

The Newberry Herald and News.

ESTABLISHED 1865.

NEWBERRY, S. C., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1900.

TWICE A WEEK, \$1.50 A YEAR.

DUNRAVEN RANCH

A Story of American Frontier Life.

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CHAPTER I.

It was nearly midnight, and still the gay party lingered on the veranda. There had been a fortnight of "getting settled" at the new post, preceded by a month of marching that had brought the battalion from distant service to this strange Texan station. The new comers had been hospitably welcomed by the officers of the little garrison of infantry, and now, in recognition of their many courtesies, the field officer commanding the arriving troops had been entertaining the resident officers and ladies at dinner. The colonel was a host in himself, but preferred not to draw too heavily on his reserves of anecdote and small talk, so he had called in two of his subalterns to assist in the pleasant duty of being attentive to the infantry ladies, and just now, at 11:45 p. m., he was wondering if Lieut. Perry had not too literally construed his instructions, for that young gentleman was devoting himself to Mrs. Belknap in a manner so marked as to make the captain, her lawful lord and master, manifestly uneasy.

Mrs. Belknap, however, seemed to enjoy the situation immensely. She was a pretty woman at most times, as even her rivals admitted. She was a beautiful woman at all times, was the verdict of the officers of the regiment when they happened to speak of the matter among themselves. She was dark, with lustrous eyes and sweeping lashes, with coral lips and much luxuriance of tress, and a way of glancing sideways from under her heavily fringed eyelids that the younger and more impressionable men found quite irresistible when accorded the rare luxury of a tete-a-tete. Mrs. Belknap was small in stature, and soft—very soft—of voice. Belknap was either brusquely repellent or oppressively cordial in manner: Mrs. Belknap was either gently and exasperatingly indifferent to those whom she did not care to attract, or caressingly sweet to those whose attentions she desired.

In their own regiment the young officers soon found that unless they wished to be involved in an unpleasantness with Belknap it was best to be only very moderately devoted to his pretty wife, and those to whom an unpleasantness with the big captain might have had no terrors of consequence were deterred by the fact that Mrs. Belknap's devotees among the "youngsters" had invariably become an object of coldness and aversion to the other duns and damsels of the garrison. Very short lived, therefore, had been the little flirtations that sprang up from time to time in those frontier posts where-in Capt. and Mrs. Belknap were among the chief ornaments of society; but now matters seemed to be taking other shape. From the very day that handsome Ned Perry dismounted in front of Belknap's quarters and with his soldierly salute reported to the then commanding officer that Col. Brainard and his battalion of cavalry would arrive in the course of two or three hours, Mrs. Belknap had evinced a contentment in his society and assumed an air of quasi-proprietorship that served to annoy her garrison sisters more than a little. For the time being all the cavalrymen were bachelors, either by actual rank or "by brevet," as none of the ladies of the—th accompanied the battalion on its march, and none were expected until the stations of the regiment in its new department had been definitely settled. The post surgeon, too, was crusing a life of single blessedness as he crusedly spring over on, for his good wife Londie betaken herself, with the children, to a distant east as soon as the dispersal of the writer's snows rendered the roads for the hard prairie roads a reported from the land or discomfort. The story. Neither at the end of the explanation—by the colonel's attention publication—of the able attitude at Mrs. Spion Cop, and there as reclining in a vicious in this connection from and independent sources. The disposition to today is not to regard the evacuation as so serious as at first thought.

Berlin, Jan. 27.—Some newspaper persons say they have cable messages from Pretoria saying General Wagoner was enticed into Spion-koopong where the Boers fell upon him; that in a swoon from his cannon were one of the tured and a hasty retreat over a camp Tugela river alone can save. London, Jan. 27.—Dispat. And the two— in coloring, his

