THOMAS MAKES SERIOUS CHARGES

The Ex-Railroad Commissioner Begins a Book of Revelations.

Charges of Incompetency and Rascality Against His Late Associates -- The Governor Called on to Take a Hand.

Wedgefield, Dec 18, 1899. Editor Item: Some months ago I read a communication in your paper signed "Sumter Farmer" extolling the railroad commission for the reduction of the cotton rate. I was surprised when I learned that the article was written by one of Sumter's most intelligent representatives The argument used was a rehash of what the commission had to say of themselves. It was also somewhat of a rebuke to me, for I have repeat edly declared that the Board of Railroad Commissioners are an utterly incompetent body, and I believe I can show this by the cotton rate which so delighted "Sumter Farm er" On page 42 railroad commissioners' report 1837, "Commissioner Thomas advocated and tried to reduce the cotton rate to which the majority would not agree " At that time the net income of all the rail roads was \$2,238,579 72, and the price of cotton was about 5 cents This same majority reduced the cot ton rate in 1899 when the net income of all the railroads was \$2.162,718 04, and the price of cotton is 7 cents Now, why refuse to reduce the rate on cotton when the railroads could better stand the reduction and the people were more in need of it? The answer is that one of the majori-

ty is now a candidate for reelection

and desires to commend himself to

the people If this is a fact, is it

not true, that the people have been

swindied out of two years' reduced

rate on cotton to suit the political

convenience of the majority faction

of the board? It is the duty of

"Sumter Farmer" to find out the

facts from the records sent to the

legislature since he is the people's

representative in that body. The board fixed a standard cotton rate, that is, the same rate for every road. The law says, "The board shall make a just and reasonable rate for each road doing business in the State" The records of 1898 show that the S. C. & Ga railroad male a net income of \$398,828 79. while Midland, made a net income of \$14,-921 45 The S C & G hauled 350,447 tons one mile, and the C Midland hauled 8,580 tons one mile Did the board execute the law when they fixed the same rate for this poor road as for the rich one It would be indeed instructive to know how these widely different figures Farmer" think of the taxing power maker praises them

What is the result of this rate lina: making? It forces the stronger to gobbie up ali the weaker roads. It destroys competition and forces com-

Sometime ago Sumter felt the need of competition, and the citizens secured a connection with the S C. & G. railroad, before its completion the Southern railway owned both convert, divert and as propriate the of them, and the people who put in greater portion of said sums to their their time, rights of way, &c, are own use And further, that the said lost in the shuffle, and Sumter is without competition, for nobody is Secretary D. P. Duncan then and green enough to suppose that the there the greater part of said sums, Southern railway and the Atlantic the property of said State, did take Coast Line would fight for freights and appropriate to their own use which they can pool

All railroad intelligence agree that "competition is impossible where of December, 1899 combination is possible " A standard cotton rate is illegal, imjurious, absolutely foolish and proof of in-

competency I have taken advantage of "Sum ter Farmer's" communication for a personal privilege He said : "It is said that the railroad commissioners do nothing but draw their salaries I don't concur in this view" Nei their do I, for I know they occasion ally draw sober breaths They did commissioners' office in Columbia in draw \$96 out of the treasury and pay Richland county in said State on the the Alliance porter They did draw 1st day of September last that W. D. \$100 and paid the expenses of two Evans, J C Wilborn and C W. commissioners to Washington to at Garris, constituting the Boa of tend a two days' convention, when Railroad Commissioners, did nake they had free passes to Washington and put in force an unlawful and I went to Washington a few weeks hurtful cotton rate, being the same afterwards I went and returned in rate for every road, regardless of the a sleeper, the trip cost me \$10 Tue different conditions, when the law commissioners signed my name to requires a just and reasonable rate the report without authority or ex for each road doing business in the cuse and made me a party to what I State. That the said W D Evans, Moulding & Building believe are illegal charges I wrote J C Wilborn and C W. Garris in the following letter to the board and disregard of the law as to rates are they made me no reply :

Wedgefield, March 3 1899. Hon W. D Evans, Chairman Board great detriment and loss of the peoof Railroad Commissioners.

