

SOUTH CAROLINA'S WHISKEY SCANDAL.

Ex-Bookkeeper Makes Some Sweeping Charges.

Columbia, Oct 12.—Mr. D. A. G. Ozuz, late bookkeeper of the commissioner at the State dispensary, has furnished the press with the following statement. There is as much more to come and it is said to be equally as interesting reading:

A GARD TO THE PUBLIC.

It seems that the Augean stables need cleaning. I am no Hercules, but I can at least do a part of the work. I have been connected with the dispensary for over six years. That I have honest and faithful in the discharge of my duties is proven by the fact that when my enemies on the board of control wished to displace me, the only excuse they could find for my removal was an allegation that I had violated a rule of the board—a rule which two members of the board assert was modified to permit that which I was discharged for doing. I am a strong believer in the dispensary law and have done all in my power to make it a success. I still believe with its administration in the hands of honest, pure and able men it is the very best solution of the liquor problem.

During my years of service in the dispensary, I have seen a number of things done which I knew were wrong. These I reported to members of the board, who were, I knew, honest, able and pure. They thought, however, that it was best to say nothing publicly about the wrongdoing until men like themselves were a majority of the board. They believed in the dispensary and earnestly strove to make it a success. In their judgment, the dispensary could not withstand the effect of such exposures, if its control was in the hands of the men against whom these exposures were made. They wanted to save the law for the great potential good that was in it. But as the contrary element has grown so confident of its power that it has gone to turning honest men out of office at the dispensary, so as to fill all places with its tools, thus facilitating the carrying out of its plans, I deem it my duty to make public all I know, so as to expose these men, deeming it better that the dispensary should die than to continue under their control, but hoping that the effect of my criticism will be to drive such men out of the dispensary and place its management in the hands of men above reproach. I make this statement because I do not wish to be considered a sorehead or as exposing things I condoned as long as I held office.

I stand ready and hereby offer my services to the board in helping them sift out all wrong doing of whatever kind which exists and help them place the dispensary law where it should be, above reproach, and to enforce its regulations in accordance with law and to conduct it in the interests of the people and not the gang which now controls it.

Very respectfully, D. A. G. Ozuz

AN OPEN LETTER.

To the State Board of Control.

As I have by a vote of a majority of your members been denied the hearing to which I had a right and which I had been promised by your chairman, I intend making my defense in the public prints. At the same time, I will go further and show the characters of the men by whom I was so summarily deposed, and of their fellow conspirators. I am deposed because I violated an order of the board of control—an order which the two honorable members of the board assert was modified to permit the very action which was alleged as the reason for my removal. I will show how members of the board violate the dispensary law and how employees at the dispensary, who are pets of the majority faction of the board violate the board's orders and are not even reprimanded for their misconduct. As the majority faction seems anxious to wash dirty linen, I will first prove that mine is clean and then give them some dirty linen of their own to clean.

Now, first, as to my own linen. Chairman Miles temporarily suspended me on charge of violating an order of the board by selling a bottle of gin at the State dispensary and not immediately reporting it to the shipping clerk. Chairman Miles says he personally notified me of the passage of that order by the board. He did incidentally in the course of a conversation one morning at the dispensary inform me that such an order had been passed. A day or two later, Mr. Douthit came into my office and got the petty cash book and wanted to enter some contraband whiskey he had just sold. I told him that it was against the rules to put it on that book and mentioned to him the order which the board had passed a few days before and which Mr. Miles had spoken to me about. Mr. Douthit replied: "I know what I am doing; this is all right. I have just come from the board room and they have passed a resolution giving

me the power to do this. I stayed there and heard them pass it. Turn over a new page of your petty cash book and enter this sale." I did this and headed the page "Cash, special," and entered the first item which was one gallon of contraband whiskey bought by J. F. Walker for \$1.80 Mr. Douthit said: "Now when anything else is sold that is the way it must be put on the book under that first item. At the end of the month these items must be entered on the shipping clerk's book and billed to a Columbia dispensary, to whom we must turn over the cash we have received for them." I replied: "Yes, and I will make that dispenser receipt this book for them and the money."

Under these instructions from Commissioner Douthit, one day when he was absent from the city I sold a bottle of gin to M. F. Nixon for \$1 and entered it as instructed. When Mr. Douthit returned I informed him and he said it was all right. It will thus be seen I thought I was doing my duty and simply carried out the orders of the commissioner, my superior officer.

