

The Watchman and Southron.

THE SUMTER WATCHMAN, Established April, 1850.

'Be Just and Fear not--Let all the ends Thou Aims't at be thy Country's, Thy God's and Truth's.'

SUMTER SOUTHRON, Established June, 1860.

Consolidated Aug. 2, 1881.

SUMTER, S. C., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1909.

Series—Vol. XXX. No. 30.

The Watchman and Southron.

Published Wednesday and Saturday
—BY—
STEELE PUBLISHING COMPANY

SUMTER, S. C.

Terms:
\$1.50 per annum—in advance.

Advertisements:
One Square first insertion.....\$1.00
Every subsequent insertion.... .50
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\$100,000 TO FIGHT THE BELL.

Independent Telephone Companies
Tell of Their Plans.

New York, Dec. 1.—Independent telephone interests have an available fighting fund of \$100,000, subscribed to do battle against the giant Bell telephone interests wherever the latter attempts to wipe out competition.

This was the gist of a statement made today by D. A. Wilson, of New York, prominently identified with the independent interests, as he testified before the State inquiry into telephone and telegraph companies now going on here.

"The disposition on the part of the Bell company is to annihilate the independent companies all over the country," said Mr. Wilson. "The National Association of Independent Telephone Companies has created a fund of \$100,000 to fight the Bell people wherever they try to wipe out competition. This was formed three months ago. The way the Bell company deteriorates the independent companies is to buy a company here and there, thus breaking up the chain. There are some 3,000,000 telephones in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut that cannot enter New York city because there is no independent company here."

The inquiry, to which considerable importance is attached in view of its possible effect upon the shaping of legislation having to do with the public service corporations, was begun by the telephone and telegraph companies going to court. Here are the subjects of the inquiry, which is being made by the joint commission appointed at the last session of the legislature. Every phase of the telephone and telegraph situation is to be examined into, and the powers given the committee are such as to make the possible scope of its investigation equally as unrestricted as were the insurance and gas investigations.

By reason of the nation-embracing character of the business done by the companies in the telephone and telegraph field here the investigation has far more than local significance, and the preliminary indications are that it will awaken widespread interest.

The committee is presided over by Senator George A. Davis, of Buffalo. Prior to the beginning of its sessions in the City Hall here today, it had taken evidence in Buffalo on telephone conditions there.

Independent telephone interests were represented today by Edward A. Maillard, an official of the New York and Eastern Telephone Company, a corporation practically absorbed, he said, by the Great Eastern Telephone Company.

Mr. Maillard declared that all the independents wanted was a chance. They craved no more than that and did not want any State regulation, he added.

It was announced this evening that Geo. J. Gould, president of the Western Union Telegraph Company and Theodore N. Vall, president of the New York Telephone Company, will be called to testify at an early day before the legislative committee now investigating the telephone and telegraph business with a view to placing these corporations under the control of the Public Service Commission.

Mr. Gould and Mr. Vall, who were prominent in the recent gigantic consolidation of telephone and telegraph interests, will be called upon to testify as to the extent of the business in the city and State. Their opinions regarding the advisability of placing the companies under the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission will also be sought by the committee.

Miss Jeanette Calder, a pretty young woman of Columbia, committed suicide by swallowing bi-chloride or mercury tablets. Three days before she took the poison she entered suit against W. T. Meyers for breach of promise.

THREE MILLION BALES SHORT.

NATIONAL GINNERS' REPORT PLACES AMOUNT AT 8,880,000 BALES.

Statement Gives Number This Year As Much Less Than Last—By States.

Memphis, Tenn., Dec. 3.—The National Ginner's Association, in its monthly report, issued late today, estimates that 8,880,000 bales of cotton have been ginned up to December 1 of the present season, as compared with 11,008,000 during the same period of last year. The report by States follows:

Alabama 901,000; Arkansas 614,000; Florida 55,000; Georgia 1,687,000; Louisiana 241,000; Mississippi 878,000; Missouri and Virginia 50,000; North Carolina 533,000; Oklahoma 509,000; South Carolina 990,000; Tennessee 203,000; Texas 3,210,000. Total, 8,880,000.

SYSTEMATIC ROBBING.

Washington, Dec. 5.—Both the producers of cotton and the dealers in that commodity are the victims of the system of trading in vogue on the cotton exchanges of the country.

This is the burden of parts 4 and 5 of the report of the commissioner of corporations, Herbert Knox Smith, on the conduct of such exchanges. The practice of dealing in futures, as it is carried on at present, is condemned, although the report does not condemn the existence of the exchange.

"The brief discussion of general speculation in this report," says Mr. Smith, "recognizes the possibilities for good inherent in a great central market like a cotton exchange, and the need that this good be developed and evils eliminated by regulations in line with economic law."