so fair and massive and strong—came rather too close together for the equanimity of Capt. Belknap, who had essayed to take a hand at whist in the parlor. One or two of the ladies, also, were silent observers of the scene—silent as to the scene because, being in conversation at the time with brother officers of Lieut. Perry, they were uncertain as yet how comments on his growing flirtation might be received. Their eyes should occasionally wander towards the hammock and then glance with sympathetic significance at those of some fair ally and intimate was natural enough. But when it became presently apparent that Mrs. Belknap was actually unfastening the little silken braid that had hung on Ned Perry's cap ever since the day of his arrival—all the while, too, looking slyly up in his eyes as her fingers worked; when it was seen that she presently detached it from the button and then, half hesitatingly, but evidently in compliance with his wishes, handed it to him; when he was seen to toss it carelessly—even contemptuously—away and then bend down lower, as though gazing into her shaded eyes, Mrs. Lawrence could stand it no longer.

"Mr. Graham," said she, "isn't your friend, Mr. Perry, something of a flirt?" "Who?—Ned?" asked Mr. Graham, in well feigned amazement and with sudden glance towards the object of his inquiry. "How on earth should I know anything about it? Of course you do not seek expert testimony in asking me. He tries, I suppose, to adapt himself to circumstances. But why do you ask?" "Because I see that he has been inducing Mrs. Belknap to take off that little tassel on the button of his cap. He has worn it when off duty ever since he came; and we supposed it was something he cherished; I know she did."

Graham broke forth in a fit of merry laughter, but gave no further reply, for just then the colonel and the doctor left their chairs, and, sauntering over to the hammock, brought mighty relief to Belknap at the whist table and vexation of spirit to his pretty wife. The flirtation was broken at a most interesting point, and Perry, rising suddenly, came over and joined Mrs. Lawrence.

If she expected to see him piqued or annoyed at the interruption and somewhat perturbed in manner, she was greatly mistaken. Nothing could have been more sunny and jovial than the greeting he gave her. A laughing apology to Graham for spoiling his tete-a-tete was accomplished in a moment, and then down by her side he sat and plunged into a merry description of his experiences at dinner, where he had been placed next to the chaplain's wife on the one hand, and she had been properly aggrieved at his attentions to Mrs. Belknap on the other.

"You must remember that Mrs. Wells is a very strict Presbyterian, Mr. Perry; and, for that matter, none of us have seen a dinner such as the colonel gave us this evening for ever and ever so long. We are quite unused to the ways of civilization; whereas you have just come from the east—and long leave. Perhaps it is the fashion to be all devotion to one's next door neighbor at dinner."

"Not if she be a repellent and venerable as Mrs. Wells, I assure you. Why, I thought she would have been glad to leave the table when, after having refused sherry and Pontet-Cannes for upwards of an hour, her glass was filled with champagne when she happened to be looking the other way."

"It is the first dinner of the kind she has ever seen here, Mr. Perry, and I don't suppose either Mr. or Mrs. Wells has been up so late before in years. He would have enjoyed staying and watching whist, but she carried him off almost as soon as we left the table. Our society has been very dull, you know—only ourselves at the post all this last year, and nobody outside of it."

"One would suppose that with all this magnificent cattle range there would be some congenial people ranching near you. Are there none at all?" "Absolutely none! There are some ranches down to the Washita country, but only one fine one near us; and that night as well on the other side of the Atlantic. No one from there ever comes here; and Dr. Quinn is the only living soul in the garrison who ever got within the walls of that ranch. What he saw there he positively refuses to tell, despite all our entreaties."

"You don't tell me there's a ranch with a mystery here near Rositter?" exclaimed Mr. Perry, with sudden interest. "Why, I do, indeed! It is possible you have never heard of Dunraven Ranch?" "I've heard of Dunraven Ranch," said he from a distance, as though hunting the other day. But what's the mystery?—what's the matter with it?" "That's what we all want to know—and cannot find out. Now, there is an exploit worthy your energy and best efforts, Mr. Perry. There is a big, wealthy, well stocked ranch, the finest homestead buildings, we are told, in all this part of Texas. They say it is beautifully furnished—that it has a fine library, a grand piano, all manner of things indicative of culture and refinement among its occupants—but the owner or owners come around once or twice a year, and is an iceberg of an Englishman. All the people about the ranch are English, too, and the most repellent, boorish, discourteous lot of men you ever saw. When the Eleventh were here they did everything they could to be civil to them, but not an invitation would they accept, not one word they extend; and so from that day to this none of the officers have had any intercourse with the people at the ranch, and the soldiers know very little more. Once or twice a year some very ordinary looking men arrive who are said to be very distinguished people—in England; and they remain only a little while, and go away as suddenly as they came."

