen in ranks to help kill the dispensary without first appealing from the Legislature to the people, do you not see that I would have tied my own hands and surrendered at discretion to my worst enemies? I had to deal with one "drift wood" Legislature once, and I appealed to the people to reform it, which they did most effectually by retiring most of those who had proven false to their professions and pledges, to private life. The present Legislature was not elected on the dispensary issue, and is a very conservative body of men, and with so much political electricity in the atmosphere and so much thundering against the dispensary, it may well pause ere it takes any action. The disclosures at Spartanburg will undoubtedly cause it to do something, but whether it will do anything effectual or not remains to be seen.

I wish to say here and now, as though in parenthesis, the result of this fight, as far as I am personally concerned, gives me no uneasiness whatever. The office of Senator does not belong to me, but it belongs to the people and they will have the right next year to choose my successor, and I will bow to their will, whatever it may be, without a murmur. I do not believe that the fall of the dispensary necessarily means my fall. I do not see what association there is or could possibly be between the dispensary question and the position which I have taken upon it and my fitness for the high office which I hold. If my health continues good I shall ask the people to continue me in the place, not because I am the father of the dispensary, but because of my service in Washington. I am not un- easy in the least. So much for that branch of your letter.

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Following this and at the close of the speaking Mr. Blease was closed by the Rev. P. H. E. Derrick, a Lutheran preacher who charged him with insulting and impugning the Christian ministry. Mr. Derrick seemed to be very mad, when he began talking to Mr. Blease. On Mr. Blease's denial that he had made certain remarks in his speech, Rev. Mr. Derrick threateningly and bravely contradicted him, revoicing the accusation. Mr. Blease turned to walk away but before he had taken twenty steps Rev. Mr. Derrick shouted after him the words, "and if you deny it you are a liar." Mr. Blease took no notice of the words.

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Mr. Blease replied: "Yes, I said it. You look like a man who would take a bottle of beer on the sly. When we get up town we will take one together. I can generally read any man." When Blease was notified that Mr. Byrd was a minister, he apologized. Col. Blease tried to continue, but the audience yelled, "Boyd! Boyd! Boyd!" and Blease's voice was drowned when he was not half through speaking.

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FIFTY KILLED.

By Excursion Train Plunging Twenty-five Feet in River.

BRAKE DIDN'T WORK.

The Train Was from Kinston, N. C., on the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad.

A dispatch from Norfolk, Va., says that owing to the inability of Engineer D. L. Belg to control his air brakes, an excursion train from Kinston, N. C., bound to that city, plunged through an open draw in a bridge over the western branch of the Elizabeth river at Bruce station, eight miles from Norfolk, Thursday afternoon, and 50 persons, mostly negroes, were drowned.

Up to a late hour Thursday night only seven bodies had been recovered from the wreckage. The list of injured so far as can be ascertained, numbers nearly 100, though most of these are slightly hurt. A large number of physicians from Norfolk and nearby cities went to the scene. Among the victims, the only white ones were Edward Joffe, manager of the excursion, and Edward Fortson, who assisted him, both of Greenville, N. C. The Marine wrecking organization Thursday night dispatched a steamer for the purpose of raising the sunken cars, which lie in about 25 feet of water. Until the cars are raised, no accurate estimate of the number of the dead can be given.

The train was composed of an engine and six passenger cars. The engine and two cars went through the draw, leaving the four rear cars on the track. One car was completely submerged and the other partly submerged. Nothing is visible of the locomotive nor even the smokestack. It is believed every occupant of the first car perished. The dead can be gotten out only by diving under the car. The scene following the wreck was one of indescribable horror, with the shrieking of men, women and children, who were drowning, struggling out of the partly submerged coach and floating in the river.

The passengers who were uninjured immediately started to rescue those imprisoned in the cars. Norfolk and Portsmouth were communicated with and physicians were sent out on a wrecking train. Many people in the neighborhood went to the scene of the wreck and helped in the rescue. The injured were taken to the track ambulance and were attended there by the physicians. Collins Ferguson, the colored bridge tender of the Atlantic Coast Line, was knocked from the bridge by the impact and killed. Higgins Belg and Fireman Alfred O'Connor, colored, escaped by jumping. The wrecked train left Kinston, N. C., at 7 o'clock Thursday morning with 165 colored excursionists for Norfolk. It was due to arrive at Norfolk at 1 o'clock Thursday afternoon.

Following this train was another excursion train over the same road bringing 300 excursionists from Rocky Mount, N. C. Proceeding the wrecked train was still another excursion train carrying some 300 merchants and others from Augusta, Ga., Charleston, S. C., and Jacksonville, Fla., bound to Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York, for the purchase of fall goods. This first train arrived at Norfolk at 8:30 o'clock Thursday morning without accident and the Augusta, Jacksonville and Charleston merchants left for the north Thursday night by water. The Rocky Mount excursionists and the survivors of the wreck were brought to Norfolk over the Norfolk and Western.

