

The County Record.

KINGSTREE, S. C.

C. W. WOLFE,

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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THURSDAY, AUG. 4, 1910.

The Tariff on Lumber.

In his speech here Friday Hon J E Ellerbe quoted an editorial "squib" from this newspaper which stated in substance that he and Congressman Lever had by their vote for a tariff on lumber raised the price to the consumer \$1.50 a thousand feet. Mr Ellerbe said that in making this statement we erred and he hurriedly explained that his vote was for a tariff of \$1.00 a thousand feet and the tariff bill as passed provided for a \$1.25 tariff as compared with \$2.00 under the former schedule. At this point we asked Mr Ellerbe whether the bill voting on did not provide for lumber without any tariff at all. He promised to answer this question later on, but never got to it. He had some good jokes to tell and only fifteen minutes allotted to our question. We also asked Mr Ellerbe what the tariff was on dressed lumber, but this question he saw fit to ignore entirely.

Now, let us see whether The Record erred or not in saying that Mr Ellerbe's vote cost the consumer \$1.50 a thousand feet more than he would have paid had the bill passed as introduced, providing for free lumber. Accepting Mr Ellerbe's statement—he might have "contended" for the \$1.00 tariff but certainly finally came round to the \$1.25 schedule, for it was by his aid and that of the forty-one other "deserters" that the bill passed. Zach McGhee, The State's Washington correspondent, and other reliable newspaper men have stated that the tariff was \$1.50 a thousand feet on rough lumber, but taking Mr Ellerbe's own statement, that duty must increase the price to the consumer one dollar and twenty-five cents a thousand feet for every load of rough lumber he buys. In a small-sized dwelling even, this would count up considerably; you can figure for yourself—just add \$1.25 to the cost of every thousand feet of lumber and you find out what his vote for the tariff takes out of your pocket and adds to the profits of the lumber trust. But, you say, he explained that the tariff does not affect the

price of lumber in this State, but enables the manufacturers to get more for it when they ship it away. Did you ever hear such nonsense? Suppose you want some lumber to build your house, don't you know the mill owner makes you pay the price fixed by the trust or you don't get it? Suppose you tell him Mr Ellerbe said that they didn't mean for the mill men to raise the price on the home people, what do you think the lumber dealer would say? He would probably tell you that if you didn't care to pay the same price, less the freight, he got for his lumber by shipping it, you could build your house with brick or marble. That is just the point. That \$1.25 tariff keeps the Canadian lumber out and provides a market to which the local mills can ship their lumber and sell it without foreign competition.

For instance, if Canadian lumbermen could come into this market without paying the duty of \$1.25 a thousand feet they could sell their product just \$1.25 a thousand feet cheaper than they can under the tariff and thus hammer down the price all over the country.

Since Mr Ellerbe would not tell us the tariff on dressed lumber, we will give that information. On every thousand feet of dressed lumber shipped into the United States the duty is \$3.50 a thousand feet. That is to say, you pay \$3.50 a thousand feet more for dressed lumber than you would have paid had the tariff been removed on lumber. Not only this, but on every piece of furniture or wooden ware, on every book and newspaper, you pay tribute to the lumber trust, thanks to the tariff that Messrs Ellerbe et al voted to impose upon their constituents.

But, says Mr Ellerbe, the tariff on lumber pays three million dollars into the treasury. One of his opponents estimated the burden of the lumber tariff to the whole United States at three hundred million dollars, which we think is a very conservative figure. Thus we are made to spend ten dollars to get back ten cents. How is that for political economy and statesmanship?

Platform vs Principles.

As an adroit dodger our distinguished friend, the Honorable J E Ellerbe, is about as smooth a proposition as ever perambulated the political pike. We had some curiosity to hear his attempted explanation of one or two little matters pertinent to his campaign for re-election and to say that he side-stepped the issues with ease and grace and nonchalance would do scant justice to the plausible sophistries with which he brushed aside awkward questions and extricated himself from the unpleasantly close places into which he was hemmed by his opponents. Hear him: "They charge me with violating my pledge in voting for a tariff on lumber when the national Democratic platform had declared for free lumber. Here is the pledge I made: 'I will support the political PRINCIPLES and policies of the Democratic party during the term of office for which I may be elected and work in accord with my Democratic associates in Congress on all party questions.' Anything about pledging myself to support the national Democratic PLATFORM

in that?" That is how he "explains" the charge that he repudiated the solemn pledge that he made as a candidate for Congress several months after the Democratic platform as formulated at Denver (which declared for free lumber) had been promulgated throughout the country. Thus Mr Ellerbe by a mere verbal quibble—a juggling of words—tries to make it appear that he never pledged himself to support the platform enunciated by the national Democratic convention, which specifically demanded in the strongest terms the removal of the then existing tariff on lumber.