"And you have never seen any of

them?" "Never, except at a distance. Not has any one of the officers, except Dr. Quinn."

"And you have never heard anything about the inmates and why they keep up this policy of exclusiveness?" "We have heard all manner of things—some of them wildly romantic, some mysteriously tragic, and all of them, probably, absurd. At all events, Capt. Lawrence has told me he did not wish me to repeat what I had heard, or to be concerned in any way with the stories. Try the doctor. To change the subject, Mr. Perry, I see you have lost that mysterious little silken braid and tassel you wore on your cap button. I fancy there was some romance attached to it, and now it is gone."

Perry laughed, his blue eyes twinkling with fun: "If I will tell you how and where I got that tassel, will you tell me what you have heard about Dunraven Ranch?" "I cannot, unless Capt. Lawrence withdraws his prohibition. Perhaps he will, though, for I think it was only because he was tired of hearing all our conjectures and theories."

"Well, will you tell me if I can induce the captain to say he has no objection?" persisted Perry.

"I will to-morrow—if you will tell me about the tassel to-night."

"Is it a positive promise? You will tell me to-morrow all you have heard about Dunraven Ranch if I will tell you to-night all I know about the tassel?" "Yes—a promise."

"Very well, then. You are a witness to the compact, Graham. Now for my confession. I have worn that tassel ever since our parting ball at Fort Riley. That is to say, it has been fastened to that button ever since the ball until to-night; but I've been mighty careful not to wear that cap on any kind of duty."

"And yet you let Mrs. Belknap take it off to-night?" "Why shouldn't I? There was no sentiment whatever attached to it. I haven't the faintest idea whose it was, and only tied it there for the fun of the thing and to make Graham, here, ask questions."

"Mr. Perry?" gasped Mrs. Lawrence. "And do you mean that Mrs. Belknap knows—that you told her what you have just told me?"

"Well, no," laughed Perry. "I fancy Mrs. Belknap thinks as you thought—that it was a gaze d'amour. Hallo! look at that light away out there across the prairie. What can that be?"

Mrs. Lawrence rose suddenly to her feet and gazed southward in the direction in which the young officer pointed. It was a lovely, starlit night. A soft wind was blowing gently from the south and bearing with it the fragrance of spring blossoms and far away flowers. Others, too, had arisen, attracted by Perry's sudden exclamation. Mrs. Belknap turned languidly in her hammock and glanced over her pretty white shoulder. The colonel followed her eyes with his and gave a start of surprise. The doctor turned slowly and composedly and looked silently towards the glistening object, and then upon the officers of the cavalry there fell sudden astonishment.

"What on earth could that have been?" asked the colonel. "It gleamed like the head light of a locomotive, away down there in the valley of the Monee, then suddenly went out."

"Be silent a moment and watch," whispered Mrs. Lawrence to Perry. "You will see it again; and—watch the doctor."

Surely enough, even as they were all looking about and commenting on the strange apparition, it suddenly glared forth a second time, shining full and lustrous as an unclouded planet, yet miles away beyond and above the fringe of cottonwoods that wound southeastward with the little stream. Full half a minute it shone, and then, abruptly as before, was hidden from sight.

Perry was about starting forward to join the colonel when a little hand was laid upon his arm. "Wait; once more you'll see it," she whispered. "Then take me in to Capt. Lawrence. Do you see that the doctor is leaving?" Without saying a word to any one, the post surgeon had very quietly withdrawn from the group on the veranda. He could not well leave by the front gate without attracting attention; but he strolled leisurely into the hall, took up a book that lay on the table, and passed through the group of officers seated smoking and chatting there, entered the sitting room on the south side of the hall—the side opposite the parlor where the whist game was in progress—and there he was lost to sight.