Dear Sir: I received a copy of the | Sworn to before me this 18th day of railroad commissioners' report. 1898. December, 1899 My name was signed to the report | B P Kelley, Magistrate.

without authority or excuse, and I beg to enqure about some matters I have been made to approve The State is made to pay for the porter State of South Carolina-Sumter full time when the alliance exchange has always paid half his wages. In 1893 under Secretary Bartlett the State paid for the same service \$96. In 1893 the State paid for stamps \$29, in 1898 \$41. Two commissioners attended the convention in Washing ton and the State paid \$100 expenses You have made me responsible and I beg you will explain the above and oblige, Yours truly,

H R Thomas "Sumter Farmer" is a State officer especially charged with the duty of protecting the interests of Sumter's citizens. The illegal cotton rate is detrimental to the interest of every citizen in that it destroys competi tion and makes people victims of a railroad trust. No trust, is the democratic slogan for 1900, and yet the South Carolina railroad commissioners, contrary to law, through pure ignorance, force a railroad trust on the people, and are commended by a Sumter democratic law maker. It is "Sumter Farmer's" duty to officially find out by what authority the Board of Railroad Commissioners ignore the law of the State to make a just rate for each road and instead fixes the same rate for every road, to the destruction of competition and to the injury of the people, and how it cost \$100 to go to Washington on free passes, and thus protect the taxpayers To assist him in his duty I make the following affidavits and forward to the governor through him, our representative

H R Thomas

Wedgefield, Dec 18, 1899. Hon M B McSweeney, Governor of

South Carolina Sir : I forward you some affidavits and a letter which I wrote the Board of Railroad Commissioners last March in regard to what I believe was a misappropriation of public funds. to which they made me a party by sign ing my name to the report of 1898 without my consent As they re fused to answer a respectful letter asking for information, in duty to myself and the people whose servant I was, I send you several affidavits as is required in Sec 22, Art IV of the constitution of 1895. In the interest of the State. I beg you will recommend the legislature to investi gate the fertilizer and cotton rates, oth of which I believe are illegal and against the public interest

No 1 MISAPPROPRIATION OF PUB-LIC FUNDS

another corporation, the Carolina State of South Carolina-Sumter for nearly every road It is impossi-

Personally appeared before me, B P Kelley, a magistrate for and in said county and State, H R Thomas who, on oath, says he is informed and believes that on sundry times shown in office cash book and report for the fiscal year 1898 at the railroad commissioners' office in Columbia in could be made to produce the same Richland county in said State W D. result or rate What would "Sumter Evans, chairman. J. C. Wilborn and Secretary D P Duncan was guilty of of this county if they were to tax signing my name to the railroad com every citizen of the county the same | missioners' report of 1898 sent in to regerdless of the different condi | the legislature without my authority tions? This is what the Board of or consent and without excuse. mak-Railroad Commissioners have done, ing me a pary to the following for which assinity a Sumter law misappropriation of public funds the property of the State of South Caro-

Paid to alliance porter, \$96 Paid to Commissioners W. D Evans and J C. Wilborn \$100 for bination to the detriment of every attendance on a two days' convenfarmer and business man in the tion in Washington, to which city they had free transportation.

The board are charged with the safe keeping and disbursement of the contingent fund approriated by the MEDICINES, legislature and did then and there W D Evans. J C. Wilborn and

H R. Thomas. Sworn to before me this 18th day B P Keiley, Magistrate

No 2

COTTON RATE.

State of South Carolina-Sumter

Personally appeared before me, B P Keiley, a magistrate for and in said county and State, H R Thomas who, on oath, says that he is inform ed and believes that at the railroad destroying competition and forcing on the people a railroad trust to the

H R Thomas

ple

No 3. FERTILIZER RATE.