There is a disagreement among the members of the board of control as to its action with reference to sales of contraband at the State dispensary. All agree that the board passed a resolution forbidding such sales at the first part of the September meeting. On the last day of that meeting, Commissioner Douthit appeared before the board and stated reasons why, in his judgment, it would be inadvisable to permit that rule to stand. After his statement Mr. Williams introduced a resolution, which was passed, which Mr. Douthit understood modified the previous order and permitted sales of contraband at the State dispensary, provided they were entered on the commissioner's petty cash book, and invoiced at the end of the month to a Columbia dispenser and the cash received for them turned over to that dispenser. Messrs. Boykin and Williams, two members of the board, assert such a resolution was passed.

If the Williams resolution was meant to accomplish any purpose at all it was meant to modify the rule forbidding sales of contraband at the State dispensary, yet as it appears on the minutes of the board it is construed by the majority faction to be a mere reaffirmation of that rule. If that construction be accepted as correct, the board was guilty of the absurdity of twice at one meeting passing a resolution permitting the commissioner to do something which the dispensary law itself gave him the right to do without any resolutions of the board—that is to send contraband to a dispenser for sale. As recorded, the Williams resolution permits sales of contraband, "through the regular channels," which words Chairman Miles admits he told Clerk Webb to add to the resolutions, claiming it was an amendment which had been adopted but which Mr. Boykin, who was in the chair when the resolution was adopted, denies was ever voted on by the board. I do not believe that as first recorded, the Williams resolution had those words attached to it. The writing of those words in the minute book gives evidence that it was not done at the same time that the body of the Williams resolution was pinned in that record, because the slant of the words "through regular channels," indicate that they were written by a man sitting in a different position from that occupied when the other part of the Williams resolution was written. I am satisfied that they were added to give color to the contention that the board had not given permission for the sales of contraband, when the majority faction decided to make an excuse for my removal.

The majority faction, which is plotting to get absolute control of the dispensary, filling all positions with its henchmen, had decided to remove all employees who were not subservient to it. They did not intend to fully and fairly investigate the conduct of such employees, but preferred one sided testimony. At the September meeting of the board Messrs. Haselden and Williams were appointed to investigate the contraband room and its accounts. Mr. Haselden wanted Mr. Williams to meet him in Columbia on Wednesday following the adjournment of the September meeting of the board. Mr. Williams said he had important engagements up to and including Wednesday, but would meet Mr. Haselden in Columbia the day after Wednesday. They parted with the understanding that Mr. Haselden was to notify Mr. Williams when to come to Columbia to go to work on the investigation, which he never did, but returned to Columbia before Wednesday and gave to the newspapers a statement that he was going to Harris Springs. Mr. Williams saw that statement in the papers and continued to wait for a notification when to come to Columbia. The next thing he saw was a statement that he had been subpoenaed on the committee by Mr. Robinson, without notice to him.

It was then two of a kind and Mr. Haselden was at liberty to proceed with his one sided investigation. Neither I nor Mr. Douthit were asked for any explanation of the charges concocted by this one-sided process.

On the night of the 20th or 21st of September T. C. Robinson, who had loosened his tongue with liquor told me in front of Huggins' store, on Main street, that "Haselden had set a trap for Douthit and had caught him in it." After asking him several times what the trap was, he said it was "in

selling contraband liquor at the State dispensary and not having it entered upon the shipping clerk's book as required by the resolutions of the board at the last board meeting." Was the trap the addition of the words, "through the regular channels?" Probably at the time of that conversation Mr. Robinson did not know that Chief Conspirator Haselden wanted my scalp and, therefore, spoke as a strong friend, which he always claimed to be, especially since 1896. I and my relatives worked for and carried Edgefield county for him as the candidate for State superintendent of education. But when Boss Haselden popped the whip over his back he forgot his friendship and sense of obligations to me, and also forgot his statement to me after hearing my explanation of my sale of that bottle of gin, that he did not see how I could have done otherwise than obey the instructions of the commissioner, especially as there was a misunderstanding in the board as to the orders given the commissioner. He advised me to appear before the board and make my statement, and said he did not see how the board could do otherwise than accept it as sufficient justification of my action. And yet he voted to make my suspension permanent without giving me a chance to appear before the board and give that explanation in reply to the charges against me.

The night before Mr. Robinson voted to make my suspension permanent he told me in the Columbia hotel, that he could never be accused of being ungrateful, and that he owed a debt of gratitude for the way my brother and others of my friends and relatives had worked for him. He added: "I believe you ought to be reinstated, and will so vote. If you find that you cannot get along with the new commissioner, you can resign in good standing, and not be kicked out." The very next morning he told me that my chances for reinstatement were bad. I said that I did not see how that could be if he stuck to his promise.