In trying to make a distinction between "principles" and "platform" Mr Ellerbe is either disingenuous or he has failed to grasp the full significance of the two words.

According to Webster's International Dictionary we have the following definition: "PLATFORM" (applied to a political party)—"A declaration of PRINCIPLES upon which a party proposes to stand." Now, then, we ask in all fairness, how could Mr Ellerbe repudiate the platform of the party without rejecting the principles that were embodied in that platform, which he himself acknowledges he was bound to support?

In this connection Mr Ellerbe declared that if anyone would show him where he promised to support the platform he would withdraw from the race. We leave it to the unprejudiced judge as to whether we have proved our contention, but we don't want Mr Ellerbe to quit the race. If the majority of the people in the Sixth district would have him continue to represent them as their Congressman far be it from us to stand in their way. Personally we have nothing whatever against Mr Ellerbe; on the contrary, our relations with him have always been very pleasant. Nor have we any quarrel with the lumber interests of this district. They are all legitimate enterprises, and we want to see them succeed and prosper. But we feel that as a newspaper we have certain duties incumbent upon us just as binding as those imposed upon Mr Ellerbe in representing his constituents in Congress. According to the lights before us we cannot conscientiously allow to pass unchallenged his explanation of the charges preferred against his official record and in our humble way we will endeavor to give our readers the result of our investigation. Having done this it is a matter of small concern to us whether or not the voters see fit to re-elect Mr Ellerbe. We are working in the interest of no particular candidate and up to this time have not even fully decided which one we shall vote for. Having no interest in a saw-mill nor any intention of building a house in the near future, we have no axe to grind and feel free to state the facts as we see them without bias or prejudice.

Tillman's Tea Tariff Vote.

In some of his speeches Mr Ellerbe refers to the fact that Senator Tillman voted for a tax on tea in extenuation of his (Ellerbe's) having bolted the rules of the party. There are several distinct points of difference and the two cases are in no wise analogous. First, the national platform of the Democratic party did not declare for free tea as it did for free

lumber. Second, tea is not a necessity, like lumber, but a luxury, upon which it is very good Democratic doctrine to impose a tax for revenue only. A man can do without a cup of tea and not suffer hardship, but he can't do without a house to live in.

Why "cuss" the trusts for grinding down the people and then send a man back to Congress who openly works in their interests?

We have frequently heard it from Mr Ellerbe's supporters that his opponents were gaining for Ellerbe by "jumping on a" at every meeting. If this be true we are much deceived in the calibre of the people of Williamsburg county and the Sixth district. If his opponents did not expose him how are the voters to know that their public servant has betrayed his trust? Certainly they do not expect Mr Ellerbe to tell on himself. Not one word was said here about Mr Ellerbe's private character and if it can be shown that his political record is spotted they should blame Mr Ellerbe who made it and not the men who turn on the light. The public officer who has done his duty invites rather than resents a careful scrutiny of his official record.

Congressman Ellerbe makes the remarkable statement—and his partisan followers blindly repeat it—that the tariff on lumber for which Ellerbe voted does not raise the price to the local consumer, but only to some vague, far-away people to whom the lumber is shipped. Can any intelligent man believe such absurd argument? If the tariff affects one part of the country doesn't it affect the whole nation? If Mr Ellerbe or any of his supporters will demonstrate the truth of his (Ellerbe's) contention The Record will take back every criticism of his vote on the lumber tariff. But it can't be done. Any one with ordinary common sense knows that if the manufacturer is permitted to raise the price of his product by stifling competition, the consumer must pay for it.

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Is now Open and Ready for Business.

Our paid up Capital is \$30,000. We invite attention to our officers and directorate, and respectfully solicit the patronage of the business men of Williamsburg County.

On accounts in our Savings Department we pay the usual four per cent. per annum. We stand ready always to extend any reasonable accommodation to our customers and guarantee protection to depositors.

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We are closing out our entire line of Summer Goods at very close prices to make room for a large stock of Fall and Winter Goods which we have purchased.

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OUR TAILORS have recently given us a discount of from \$3.00 to \$7.00 on all Summer Suits and Trousers. Our customers get the benefit of this reduction.

In Our Grocery Department we still handle the line of eatables that have made our place so popular with the ladies of Kingstree and the surrounding country.

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