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SENATOR M'LAURIN FIRES HIS FIRST GUN.

REAL "CAMPAIGN OPENER" AT CHARLOTTE LAST NIGHT.

Defense of His Several Votes—His Conception of Work for Southern Statesmen—Insists on Being Untransmuted on Great Issues.

(Special to The State.)

Charlotte, N. C., April 18.—This was an eventful day in the history of the Southern Manufacturers' Club. The Chinese Minister, Mr. Wu Ting Fang, was the guest of honor, while next in rank among the prominent guests was John L. McLaurin. His address, which he read, is a declaration of the Senator's position in politics, and while the address was entitled "Our Present Condition in the South and Our Duty in the Future," it was in reality the first gun in his campaign for the reelection to the senate from South Carolina. He indicates the lines along which he will fight. He has left the "ruts," he says, and for so doing defends himself, and indicates the line in politics he thinks the south should follow.

Mr. McLaurin spoke as follows:

DENIES A REPORT.

Mr. Toastmaker and Gentlemen:

I desire to make a statement of somewhat a personal nature before proceeding with this speech, which I intend to deliver tonight. A certain newspaper correspondent in the city of Washington has persistently spread the report that I was coming to Charlotte to make a speech which would lurch a new party in the south. The report was absolutely false. If I had any such intention good taste would prevent me from taking advantage of an opportunity of this kind. I am content to advocate with Democratic lines the policy which I believe best for the south, and when I can no longer do this I am ready to retire to private life.

In the south we are today realizing some of the dreams of its far reaching statesmen and business men of fifty years ago. With prophetic eye, they saw the industrial and commercial possibilities of our highly favored south.

With an advance of thought that is really surprising, they suggest enterprises of wonderful magnitude for its upbuilding and commercial dominance. From 1838 to 1860, conventions were held to voice the demands of a deep seated public sentiment for industrial progress. The story of these movements is enshrined in a South Carolina publication, which, under the name of Dobows review, did for the old south what the Manufacturers record is doing for the south today.

The same spirit which enabled our fathers to leave the field of defeat with nothing but their courage and characters left, still lives in the south and inspires you today in your undertaking.

Some of the great southern statesmen and statesmen of fifty years ago are no longer ideal dreams. They are now realities. They are no longer dreamed of by a cruel war which destroyed our social and industrial system, and which for years reached out its hand to crush the industrial operation in the south. Such men as I meet here tonight are making these dreams actual living realities.

WHAT WARS SETTLED.

Talk about the "New South." The name is a misnomer. It is the same old spirits revived which sixty years ago made the south the dominant power in this nation—a position of which nothing but war could have robbed her. What we need now to again attain that proud eminence is the same broad conception and the same comprehensive grasp of the true situation. The last twenty years have wrought an industrial revolution in the south, which must find expression in our social and political life.

The time is past for the discussion as to whether this government is to be one consolidated in its structure or a loose aggregation of (so-called) sovereign States. The civil war settled that.

It is useless to discuss the question of whether this is to be a purely

theoretical Democratic government or an expanding and giant Republic. The Spanish war settled that. Why not then accept conditions as they are and make the most of them?

The agitation of such issues only serves to sidetrack broad American doctrines and should not be made party questions because they grow out of actual political and economic conditions, which it is beyond the power of either party to change. I care not of what political faith the occupant of the white house might have; for, if a true American, mindful of the honor and dignity of the nation, the results of the Spanish war could not be widely different from what they are today.

Why should our people be the only ones to close their eyes to what is going on? Why should we move on in the same old ruts and insist that political policies and old traditions, long since dead, are vital living issues, and depend upon them for the salvation of the south.

LESSONS OF M'KINLEY'S TRIUMPH.

The triumphant re-election of Mr. McKinley in the last campaign is full of significance. It is a stubborn fact confronting the Democratic party today, suggestive of reproachful remembrances and fearful menaces. What a reflection that this new Democracy did not carry a State where the issues were discussed and judgement passed by the people upon them on their merits. Of course with us it has been impossible to decide elections upon issues. It has been simply a question of white supremacy. In the north and the west, dissolved into factions, tainted by the errors of republicanism and the follies of populism, the party could not withstand the tide of popular opposition excited by unreasonable criticism of the conduct of a foreign war, and by the vicious and incendiary appeals made during the last month of the campaign to class hatred and prejudice.

