

WEEKLY ERA.

RALEIGH, N. C.

THURSDAY, JAN. 22, 1874.

There was in the City one Socie, infamous for his insolence and villainy, who thought the perfection of Liberty was the perfection of speech.—PLUTARCH.

Appleton Oaksmith—Jo. Turam Sibley—Western North Carolina Railroad.

Recognizing the service Captain Appleton Oaksmith has done the State of North Carolina in keeping before the European public, through publications he has made, the natural advantages and stupendous resources of our State, and being the first to load and send direct a ship from the favorite port of Beaufort, it is with the most painful sense of a disagreeable duty that the *Era* is constrained to write him in the above connection and association.

But the conduct of that gentleman is, and has been such, that, to save him from criticism, is impossible; when he might, and should have so served the State as to command and receive the plaudits of this whole people.

In the *Sentinel* of Sunday and Tuesday, as the production in part of Mr. Oaksmith, but giving the unmistakable impress of Jo. Turner appears an article, from which is taken this statement:

"He, Gen. Sibley, says, as we have heard, that he loaned Gen. Littlefield, through his bankers, \$175,000. When Holden talked about removing Littlefield as President, Littlefield and his friends were in a tight place, and paid him (Sibley \$50,000) for the accommodation. Finally a million or more of Western Railroad bonds were put up with his bankers to secure the debt. The interest was not paid; the million of bonds were sold, he bought them, and then filed a bill to foreclose the mortgage, which was done by Judge Dick in the Federal Court."

In publishing this statement, the editor of the *Sentinel* is either a knave or a fool. If he did not willfully, corruptly, maliciously, and for pay, publish what he knew to be a falsehood, then he is an idiot—a natural born fool.

The last Legislature, Mr. Bennett of Anson as chairman of a special committee, investigated the transaction, from beginning to end, through which Hiram Sibley came in possession of eleven hundred thousand dollars of the mortgage bonds of the Western North Carolina Railroad, five hundred of them signed by the trustees of the road, and good; six hundred not so signed, and worthless.

Mr. Bennett and his Committee took a great deal of testimony, and reported that the transaction was regular, and showed no corruption or improper intent, whatever the disastrous result might be, or how far some of our negotiators may have been overreached, or defeated in their expectations by subsequent events and vicissitudes they could not have foreseen.

A brief history of the matter is this:—Under a resolution introduced by Judge Merrimon, and advocated by him, to raise money to pay contractors and push the road to Old Fort, a directors meeting mortgaged the Western North Carolina Railroad, Tod R. Caldwell, and perhaps another director, opposing the scheme.

In 1870, Dr. J. J. Mott, being President of the road, borrowed some \$225,000 of the New York Warehouse and Security Company, giving the note of the Company and putting up the half million of signed, and six hundred thousand of unsigned bonds, as collateral. He paid one and a quarter per cent. interest, per month. The progress of the France-Prussian war, and its consequent effect on the money markets of Europe and America, defeated the hopes and plans of President Mott to realize on his securities, and thus relieve his loan and free his collaterals.

In 1871, under act of the Legislature, making President Warren of the Senate, and Speaker Jarvis of the House, Deputy Governors, Sam-

uel McDowell Tate came in as President of the Road. To save a quarter per cent. interest, as he alleges, President Tate negotiated a loan with Lancaster, Brown and Company, of New York, agents or depositaries for Hiram Sibley, and to this house Mr. Tate transferred his loan and collateral from the Warehouse and Security Company.

In saving the interest, Mr. Tate lost this advantage:—By keeping his interest paid up, his loan and collateral could have remained intact to this day. His arrangement however, with Lancaster, Brown and Company, was, that if the loan was not taken up by a certain day, the collateral bonds were to go to sale. The loan was not taken up, and the mortgage bonds, as collateral securities, on which President Mott had borrowed \$225,000, went to sale. At this sale Hiram Sibley bought these bonds, and, it is said, still holds them.