The report is especially condemnatory of the dealings in futures, branding this form of speculation as pure gambling and highly injurious to legitimate trade. In quotations for "future" deliveries of cotton, the market is so uncertain and so many elements of chance enter into the transaction that all bids are made at a much lower figure than those offered for cotton actually in existence.

The effect of these fictitious quotations, the report points out, tends to mislead the cotton planter as to the true value of his crop, honestly grown. In addition, it leads brokers to "play" both sides of the market to protect themselves against loss in such trades, with the result that the producer is forced to pay in the end, while the farmer loses likewise.

The report, while recognizing that the exchanges in New Orleans and New York are necessary, does not mince words in criticizing the New York exchange. After declaring that the New Orleans methods of conducting the transactions in cotton followed natural lines, the report draws attention to the fact that it has been proved that abnormal depressions in the future price in New York "were almost wholly due to improper artificial conditions now maintained by the New York cotton exchange. By maintaining them, the New York exchange is responsible for a very real injury to the producer and merchant."

In closing the letter to President Taft which accompanied his report, Commissioner Smith again takes occasion to reprove the New York exchange. He said:

"After the publication of the earlier parts of this report, the New Orleans and New York cotton exchanges established special committees, instructed to consider the system of their exchanges and to cooperate therein with the commissioner of corporations. Conferences have been held by the commissioner with both committees. On the part of New Orleans this cooperation was very complete, resulting in certain important improvements in the rules of that exchange. After more than a year's investigation, the committee of the New York exchange has not yet made any final report or taken any substantial action."

The commissioner touches on the activities of the various organizations of cotton growers, all formed with a view of controlling both price and production. He believes, however, that so numerous are the factors of supply and demand in determining the price of cotton that it is impossible to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion as to the extent of influence exerted by such organizations.

AUDUBON SOCIETY MEETING.

M. O. DANTZLER, OF ORANGE-BURG, ELECTED PRESIDENT.

Need for State Game and Fish Commission Discussed—Bill Requiring Hunters to Take Out Licenses to be Presented to Legislature—Work of Retiring President Highly Commended.

Columbia, Dec. 3.—The annual meeting of the Audubon Society was held here this afternoon, when plans for the coming year were discussed and officers elected. One of the important matters considered was that of placing before the Legislature the need of a fish and game commission. A bill along this line was introduced at the last session of the General Assembly, but all the Audubon Society bills were postponed and have a place on the calendar now. The commissioner that would act under such a bill would save a great amount of work and would systematize the appointment of game wardens.

Charleston has one of the largest memberships in the country in Audubon Society work. When Secretary Rice looked over the list last year there were 160 members registered from Charleston. This is the largest number in one city in the South. Charleston's members, says Mr. Rice, have shown much interest in the work of the Society.

Officers of the Society.

At the meeting of the Society today the following officers were named:

President—M. O. Dantzer, Orangeburg.

Vice President—W. H. Gibbs, Columbia.

Secretary—James Henry Rice, Jr., Summerville.

Treasurer—A. R. Heyward, Jr., Columbia.

The directors are: B. F. Taylor, Columbia; Edward L. Wells, Charleston; Samuel G. Stoney, Charleston; Paul Sanders, Ritter; W. H. Andrews, Georgetown; W. G. Shirrine, Greenville; L. D. Jennings, Sumter; R. C. Burts, Easley; A. L. White, Spartanburg; D. Sam Cox, Columbia; G. W. Croft, Aiken; W. H. Wallace, Newberry; F. Perrin, Abbeville; R. P. Hamer, Jr., Hamer; Neils Christensen, Beaufort.

The Audubon Society of this State was chartered by the General Assembly in 1907, the Society was first organized January 4, 1900.

Treasurer's Report.

The treasurer's report showed that, although the membership dues were not as large as last year, the fines totalled up considerably more than in the previous year.

The fact that the membership of the Society was not more increased during the past year is due to the necessity for work to be done before the Legislature for nearly two months at the last session. This did not leave as much time for work throughout the State in the connection with the gaining of new members. There were many convictions of violations of the law during the past year, and these fines are used by the Society in furthering its work. The game wardens were paid more money this year than last, but the cost of litigation in the courts was less.

PROF. RIGGS IN CHARGE.

Col. Hardin Declines—Director of Chemical Department, Chosen to Fill Gap, Refuses to Accept Position.

Clemson College, Dec. 3.—Col. M. B. Hardin, director of the chemical department, who was last night elected acting president to succeed Dr. P. H. Mell on January 1, until the board can find a president, has declined to serve. At a second session this morning, the board elected Prof. Wm. M. Riggs instead.