Fundamental principles were lost sight of, and in an insane effort to secure party success at any cost, the attempt was made to combine socialism, populism and sectionalism, with nothing but the sentiment and traditions of Democracy. The real Democratic leaders of the senate for the past three years have been Allen, Teller and Pettigrew, all of them able men, but one a Populist, one a high tariff Republican, and the other, I do not know what. All of them opposed to State banks of issue with proper safeguards, and most other things we need in the South. This was called the "New Democracy" in contradistinction from the old, and some of its leaders stated that its creeds were revolutionary and were so designed to be.

To sow discontent with industrial conditions and distrust of the governing power; to array class against class, in the hope of securing fancied social and industrial equality is to my mind the first step in revolution. The South is the American end of America. In no section is there so small a foreign element, so much conservatism, and so pure a patriotism. What a political paradox then it is for our people to be the allies of professed revolutionists elsewhere.

WHAT THE M'KINLEY VOTERS FEARED.

It was not the pure type of Southern Democracy that the balance of the country feared in the last presidential election. They knew that properly interpreted this was conservative and safe. It was well understood, however, what influences dominated, and that, therefore, the South in national affairs was still powerless. One doubtful Northern State had then and has now more influence than the entire South combined. One party says, why should I consent to you, I can hope for nothing. The other says, I've got you any way, and I will do as I please; help yourself if you can.

What a position for a brave, high-spirited people bound hand and foot, the miserable slaves of one party and a football for the other.

I, for one, do not believe that the people of the South are ready to trust this government into the hands of any party to begin the leveling

process through the exercise of the taxing power; and yet this is exactly what this new propaganda means, and outside of the South it is proclaimed by the very same class who preach and practice social equality between the races. The two dogmas are inseparably interwoven. Go into the West, attend one of their campaign meetings search beneath the skin and you will find the same old social equality dogma, to the tune of which the soul of John Brown is still "marching on."

Taxation for the purpose of equalizing or redistributing property is rank socialism, not Democracy. Let it take hold in the South and with it will go those barriers which we have erected to maintain the purity of our race and the integrity of our civilization.

DEFENDS EXPANSION.

Another thing—to my mind it is folly to oppose expansion under the name of imperialism. It deceives no man of intelligence. He understands that there is no analogy between this country and the Roman empire, and that those who talk of imperialism do not take into account that power which is born of our free institutions, a fortress in the hearts of our people stronger than any ever built of stone. As long as this is there they can never become slaves; and when it is dead it matters not whether under republic or empire, they become an easy prey. It depends upon the people, not the government, whether they be slaves or freemen. It is the people that make the government, not the government the people. With a brave, strong, intelligent people, with a free press and popular education, there can be no imperialism. Why should we be afraid to trust ourselves? The whole tendency of the times and the spirit of the age is toward Democratic instead of imperialistic ideas of government.

The throne of the "Great White Czar" trembles today at the roar of the Democratic Lion, and the echoes resound even from the far off Orient.

Our people understand that it is not actual territory or dominion over people that we seek, but the expansion of American thought, ideas of government commerce and civilization.

Political leaders might well learn that the law of progress will sweep away as chaff those who would place barriers against this mighty tide which is destined to spread the Democratic idea of government to the uttermost bounds of the earth. My definition of Democracy is liberty for man, formulated into a theory of government. It means man's inalienable ownership of himself, it means free thought and free speech.

In the dark ages of the past some poor slave raised his bowed head and looking up into the blue sky caught inspiration from God's free air and sunshine that he also of right was free, and ever since, that vision of liberty has been an undying revelation for every age and all climes.

Grecian and Roman slaves saw the heavenly light, and facing their masters' sword, bravely died. Saxon churl with wooden collar, and our own fathers, at Cowpens and King Mountain, looked upon the celestial picture, and with a smile of joy gave up their lives.