He replied that he was my friend and had nothing against me, but he would have to vote against me, as the members of the board had brought great pressure on him to vote that way as a personal courtesy to them. I told him he was a d—d friend to a man, to help others stick mud on him as a "courtesy" to them, and bid him go on and do his d—d dirty work. And he did it.

I have shown that there was no just cause for my suspension. But I was not suspended for what I did, though that was alleged as the cause. I was suspended because a political clique wanted me removed from the dispensary. They are bound together by a community of interest, their predominant feeling being a thirst for revenge and a desire to get complete control of the dispensary for use as a political machine and more venal aims, which can be understood from the charges and specifications which I will make. When Haselden and Robinson, the investigating committee, were in Columbia they left the work of conducting the investigation as to the contraband, which a committee was appointed to do, to Bookkeeper Mobley and Inspector Moody and spent their time caucusing with Chairman Miles and the conspirators. A caucus was held in the office of a State officer and it was decided to suspend me without giving me any notice or asking me for any explanation of the charges against me. This dermination was talked around Columbia nearly an hour before I was notified of my suspension: a friend of mine heard it at the upper end of Main street and walked down town to a telephone and told me that the gang had fixed to make it hot for me and to do me.

The day after my temporary suspension Chairman Miles gave the newspapers an interview which contained a he and a slanderous insinuation, whose absolute falsity he could have easily informed himself of. He said: "I did not know until this that commissioner Douthit had been doing the same thing, else I would have suspended him along with Mr. Ozuz." The afternoon before the interview was given out I told Mr. Miles I had made a sale of contraband because my superior officer, Commissioner Douthit, had made such sales and instructed me to do likewise, and I showed him on the book the records of such sales by Mr. Douthit.

After hearing what I had to say on the subject, Mr. Miles declined to revoke my temporary suspension then, but said he would think it over during the night and decide next morning, admitting that it looked hard to suspend me when I had no intent to do wrong and thought I was doing right in obeying the orders of my superior officer. The morning after my suspension he went to Spartanburg. When he returned he said to Mr. Douthit: "If I had known when I suspended Mr. Ozuz what I know now, I would not have suspended him." And yet the old hypocrite, after admitting that he had not treated me fairly, appealed to the members of the board to confirm my suspension and thus confirm his action as a courtesy due him by the members of the board.

The slanderous insinuation in his statement "that the money obtained from the sale of contraband had been

properly turned over, so far as he knew." He knew it had been properly turned over, because I told him so and showed him the record.

There is another lie told by Mr. Miles. He promised me that I should be accorded a full hearing by the board before a vote was taken on the motion to make my suspension permanent. But the vote was taken without a hearing being given me, though I was on hand waiting for it. When I taxed Mr. Miles with his perfidy he at first tried to deny having made such a promise. After I forced him to admit it he said, "Yes; but I forgot it." Then he returned to the board room and said to the board, "Mr. Ozuz wanted a hearing but did not know it was my place to get it for him."

While on the question of Mr. Miles' veracity, I might state that he is a liar by his own confession. I have heard him say on several occasions: "I have told more lies since I have been on the board than in all my life before." I dare him to deny that he made this statement; if he does I will prove it on him.

In my case Mr. Miles is a great stickler for strict obedience to the rules of the board, but he is more lax in other cases. I have shown him that it is very doubtful if there was such a rule as was claimed I violated, but there are other rules of the board as to which there is no doubt and violations of which have been reported to Mr. Miles, chairman, without any action being taken by him.

The board passed a rule forbidding employees of the dispensary to drink on the premises. Printed copies of that rule were posted all over the building. Shipping Clerk Black had been reported to Chairman Miles time and again for drinking and being drunk and cursing in the dispensary against the positive rule of the board, but he has not even been reprimanded with Black, much less suspend him. Yet he suspends me without an investigation of the charge against me.

By his position as chairman of the board, Mr. Miles was able to give or get the job of receiving clerk for his nephew, F. L. Moore Young, of Clinton. One has only to refer to the books Young tries to keep to find his utter unfitness for the job. Young does not know the multiplication table and could not count a carload of goods correctly if his life depended upon it. Time and again he has made gross errors in his count of goods received at the dispensary, though his count was relied upon to verify the invoices for which the dispensary paid.

Commissioner Douthit is a bonded officer. It is his duty to pay for goods received at the dispensary. If he pays for goods which has not been received, his bond can be sued for the recovery of the money so paid. Naturally, Mr. Douthit endeavored to make the receiving clerk, whose reports were the basis for his payments of goods received at the dispensary, efficient. 'scharge his duties. He reported a number of Young's serious mistakes to Chairman Miles, who, however, did not suspend his nephew, but got angry with Mr. Douthit and myself, imagining that we were persecuting the boy. His votes against myself and Mr. Douthit are part of his revenge.