Prof. Riggs is director of the mechanical department. The committee of the board, consisting of Senator Tillman, Col. Alan Johnstone and R. I. Manning, was continued with instructions to resume its efforts to find a president. The new by-laws adopted tentatively in September were made permanent at this meeting. These new by-laws give the president greater power and otherwise improve the regulations of the college.

The trustees adjourned this morning.

The legislature will be asked to appropriate \$40,000 to rebuild the dormitory of the State Colored College at Orangeburg, which was burned recently.

MAY FORFEIT THEIR CLAIMS.

NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE DISPENSARY SITUATION.

Whiskey Firms' Payment of Whose Claims Against County Dispensaries was Held Up by the Winding-Up Board and Who Failed to Appeal to the State Supreme Court will Probably Lose Their Money.

Columbia, Dec. 5.—The never ending dispensary web has developed another serious situation. Whiskey firms not appealing to the Supreme Court will likely forfeit their claims against the county dispensaries, if there have been over-judgments against them by the winding-up commission. This new phase of the claimants' run will mean at least \$65,000 in over-judgments secured by the State if it pans out as expected.

There has been a great deal of speculation recently as to what method would be pursued by the State to recover the over-judgments or what the claimants were going to do to get their money from the county dispensaries. Not long ago Governor Ansel ordered the county dispensary boards to hold up the claims of the firms named in the commission's findings against whom over-judgments had been found. The claims were also held up in dispensary counties, Charleston, Richland, Beaufort, Aiken, Georgetown and Florence. It has been stated that the whiskey firms understood that the appeal would be to the Circuit Courts, but it now appears that the firms not appealing to the State Supreme Court are in a bad way.

COTTON GOODS TRADE.

Imminence of Government Report on Crop Cause Assigned for Slackening of Operations.

New York, Dec. 5.—The imminence of the government bureau report on the cotton crop is a cause assigned for the light trading in the cotton goods and yarn markets. Buyers attach considerable importance to it and are operating in a hand-to-mouth way, hoping that something will happen to prevent the further advance in cloths which must follow the sustained value of the staple.

There has been considerable trading between second hands in the primary markets at prices showing concessions from recent quotations, but mills and commission houses are holding steady and are not disposed to accept further contracts until there is some assurance that values will warrant cotton purchases and continued production. Retailers are busy with the holiday trade, and are naturally paying the minimum of attention to piece goods. At the same time jobbers and selling agents are charging many goods on old orders and mills are fairly well engaged for the balance of the year on medium count and fine yarn goods.

The dullness in export circles continues and the coarser end of the market remains quiet. Yarn prices have declined a little and buyers are conservatively inclined.

General trade in the West and South holds up better than in the metropolitan sections in the East. Prices remain nominally as when last quoted, but on transactions between second hands value are easier.

FIRE IN BALTIMORE.

Flames Starting Near Point of Origin of 1904 Conflagration, Caused Damage Aggregating \$300,000.

Baltimore, Dec. 2.—Fire broke out late this afternoon in the building No. 104 south Sharp street, within a block and a half of the point of origin of the great fire of 1904. It spread rapidly and within a short time had done damage estimated roughly by an insurance man at \$500,000.

In its spread the fire involved the establishment of C. J. Peed Shoe Company and the Spear Brothers' Company, shoes, 104, McCaddin and McElwee, house furnishings, 106 and 108, and firms occupying the upper floors of 100 and 102 Sharp street. The flames jumped a narrow alley in the rear and gained a momentary foothold in the big building occupied by the R. M. Sutton Company, dry goods and notions.

A man by the name of Lanier was killed at Ninety-nine Islands by a dynamite blast. He was five hundred feet away, but was struck by a piece of flying rock.

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON.

FORECAST OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF DEPARTMENT HEADS.

Much Talk of Economy and Smaller Appropriations will be Asked for—Army and Navy are Full of Sore Heads, and They Resent Charges and Intent of Economy.

Washington, Dec. 5.—The few days preceding the meeting of congress in Washington are not without interest. The President is immersed in his message to Congress, which, it is said, will not be as long as President Roosevelt's last message, inasmuch as it will contain not more than fifteen thousand words. This, however, will be of sufficient length and most readers will prefer to confine themselves to such epitomes as the press always furnishes. The Cabinet members are busy with their several reports and some of them have been completed. They are generally asking smaller appropriations than were demanded last year. Economy is the watchword of the present administration but it is not at all improbable that before the budget is made up it will exceed more than the billion dollar mark as did the last appropriation. It is difficult with the ambitious schemes of public improvement and betterment in almost every direction to see how appropriations can be kept down.