WHAT SHOULD A PARTY DO?

Why need a true Democracy hunt for issues in our relations with foreign countries? It is upon domestic problems, the rights of man and man, the relation of labor and capital and its stand upon these home issues that has endeared it to the people in the past and upon which it must finally stand or fall.

It is folly to attempt to dwarf great national and international issues into mere questions of party policy; it failed in the last campaign, and will fail every time it is tried.

WILL NOT BE TRAMMELED.

Every member of the American Congress, when it comes to a foreign policy, a foreign war, and army, a navy, a merchant marine, or any other question affecting our honor as a nation, or prosperity as a people, should be free and untrammelled to

vote as his judgment and conscience dictates. For myself, I would not, under existing conditions, be willing to hold a seat in the United States senate upon any other terms. To allow others to think for me upon these great questions is a cowardly evasion of my responsibilities, and a criminal neglect of the true interests of those who select me.

I am rejoiced tonight to be in the presence of so many of the great captains of Southern industry. You are the men whose energy and enterprise and developing our natural resources and thus laying the foundation for the full enjoyment by our section of all that must follow in the wake of the expanding glory of our republic; and this in spite of the fact that it has become the fashion in some quarters to sneer at what is termed the "sordid commercial" argument in favor of expansion and other national issues.

Our political leaders should not forget the fact that modern Democracy had its origin in this same commercial instinct. Two hundred and fifty years ago it had its birth in those cities along the river Rhine, where, through trade and manufacturing, the people could compel the feudal lords to grant them civil rights. The free institutions of which we boast grew up under the fostering care of commerce. The rights of the individual expanded into rights for his city and those for the State, so that modern Democracy does not teach that there is an absolute rule for government, and that any particular theory of government is of permanent value and adapted under all circumstances for the welfare of man. The fathers of this Republic never intended to lay a foundation which was to be always of the same circumscribed proportions, with a superstructure of nicely measured parts all to exist permanently just as constructed.

They aimed to create a giant not a pigmy.

For a nation the century has been content to grapple with the questions of internal development, but suddenly in the evolution of our national destiny, we have become one of the great powers of the world, and can no longer move in a circumscribed orbit. If we would maintain our supremacy or even equality among the nations of the world, the shackles forged by narrow, sectional prejudices must be broken.

GOVERNMENTS MOULD THEMSELVES.

The question of the hour is not whether this Republic is what its founders (with the light before them) intended to make it; not whether it is theoretically an ideal Democratic government, at all times in exact conformity to the technical requirements of a written constitution, but whether with the spirit rather than the letter of that constitution, we are making the most of our national opportunities and meeting the political economic conditions growing out of the constantly changing needs of the people. It is historically true that no form of government ever did result from deliberate choice; it has always been the logical result of conditions.

The nation is nothing but the type of individual life, and as from childhood to manhood we outgrow garments and duties, these are put aside, so it is in the evolutionary development of a nation, social, political, and industrial systems that have their day and thrust aside for new methods and new systems to meet a changed and higher state of existence. We have reached a stage of development in the South where it is unprofitable to rake the dead ashes and charred embers of the past and where we must look forward rather than backward. True statesmanship, while vigilant as to the present, looks with prophetic eye to the future.

The people have a right to expect their leaders to be in advance of the thought of the age, and not tamely drift with the current. In an era of transition and change like this, without some such forecast, political parties will cling to dead issues, and finally flounder in the maelstrom of

factional division and greed for office.

When Louisiana, Florida, Texas, and California were acquired the great leaders of the Democracy acted upon this doctrine, and so when this war with Spain produced certain results it would have been the part of wisdom to have made party platforms and policies correspond with existing conditions and their natural and inevitable consequences.

STROUGLING FOR COMMERCE.

We are now in the commercial arena, contending with the other nations for the trade of the world. So far we have built up our foreign trade by intense absorption in the internal development of our domestic industries. We now produce sufficient for the needs of twice our population, and not to find a market for our surplus is to invite stagnation and decay.