It used to be an unwritten rule that nobody under 21 years of age should be employed in the dispensary. Young is only 17, but the temptation of his \$50 a month salary was too strong. His childish nature is shown by the fact that he used to play pranks on the men at work in the dispensary, throwing water on them and hitting them with paddles when they were bending over. Because of these pranks, which were out of place in a business institution, Commissioner Douthit on one occasion suspended Young for a week. This suspension increased Mr. Miles' feeling of resentment towards Mr. Douthit.

Young played some of his pranks on a man named Looper, who was one of the best hands in the dispensary. Because Looper objected and told Young what he would do to him if he did not let him alone, Chairman Miles took advantage of his office as chairman and Looper's subordinate position and vilely cursed him in the dispensary and threatened to cut his "d—d heart out."

Talking about ignorance and unfitness for position, Mr. Miles is chairman of the board of control, yet he did not know that the dispensary had to have a retail United States license to do business, as well as a wholesale license, until informed of that fact by me the day he suspended me. As one of the reasons he gave for suspending me, he said that my selling liquor at retail at the dispensary, I had laid the dispensary officials liable to prosecution by the internal revenue department for selling liquor at retail without a retail license. He was very much surprised when I showed him tacked up on the wall a dispensary internal revenue license for retailing, which it had to have to do business.

Speaking of retail sales at the dispensary, less than three months ago Chairman Miles bought of himself and sold to himself at the State dispensary a half pint of alcohol, which he bought at the price to dispensers and not consumers, thus cheating the town and country out of their profits. Why doesn't he suspend himself?

In Haselden's and Robinson's report of the investigation made by Bookkeeper Mobley and Inspector Moody there are no charges against me, and he produced no proof against me of any wrong doing in his affidavit and yet, when Mr. Haselden's report was read and after Mr. Douthit's removal

be. Haselden, moved to make my suspension permanent without hearing me as he had promised to do the night before he made the report. He voluntarily told me in the Columbia hotel that he had finished his report and that he had not touched me in it nor had any evidence of my wrong doing and when my case came up he would promise to hear me and then decide how he would vote. The next morning he moved to make my suspension permanent without hearing my explanation. When the board adjourned for dinner after voting to remove Mr. Douthit I taxed Haselden about his conduct in going back on his promise about hearing me and I made him admit in Mr. Boykin's presence that he said he told me he had no charges against me and no evidence of wrong doing, and when I asked him to explain his action in making a motion to permanently suspend me, he said: "I just done that to bring the matter up; I don't know how I will vote on it but will decide after hearing you." What do you call such double-dealing and speaking evasion? Is it acting a lie as well as telling one? In getting up his evidence he tried to keep everything hid and would speak around like he was ashamed of his dirty work and when asked if he wanted anything, or if anything could be explained to him if he did not understand it he would say he was not looking for anything. Seemed to be afraid Mr. Douthit and I would find out what he was driving at and explain it so fully to him that he could not have the heart to distort it to make it fit his vile ends. He seems to hate justice and with his perversion paralyzes truth.

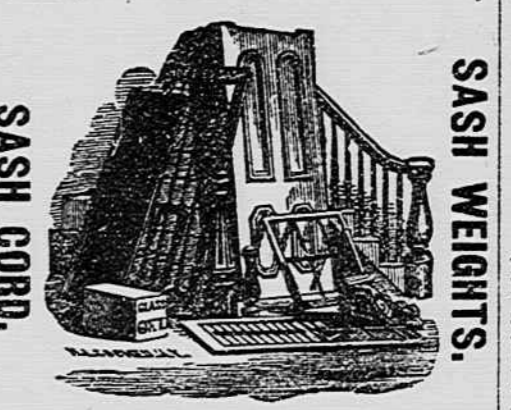
Mr. Haselden now poses as condemning retail sales at the dispensary as contrary to the spirit of the dispensary bill, but in March of this very year, while Haselden was still chairman, he personally sold at the State dispensary to a committee in charge of a banquet to the visiting congressmen, champagne, whiskey, wine, rum and brandy to the amount of \$106.85, about the largest bill that was ever retailed at the dispensary, selling to them at the price to dispensers and not to consumers, thereby swindling the town and county out of their profits.

D. A. G. Ozuz.

The second chapter will be found on another page. The succeeding chapters will be published later.

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