A third time the bright light burst upon the view of the gazers. A third time, sharply and suddenly, it disappeared. Then for a moment all was silence and watchfulness; but it came no more.

Perry looked questioningly in his companion's face. She had turned a little white, and he felt sure that she was shivering.

"Are you cold?" he asked her, gently. "No—not that; but I hate hysterics, after what I've heard, and we haven't seen that light in over so long. Come here to the corner one moment." "I led him around to the other side of the big wooden, barack like residence of the commanding officer. "Look up there," she said, pointing to a dark window under the peaked dormer roof of the large cottage to the south. "That is the doctor's house." In a few seconds a faint gleam seemed to creep through the slats. Then the slats themselves were thrown wide open, and a white shroud was lowered, and, with the rays behind it growing brighter every instant, a broad white light shone forth over the roof of the veranda. Another moment and footsteps were heard along the doctor's porch, footsteps that presently approached them along the

grass. "Come," she said, plucking at his sleeve, "come away; it is the doctor."

"For what reason?" he answered. "That would seem like hiding, no, Mrs. Lawrence, let us stay until he comes."

The doctor passed them with brief and courteous salutation; spoke of the summery air and went in again by the main door to the corner of his partner.

"Then Perry turned, what does it all mean? Is this part of what you had to tell me?"

"Don't ask me now—I did not want to see what we have seen, but I had heard queer stories and could not believe them. Take me in to Capt. Lawrence, please. And, Mr. Perry, you won't speak of this to any one, will you? Indeed, if I had known, I would not have come out here for the world, but I didn't believe it, even when she went away and took the children."

"Who went away?" "Mrs. Quinn—the doctor's wife. And she was such a sweet woman, and so devoted to him."

"Well, pardon me, Mrs. Lawrence, I don't see through this thing at all. Do you mean that the doctor has anything to do with the mystery?"

She bowed her head as they turned back to the house: "I must not tell you any more to-night. You will be sure to hear something of it all, here. Every-body on the piazza saw the lights, and all who were here before you came knew what they meant."

"What were they?" "Signals of some kind, from Dunraven Ranch."

CHAPTER II.



ED PERRY hated reveille and morning stables about as vehemently as was possible to a young fellow who was in other

respects thoroughly in love with his profession. A fairer type of the American cavalry officer, when once he got in saddle and settled down to business, he would hardly say to find. Tall, athletic, slender of build, with frank, laughing blue eyes, curly, close cropped, light brown hair, and a twirling mustache that was a source of inexpressible delight to its owner and of some envy to his brother subalterns, Mr. Perry was probably the best looking of the young officers who marched with the battalion to this far away station on the borders of the Llano Estacado. He had been ten years in service, counting the four he spent as a cadet, had just won his silver bar as the junior first lieutenant of the regiment, was full to the brim of health, energy, animal spirits and fun, and, barring a few duns and debts in his earlier experiences, had never known a heavier care in the world than the transient and ephemeral anxiety as to whether he would be called up for recitation on a subject he had not so much as looked at, or "bivied" absent from a roll call he had lazily slept through.

Any other man, his comrades said, would have been spoiled a dozen times over by the pitting he had received from both men and women; but there was something essentially sweet and genial about his nature—something "lacking in guile" about his perceptions," said a cynical old captain of the regiment—and a jovial, sunshiny way of looking upon the world as an Eden, all men and all women as friends, and the army as these various attributes combined to make him popular with his kind and unusually attractive to the opposite sex. As a cadet he had been perpetually on the verge of dismissal because of the appalling array of demerits he could roll up against his name, and yet the very officers who jotted down the memoranda of his sins—omission and commission—against the regulations were men who openly said he "had the making of one of the finest soldiers in the class." As junior second lieutenant—"plebe"—of the regiment, he had been welcomed by every man from the colonel down, and it was considered particularly rough that he should have to go to such a company as Capt. Canker's, because Canker was a man who never got along with any of his juniors; but there was something so irrepressibly frank and contrite in Perry's boyish face when he would appear at his captain's door in the early morning and burst out with: "By Jove, captain! I slept through reveille again this morning, and never got down till stables were nearly over," that even that cross grained but honest troop commander was disarmed, and, though he threatened and reprimanded, he would never punish—would never deny his subaltern the faintest privilege; and when promotion took the captain to another regiment he bade good-by to Perry with eyes that were suspiciously wet. "Why, blow it all, what do you fellows hate Canker so for?" the youngster often said. "He ought to put me in arrest time and again, but he won't. Blamed if I don't put myself in arrest, or confine myself to the limits of the post, and do something, to cut all this going to town and tops and such things. Then I can stick to the troop like wax and get up reveille, but if I'm out dancing till 2 or 3 in the morning it's no use, I tell you; I just can't wake up."