The most striking feature in our export development is the remarkable and constantly increasing demand for our iron and steel. Within six years we have advanced to the position where American iron and steel enters into the construction of every bridge and railroad in the world or fixes the price thereof.

I saw in the paper a few days ago that the Baldwin locomotive works in Philadelphia were supplying the Russian government with 150 locomotives for the Trans-Siberian railroad. The facts surrounding this sale are of peculiar interest. The Russian government owns its railroads and maintains large shops. It puts a duty of 5 cents per pound on imports, but when it came to supplying the equipment for this giant road of 3,000 miles, it was found that they had to come to the United States. And yet, seven years ago the first iron shipment abroad was from Birmingham, Ala.

FROM BORROWERS TO LEADERS.

Another feature of American influence is our suddenly acquired financial independence. For years we have been borrowers, but during the two years past we have become lenders of money. Three of the largest European governments, England, Germany and Russia, have found it necessary to come to New York for important loans, thus showing that the centre of the financial world has been transferred from Lombard to Wall street.

It is folly for the political leaders of the South to close their eyes to the truth that the commercial expansion of the United States is a fact of constantly enlarging proportions, demanding changed governmental policies to meet new conditions.

In spite of higher wages, with labor-saving machinery, the superior skill and intelligence of our operatives, under a factory system better organized than any in the world, is giving us industrial ascendancy. It needs, however, to support it a broad statesmanship, not handicapped by sectional prejudices. We can differ about domestic matters and divide upon party lines, but when it comes to utilizing national opportunities, north, south, east and west should unite in maintaining the supremacy of the United States in the great struggle among the nations for the commerce of the world.

COLUMBIA THE MANUFACTURING CENTRE.

The south must play an important part in our country's future. For a third of a century she has been hampered by a struggle for mere existence, forced to devote all of her energy and statesmanship to the maintenance of white supremacy. Thank God, this is permanent and assured beyond peradventure of doubt. At last she has emerged from her former and prostrate condition; freed from her enthrallment, she can put herself in touch with the best thought of the age, and again exercise an influence in national life. I believe the time will come when the south will be the hope and salvation of this nation. Her marvelous growth in manufacturing enterprises, her development of natural resources, and her rapid advance in progressive thought and action, is making her again the leading section in this

country. The centre of manufacturing in the United States has been transferred from Fall River, Mass., to Columbia, S. C. But if we would make the best of our opportunities we must renounce sectional prejudices and support broad national policies, looking to the creation of foreign markets, the expansion of trade and the upbuilding of a common country. We must demand and have for the south a full share of the benefits as well as the burdens of national life. The south is virtually interested in the Asiatic markets. Her manufacturers are studying the needs of the people in an intelligent effort to turn out products suited to those markets. The closing markets owing to recent troubles has caused a glut of goods, which is affected by a decline of three cents a pound in raw cotton.

WHAT M'KINLEY IS DOING.

The administration is doing a great deal towards improving our commercial opportunities in the east, by showing some regard for the inalienable rights of China, while protecting the legitimate demands of foreign interest. Dewey's victory first established American prestige along the Asiatic coast. It was then that 800 million people in the orient earned respect for the United States and saluted us as a first-class power. The attitude of the United States since in the field of diplomacy in China has given confidence and increased respect. The United States from the first took lead, and even the warlike Emperor of Germany has had to yield to "Uncle Sam's" friendly admonitions. We now occupy the vantage ground, because on friendly terms with all the powers. I make assertion that the south has more to gain than any other section from the foreign policy now pursued by the administration, particularly when the Isthmian canal is constructed as it will be. I have read extracts from the speech of my amiable and distinguished friend his excellency; Minister Wu, recently made in Chicago. It is replete with wisdom and good sense. We cannot hope and we should not wish to base a polity, society and religion the slow growth of 4,000 years. To do so is to destroy the Empire in the attempt to suddenly thrust upon her a western civilization for which her people are not prepared. All we can hope to do is to vitalize this old civilization with western ideas, science and inventive genius, thus making it more potential in material achievements. This country has done well to use every effort by the benign influence of its political and commercial power to preserve the identity of the Empire and the integrity of its civilization. Under this policy, it is reasonable to expect China to become the constantly expanding market for our products, and as gradually her interior is fully developed by a network of railroads and all of her cities opened up to foreign commerce, the opportunities are almost without limit. The South now controls most of this trade, and with such development, in the near future, it should increase tenfold.