Crushed Into Trolley. At Cincinnati, Ohio, three men were killed and ten were injured Wednesday night when a fast through express from New York to Cincinnati on the Baltimore and Ohio Southwestern crashed into a Winton Place trolley car in Winton Place suburb. All the killed lived in Winton Place. According to some witnesses of the wreck John Driscoll, gate tender, had let the gate down to allow a freight to pass. The locomotive of the freight emitted heavy clouds of smoke, preventing the tender from seeing the passenger train bearing down at high speed and he raised the gates, it is said. The locomotive struck the back part of the street car and it was tossed to pieces in all directions.

Made Him Insane. At Barley, Ga., A. J. Chestnut, who a few days ago shot and killed Marshall Mike Aspinwall, and being pursued by the sheriff and a large number of citizens was wounded, died Wednesday evening. William Smith of Waycross, engaged at Barley to work on the school building, shot Chestnut with a rifle and since has become insane and is now in the asylum.

Voiced If Gas. The dispensary was voted out in Union County Tuesday by a vote of twenty-two to one. The vote was very light, showing the opinion of the citizens of that county is very hostile to the system.

FELL FROM A POLE.

A Promising Young Man Meets With a Fearful Death.

Robert Haynsworth of Olemson, '02, Dies From Injuries Received While Performing His Duty.

A special dispatch from Darlington to The State says Mr. Robert Haynsworth, a young man of much promise, died there Thursday morning from the effects of injuries he sustained in falling from an electric light pole Wednesday night. The storm Wednesday afternoon had upset the electric light wires and Wednesday night it was discovered that some of the arc lights were not burning. The engineer, Mr. Hatchell, at the power plant apprised young Haynsworth of this fact and the latter started on his round to remedy the trouble.

He was cautioned, however, to phone when he found a wire that needed fixing so the power could be cut off and he did so once or twice but no message was received at the point where the accident occurred. When found by the Coast Line night watchman Mr. Haynsworth was lying at the foot of an electric light pole between the depot and a nearby shed. His mangled limbs were across the railroad track and his body was drawn as if he had suffered intense congestion. One leg was completely crushed, causing the main bone to project through the outer skin and clothing; his forehead also sustained a severe blow in which the skull was slightly fractured. He bled profusely and was never conscious after the fall. Mr. Hatchell says that Mr. Haynsworth left the power plant about 9 o'clock and was not found until 10.15. It is probable that he lay there for over an hour before any one saw him.

There are numerous conjectures as to how this accident occurred, but it is generally believed that young Haynsworth ascended the pole and came in contact with a live wire which caused him to lose his grip and fall. He must have fallen 25 or 30 feet. When found he was moved to the home of his grandmother, Mrs. H. E. P. Sanders, and a doctor was summoned but to no avail. He died Thursday morning at 3 o'clock and will probably be buried Friday at Florence, where his family reside.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Mosey Haynsworth of Florence and a nephew of that city. In 1902 he graduated at Olemson in the electrical department and came immediately to Darlington, where he accepted a position with the Carolina Water and Light company. He proved himself an efficient electrician and he advanced rapidly in this line of work. Only a few months prior to his death he was promoted to the position of general superintendent of the electrical plant there. He was a young man with a bright future and he had a host of friends in Darlington. His untimely death has cast a gloom over the entire town.

Wounded by Russians. A special dispatch from Anderson to The State says Sheriff Nelson E. Green and his deputy, W. N. Scott, received slight wounds at the farmers' barbecue Wednesday afternoon in arresting four young men of the county for disorderly conduct. The men are A. L. Whitten and three brothers named Biehey. It seems that these men were cursing and talking loudly at the table and when they were ordered by the sheriff to keep quiet one of them resisted the officer, who was cut across the abdomen. His deputy was also slightly wounded. The men were taken into custody and are in the county jail.

A Young Mother. Helen Elster, who would have been thirteen years old on November 5th next, died in the New York Post-graduate hospital Saturday forty five minutes after the surgeons performed the Caesarian operation on her. The operation was the last resort to save the lives of mother and baby. It was successful, for, although other causes were fatal to the child mother, her baby survived and was cheerful and healthy, weighing seven pounds. The child was an illegitimate one.

Another Polar Expedition. A dispatch from Christina Norway, says the steamer Terranova has been sighted off Honningsvåg, with Ziegler, of the north pole exploring expedition, heading by Anthony Fiala of Brooklyn, aboard. The vessel had got to 85 degrees 13 minutes north latitude. All the Americans in the party are well.

Train Hit Them. Four young men who reside in Charlotte, N. C., sat on the Southern railway track near Greenville Tuesday night fell asleep. The outgoing Columbia train in passing killed C. Williams instantly and seriously injured Paul Fowler and Henry Holley. Edward Ellis escaped unhurt.

Lost His Hand. As a result of drinking Asheville liquor in two great an abundance and sleeping beside the railway track David Paycock, a Union, S. C., negro, is in the Mission Hospital minus his left hand, says the Asheville Citizen.

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