There are many public plans and enterprises for improvements of the public service but none of them are startlingly new although they are all increasingly urgent. The Secretary of the Navy has issued orders for the reorganization of the Navy Department which are looked upon by those whom it will affect as nothing short of revolutionary. If he is successful in carrying out his plans much good will be accomplished. The keynote to the changes in the Naval establishment has been expressed in the not novel truism that the object of the Navy is to maintain an effective war fleet on the seas. There is probably, not a school boy but knows that this is a self-evident proposition and not a Senator who would maintain that there could be any other legitimate object for the Navy and, yet, there are Senators and members, admirals, commodores, captains and lieutenants of the Navy with their wives, mothers-in-law, sisters, cousins and aunts who have for seventy-five or a hundred years lived, moved and had their being on the hypothesis that the object of the Navy was to maintain, first, a splendid Navy Department at Washington with distinguished Naval officers at the heads of various bureaus and other Naval officers at a dozen Naval stations and Navy Yards that are no longer used but are kept up at an immense expense and that cannot be needed for any legitimate Naval purpose because the entrance to these Navy Yards is so shallow for the admission of modern warships. Their idea of the Navy is that it was created and is maintained, not for National defense but for the benefit of a brilliant corps of Naval officers and their families and friends. These Naval officers have intermarried into the families of senators and cabinet ministers, until they form the highest social aristocracy in this country. They are sore hit by this order of Secretary Meyer. Senator Hale, of Maine, who has the sobriquet of the "Lord of the Navy," will, doubtless, be heard from in opposition and other senators and members will, doubtless, speak in eulogy of the old Navy and the old system and tell how much was accomplished at Manila Bay and Santiago. It may be excusable to "point with pride," but naval experts and close students of naval progress know that many improvements in naval construction, naval equipment and naval practice have been made since the Spanish War and that if the American Navy is equal in strength, man for man and ship for ship, with the foremost navies of the world it is because it has made a great progress and improvement since it sank the leaking lobster pot navies of Spain in Manila Bay and at Santiago.

WARD'S WOUND PROVES FATAL.

Young Georgetown Man Succumbs to Injuries Received while Hunting.

Georgetown, December 2.—Arthur F. Ward died at 9.15 o'clock this morning as the result of gunshot wounds accidentally received while hunting ducks in the rice fields on the Sanjee River yesterday afternoon. His death was due primarily to shock and loss of blood and the long interval of suffering from the fearful wound in his thigh before medical aid could be secured. He was conscious throughout the night and to within a few moments of the end. He exhibited an heroic cheerfulness, which caused those at his bedside to hope there was still a chance for life. But his vitality had received too severe a strain and he breathed his last peacefully, surrounded by loving members of his family and devoted friends.

Abraham Williams, a negro, has been arrested in Aiken on the charge of attempting to make a criminal assault on a colored woman.

months before it meets, a Congress that knows more about District, county or parochial affairs than about National affairs, a Congress composed of hundreds of men who by the time they learn their business as National legislators have lost their places or rather have their places filled by men as green and untried as they themselves were when first sent to Washington. In other words, the legislative management of the United States is not in the hands of seniors but of freshmen who are responsible not so much to the Nation as to the provincial homes from which they come.

TAX REFORM NEEDED.

COMPTROLLER GENERAL JONES WILL MAKE SUGGESTIONS.

Farmers Own Little Land and Contention is That They Should Favor Readjustment of Present Method of Making Returns.

Columbia, Dec. 3.—In his annual report to the legislature Comptroller General Jones will call attention to some necessary tax reforms. This will be especially timely, as the year 1910 is the time for reassessment of real estate for taxation in this State and it has been suggested that there might be some improvement in the laws. It is not known whether the legislature will take a hand in the matter during the approaching session as the tax proposition was not considered at the last session and that was the first of the present two years' term.

Mr. Jones is of the opinion that the bulk of the land in this State is not owned by farmers, that is those who actually superintend the farm work. He calls those men farmers who live on the farms and make the cultivation of crops their regular business and not those men who live in towns and plant crops from year to year through overseers or renters.

Some time ago the press of the State carried the following significant paragraph:

"Mr. Jones came across some striking inequalities in tax assessments in Williamsburg county. Lands being sold at from \$400 to \$800 an acre are down on the tax books at from \$5 to \$10 an acre and other land farther from town, assessed at \$2 an acre, has a ready market value at \$50 an acre. Mr. Jones says the township and county equalization boards, which fix these values, have got into the habit of gauging assessments by the amount of taxes they think the property holder should pay. In this way the large property holders pay little taxes proportionately."

As to the statement that this is true of most of the counties in South Carolina. Referring to the farmers he says he doesn't see why they should kick when the greater portion of the land, in his opinion, is not owned by the farmers but by men in other lines of work. He differentiates between the farmer and the planter.

It is pointed out in some of the county papers from time to time that these inequalities do exist. It is contended that the inequality should be remedied by either the taxpayer himself or by the board of assessors. To evenly proportion the taxes appears to be quite a problem and will be discussed at length at the coming session of the general assembly.

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