CHANGED CONDITIONS.

We are no longer a purely agricultural section, but mining, manufacturing and kindred interests have sprung into prominence and demand governmental policies to protect and develop them. A statesmanship so partisan in its character as to adhere to old political doctrines, either settled by the arbitrament of the sword or firmly fixed as governmental policies, cannot solve the political and economic problems now confronting the southern people. Such a statesmanship cannot properly interpret present economic movements, nor provide by aggressive and progressive thought for the radically changed conditions now confronting us.

MINISTER WU'S ADDRESS.

In his address at the dinner to-night Mr. Wu gave a general review of the trade conditions between the south and the orient, and of China's importance as a market for southern goods. After quoting from advance sheets as the consular reports for February, 1901, he said:

"Large as is the amount of American cotton goods which China imports every year, it forms only one-sixth of the quantity she buys from abroad. Indeed, only the outskirts of the country have been entered. It is well known that the bulk of the American goods is shipped to Manchuria and the province Chi Li. Now Manchuria has a population of 7,700,000 and Chi Li a population of 18,000,000. These are by no means the most thickly populated parts of the empire. There 17 other provinces of China proper, many of which have a denser population than either Chi Li or Manchuria. There is no reason why American cotton goods cannot find as ready a market in the provinces of central and south China as in the north.

OUR FOOTHOLD IN CHINA.

"It is manifest," he said, "that the cotton growers and manufacturers of the Southern States have not only gained a foothold in Manchuria as a north China, but always find a market for their goods throughout the whole of central and southern China. The only thing the American manufacturer has to keep in mind is that he should make goods suitable for the Chinese markets.

WHAT THEY REQUIRE.

"If properly placed before the Chinese, American cotton goods will obtain the same foothold in southern China that they have in northern. The present importation are not nearly sufficient to meet the requirements. It must be borne in mind that the Chinese never wear wool, not even in the depth of winter; that generally speaking, the entire population cloth themselves in cotton all the year round. Their bedclothes, umbrellas and in many instances, boat sails are made of cotton, and the consumption is practically unlimited if they are made in accordance with native requirements. The cloths must be strong, coarse, unbleached goods 22 inches wide, retail at about 5 cents gold a yard or 30 cents gold per piece of nine yards. There is also a virgin market for a cotton cloth which, tanned or otherwise treated, would prove rain proof. All cloths would have to be put in lengths to suit the peculiar requirements of the trade for which they are designed, and such details could best be learned after having made a trial shipment.

HURT BY THE WAR.

"The recent troubles in North China have undoubtedly injured the American cotton trade in that country for the market for such goods has become a vast camp for armed hosts. In the warlike operations, trade and commerce cannot continue to flourish. The restoration of peace and order to that distressed region will be a boon not only to inhabitants of North China, who have already suffered untold losses and hardships, but also to southern planters, manufacturers and laboring men of all classes in this country, who depend upon the return of normal trade conditions in the Chinese empire for their continued prosperity, and I sincerely hope and trust that this will not be long delayed."

MR. ELLISON SMYTH'S SPEECH.

Mr. Ellison A. Smyth, president of the Pelzer Manufacturing company, spoke on "The question of the hour, or the need of an early and peaceful settlement of the oriental question from the standpoint of a southern manufacturer."

Dr. Chas. W. Dabney, president of the University of Tennessee, spoke on "The Possibilities in Cotton." Among other prominent guests was Senator Pritchard of North Carolina. On his arrival this morning, Mr. Wu was met at the depot by a committee and escorted to the club rooms, where breakfast was served. After that he was given a tour of the cotton mills of the city. In the afternoon he held a reception in the parlors of the club.

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