Personally appeared before me, B. P Kelley, a magistrate for and in State paid porter \$29, in 1898 the said county in said State, H. R. Thomas who, on oath, says that on the 28th day of November, 1895, at the railroad commissioners' office in Columbia in Richland county in said State, W. D Evans and J C Wil born, a majority of the Board of Railroad Commissioners, against the protest of H. R Thomas, the minori ty member of said board, did put in force a fertilizer rate based on errors of about 800,000 dollars in the net income of all the roads as shown on pages 177 and 186 report 1895, and that the majority of the board did not know whether the Southern rail road lost \$93,107 28 or made \$442,. 961 65 by the year's operations as shown on pages 177 and 186 report 1895 And further that said W. D. Evans and J. C. Wilborn did enter into a trade with the railroads of the State against which said H. R. Thomas protested as shown on page 50 report 1896, where said W. D Evans and J. C Wilborn agreed to raise rates on other commodities to induce the roads to work an illegal fortilizer rate When the roads came for their pay and asked for a raise of rate under the trade or agreement said H R Thomas advocated a reduction of the cotton rate instead as shown on pages 31 to 42 report 1897 Said W. D Evans and J. C Wilborn voted against cotton reduction At that time the net income of all the roads was \$2,238 579 72 and the price of cotton was about 5 cents In 1899 said W. D Evans and J. C. Wilborn did reduce the rate on cot ton when the net income of all the roads was \$2,162,718 04, and the price of cotton is 7 cents. And fur ther that the fertilizer rate put in force reduced the rate from the Colubia mills into the Piedmont section 25 per cent and from the Charleston mills 8 per cent in the same section The Charleston mill fixed the price all over the State This was an illegal discrimination in favor of the Columbia mills of 17 per cent, about 75 cents a ton on about 70 000 tons, equal to about \$50,000 a year. The fertilizer rate was made by Secretary D P Duncan, who was the agent for the Columbia mills and who was the beneficiary of his own act, supported by said W. D. Evans and J. C. Wil born The discriminative and illegal fertilizer rate based on errors of

> each road or on \$800,000 errors. H R Thomas Sworn to before me this 18th day

about \$800,000 has rebbed the ped-

pie in the Piedmont section alone

out of some \$200,000 on the one

commodity of fertilizer since 1895.

Report 1895, pages 177 and 186,

shows the impossible two incomes

ble to figure a just rate as the law

of December, 1899 B P Kelley. Magistrate

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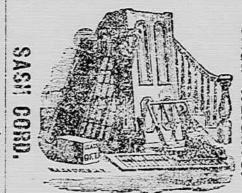
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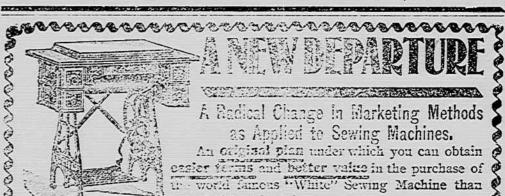
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TESTIMONIALS.

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From your friend and student

W. W. GREGG.

From one of our first graduates. He has a | COMPLETED SSORTHAND IN THREE MONTES.

Blackville, Barnwell Co . Mcb 30, 1899. Prof. W. H. Newberry, President C. B. C., Mr. W. H. Newberry, President Columbia My Dear Sir: During the month of Janu-Business College, Columbia, S. C.

My Dear Sur It effords me pleasure to ary, 1885, was the time I began a business course in the Columbia Business College I testify to the merits of the Columbia Business Although a stranger to the city, I was well Callinge. I do not hesitate to say that I have comed by professors and students, which received substantial and beneficial results. I made me feel at bome. Having completed cheerfully recommend it to any person desirmy course. I accepted a position as book. ous of securing a business education. Durkee, or for one of the largest dry goods firms ing my course of study at the college there to the city, which position I held for one was uniform kind and courteous treatment . 15,000 00 year, and then changed to the grocery firm and attention. Close attention was given of James M. Green, one of the leading fancy , the students by the instructors to insure acgrocers in the city which position I still hold curney and thoroughness in their studies, Owing to the thorough training received at and my progress was rapid, and I presume, Transacts a general banking business; also, the columbia Business College, have been efficient, as I obtained a situation as soon as the rate of 4 per cent. per annum, payable siways look nack to the time spent in the hand course in three months. I do not think Coinmbia Business College with pleasure. I | the Columbia Business College can be excelled

> your college grand soccess, I am Your friend and old student, (Miss) DAISY STOKES.