It was always predicted of Ned Perry that he would be "married and done for" within a year of his graduation.

Every new face in the five years that followed revived the garrison prophecy. "Now he's gone, sure!" but, however devoted he might seem to the duns in question, however restless and impatient he might be when compelled by his duties to absent himself from her side, however promising to casual observers—perchance to the duns herself—might be all the surface indications, the absolute frankness with which he proclaimed his admiration to every listener, and the fact that he had been just so with half a dozen other girls, enabled the cooler heads of the regiment to decide that the time had not yet come—or at least the woman.

"I wish," said Mrs. Turner, "that Mr. Perry would settle on somebody, because, just so long as he doesn't, it is rather hard to tell who he belongs to." And, as Mrs. Turner had long been a reigning belle among the married women of the—th, and one to whom the young officers were always expected to show much attention, her wistful way of describing the situation was readily understood.

But here at the new station, at far away Rositter—matters were taking on a new look. To begin with the wives of the officers of the cavalry battalion had not joined, none of the indices of the—th were here, and none would be apt to come until the summer's scorching work was over and done with. The ladies of the little battalion of infantry were here, and, though there were no maiden sisters or consins yet at the post (it was assumed that more than one was already summoned), they were sufficient in number to enliven the monotony of garrison life and sufficiently attractive to warrant all the attention they cared to receive. It was beginning to be garrison chat that if Ned Perry had not "settled on somebody" as the ultimate object of his entire devotion, somebody had settled on him, and that was pretty Mrs. Belknap.

And though Ned Perry hated reveille and morning stables, as has been said, and could rarely "wake his week" with making one of more tapes, here he was this beautiful May morning out at daybreak when it was his junior's tour of duty, and wending his way with that youngster out to the line of cavalry stables, boosted and spurred and equipped for a ride.

The colonel had listened with some surprise to his request, proffered just as the party was breaking up the night before, to be absent from garrison a few hours the following morning.

"But we have battalion drill at 9 o'clock, Mr. Perry, and I need you there," he said.

"Oh, I'll be back in three hours or so before breakfast."

The colonel could not help laughing. "Of course you can go—go wherever you like at those hours, when you are not on guard; but I never imagined you would want to get up so early."

"Neither I would, colonel, but I've been interested in something I heard about this ranch down the Monee, and thought I'd like to ride down and look at it."

"Go ahead, by all means, and see whether those lights came from there. It made me think of a play I once saw—the 'Colleen Bawn'—where a girl's sweetheart, signaled across the lake by switching a light in her cottage window just that way three times, and he answered by turning out the lights in his room. Of course the distance wasn't anything like this; and there was no one here to turn down any light—Eld what did you say?"

"I beg pardon, colonel. I didn't mean to interrupt," put in a gentle voice at his elbow, while a little hand on Perry's arm gave it a sudden and vigorous squeeze. "But Capt. Lawrence has called me twice—he will not re-enter after lighting his cigar—and I must say good night."

"Oh, good night, Mrs. Lawrence, I'm sorry you go so early. We are going to reform you all in that respect as soon as we get fairly settled. Here's Perry, now, would sit up and play whist with me an hour yet."

"Not this night, colonel. He has promised to walk home with us" (another squeeze), "and go to bed, or be a faithless escort. Good night. We've had such a lovely, lovely time."

And Ned Perry, dazed, went with her to the gate, where Capt. Lawrence was awaiting them. She had barely time to murmur:

"You were just on the point of telling him about the doctor's lights. I cannot forgive myself for being the means of seeing it; but keep my confidence, and keep this until everybody is talking about it; it will come soon enough."

Naturally, Mr. Perry went home somewhat perturbed in spirit and all alive with conjecture as to what these things could mean. The first notice of "assonibly of the trumpeters"—generally known as "first call"—roused him from his sleep, and by the time the men marched out to the stables he had had his phines bath, a vigorous rub and a chance to think over his plans before following in their tracks, dressed for his ride. The astonishment of Lieut. Parke, the junior of the troop, was something almost too deep for words when Perry came bounding to his side. "What on earth brings you out, Ned?" was his only effort.

"Going for a gallop—down the Monee, that's all. I haven't had a fresher for a week."

of disorder of any kind, and nothing more offensive to the eye than the sight of two or three of his charges loose and plunging and kicking up and down the stable yard. On the other hand, there was no one exploit that seemed to give the younger animals keener delight—nothing that made the perpetrator a bigger hero in his own eyes or the object of greater envy among his fellows—and as a consequence every device of which equine ingenuity was master was called into play, regularly as the morning came around, to break loose either from the control of hand of the trooper or from the first reins of the officer in charge of the troop sergeant's was, therefore, to see that all the horses were securely lashed and bridled. Not until he had examined every "halter shank" was Mr. Parke at liberty to look around, but when he did his contraband had disappeared from view.

And over this broad level, horizon bounded, not a moving object could be seen. Far away, in little groups of three or four black dots of grazing cattle marked the plain, and over in the "break" of the Monee, just beyond the first set of cottonwoods, two or three herds of Indian ponies were sleepily cropping their morning meal, watched by the little black nip of a boy whose dory red blanket made the only patch of color against the southern landscape. Later in the day, when the sun mounted high in the heavens and the brisk westerly winds sent the clouds sailing swiftly across the skies all the broad prairie seemed in motion, for then huge shadows swept across the plain with measured speed and distant cattle and neighboring pony herd appeared as though calmly and contentedly riding on a broad platform. Nature's own "observation car" taking a leisurely journey towards the far away Pacific.

But the sun was only just up as Mr. Parke came back from his inspection of the latter fact-ways and paused to look across the low valley. Far down to the southeast the rays seemed glinting on some bright objects clustered together within short range of the shadowy fringe, and the lieutenant staked his eyes with his gaudnet and looked fixedly thitherward as he stood at the stable door.

"Some new timing down at that Eng. fish can't be the talk of I suppose," was his explanation of the phenomenon, and then "wonder why Perry hasn't ridden to cultivate the acquaintance of those people before this. He was always the first man in the—th to find out who our neighbors were."

Pondering over this question, it occurred to Mr. Parke that Perry had said he was going down the Monee that morning, but nowhere was there a speck in sight that looked like a lone horseman. To be sure, the trail bore close to the low hills that bounded the valley on the north by the time one had ridden a mile or so out from the post. He was probably hidden by this shoulder of the prairie, and would continue to be until he reached the bend, five miles below. No one watching for him then. Besides, he might not yet have started. Mr. Parke recalled the fact that Ned had suspected a while ago that Ned was going to ride on a "crazy anti-bear-trail ride" with a lady friend. Mrs. Belknap had her own horse, and was an accomplished equestrienne. Mrs. Lawrence rode fairly well and was always glad to go, when some body could give her a saddle and a reliable mount. There were others, too, among the ladies of the infantry garrison who were no novices at a cheval. Mr. Parke had no intention whatever of prying into the matter. It was simply as something the officer in charge of the table duty was entitled to know that he turned suddenly and called:

"Sergeant, Gwynne!"

He heard the name passed down the dark interior of the stable by the men sweeping out the stalls, and the prompt and cheery reply. The next instant a tall young trooper stepped forth into the blaze of early sunlight, his right hand raised in salute, and stood erect and motionless by the lieutenant's side.

"Did Mr. Perry take an extra horse, sergeant?" "No, sir."

"I thought possibly he meant to take Roland. He's the best lady's horse in the troop, is he not?" "Yes, sir, but Roland is at the line now."

"Very well, then. That's all. I presume he has just ridden down to Dunraven." And Mr. Parke turned to look once more at the glinting objects down the distant valley. It was a moment or two before he was aware of the fact that the sergeant still stood there, instead of returning to his duties.

"I said that was all, sergeant; you can go back to your feeding." And then Mr. Parke turned in some surprise, for Sgt. Gwynne, by long odds the "smartest" and most soldierly of the non-commissioned officers of the cavalry battalion for the first time in his history seemed to have forgotten himself. Though his attitude had not changed, his face had, and a strange look was in his bright blue eyes—a look of incredulity and wonderment and trouble all combined. The lieutenant was fairly startled when, as though gathering himself together, the sergeant falteringly asked:

"I beg pardon, sir—he had ridden—where?" "Down to the Ranch, sergeant—that one you can just see, away down the valley."

"I know, sir; but—the name?" "Dunraven Ranch." For an instant the sergeant stood as though dazed, then, with sudden effort, saluted, faced about, and plunged into the dark recesses of the stable.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

GOV. MCSWEENEY

MAKES STATEMENT.

WHAT HE SAYS ABOUT THAT DISSENTSARY "CAUCUS."

Told Those Present He Did Not Wish to Be On the Board of Control. The Purpose

(The State, Jan. 31st.)

In view of the question of Senator Manning on the floor of the Senate on Friday night last in regard to the alleged caucus on the dispensary, said to have been held in the governor's office, Gov. McSweeney has made a statement in regard to the matter.

He said yesterday that he certainly had no objection to the facts being known. He said: "There was nothing private or secret about it. I saw that there were a number of bills relating to the liquor question being offered in the general assembly, nearly all of which pointed to the abolition of the state board of control, and the conference was held simply to try to get the friends of the dispensary to agree on some plan and present it, and avoid long and useless discussion and thus help to shorten the session. I had no administration bill to present and have had none. My position was clearly and positively stated in my message. I insisted in the conference that I did not want to be on the board of control, and so far as wanting power to appoint the board, I never thought of that, and knew nothing of Senator Henderson's amendment until I heard it read in the senate.

"At the conference which was held it was distinctly understood that it was not binding on anyone, and the only purpose was to try to get the friends of the dispensary, holding divergent views, together and figure on some plan and thus save the time of the legislature.

"I have not assumed to dictate to the members of the legislature, nor have I tried to get them to place more power in my hands. Neither have I tried to shirk any responsibility that was properly mine.

"I do not conceive it improper for members of the legislature to confer about important legislation and for efforts to be made to get those who are seeking the same end together on a plan to accomplish that end and thus save time and money for the people. That is all there was in it.

"I have not endeavored to influence legislation further than to make suggestions, as I am commanded by the constitution in my annual and special messages. My aim has been and shall be to execute the laws as made by the law making power."

Wanted.

Honest man or woman to travel for large house; salary \$65 monthly and expenses, with increase; position permanent; inclose self-addressed stamped envelope. Manager, 330 Caxton bldg., Chicago.

Given a Half Holiday.

(Norfolk Virginian Pilot, Jan. 20.)

Vice-President E. St. John, of the Seaboard Air Line, in keeping with the broad spirit that marks the man, and which has put on his side the people of all the States through which the Seaboard Air Line passes, made yesterday a half holiday in memory of the birthday of Robert E. Lee. It was a graceful act on the part of the distinguished and big-hearted New Englander. Not a few have remarked in Norfolk during the trying ordeals through which the Seaboard Air Line has passed of recent weeks, that the main force toward its successive legal victories has lain in the fact, that through such sympathetic touch with the people at all points, the system has come up fortified in the faith and goodwill of the common folk of at least five Southern States.

CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.

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Bears the Signature of

of