This is a brief statement of the transaction. When Mott borrowed the money, Littlefield was in Europe, playing hide-and-seek with Colonel Nick Woodfin.

If the editor of the *Sentinel* had half sense, he would know the statement he publishes is not true. Fool as he is, he does know better. But to traduce Holden and others of the State, and to earn his "by the letter m" allowance from Mahone, Robinson, Oaksmith or the Devil, he must needs put forth the above glaring falsehood that not only Colonel Bennett and his Committee refutes, but which Samuel McDowell Tate, less than a year ago, corrected in the columns of the *Sentinel*.

And of this stuff is the Mahone-Oaksmith-Robinson-Turner opposition to Consolidation.

Think of it, people of North Carolina!

North Carolina Railroad Consolidation.

One year ago, when the Western North Carolina Railroad was about to go to judicial sale and to consequent completion, this Legislature, with a large Democratic majority, authorized and ordered an appeal to be taken from the decree of the Federal Court, at the same time constituting a Commission to look into the affairs and condition of the Western North Carolina Railroad, and mature and propose a plan for the solution of its troubles, and, if possible, save to the State and our people something of that great work.

Following out the party instincts of that Democratic majority, the Legislature constituted its Commission as follows:—Matthias E. Manly, of New-Berne, George Davis, of Wilmington, Walter L. Steele, of Richmond county, and J. H. Wilson, of Charlotte, to sit and confer with the Governor of the State and the Commissioners of the Court to sell the Road, viz: Burgess S. Gaither of McDowell, and Marcus Erwin of Buncombe.

Mr. Davis of the Legislative Commission and Mr. Erwin of the Court Commissioners, for reasons assigned at the first meeting, declined to serve.

But beginning early in the Spring, and sitting from time to time during the Summer and Fall, down to the meeting of the Legislature in November. Messrs. Manly, Steele, Wilson, Gaither and Governor Caldwell, were constant and assiduous in their efforts to arrive at a solution of the great problem that had been submitted to them by the Legislature.

They succeeded in bringing their labors to a happy, and, for the State, a favorable issue.

The Commission came forward at the beginning of the session with what is known as the consolidation plan, which promptly received the approbation of the North Carolina public. The most practical and patriotic men of the State have approved and heartily endorsed it. Eminent and successful Railroad men like Colonel William Johnston, of Charlotte, have given it their earnest endorsement and support, and it was difficult to imagine how any one could oppose it.

But the scheme has met with opposition. Not simply the opposition of rivalry and conflicting Railroad interests, but opposition has been manufactured and paid for by the letter m.

Bismarck Mahone, of the consolidated line of Railway from Norfolk, Virginia, to Bristol Tennessee, opposes it because it looks to the completion of the Western North Carolina Railroad; a line Bismarck has declared shall never be completed. He cannot allow it to be completed. Let the Western North Carolina Railroad once reach the Tennessee line and, on business estimated by his receipts, Mahone's Road loses seventeen hundred thousand dollars a year, to say nothing of the prospective increase of business.

When this Western North Carolina Railroad was about to be sold and completed last Winter, Mahone's financial agent in London despatched him that the sale must be defeated, or his bonds fell flat on the European markets. Mahone declares that he did not send a certain gentleman here, from the Lombard Exchange, who figured extensively in Railroad matters in the lobbies of our Legislature last Winter. But an agent of Mahone's when asked, last Summer, in New York, if he sent him, admitted that he did.

Mahone, his financial agents, black-mailers, conspirators and runners were happy all last year, for they had got the delay they wanted, and having blocked the game of building the Western North Carolina Railroad, as they thought, permanently, they ceased their Railroad operations in North Carolina.

But consolidation suddenly loomed up. Mahone sets the firm of John Robinson and Father to buying up those old State bonds known as the North Carolina Railroad Construction bonds. Jo Turner, under an influence residing somewhere between Andrew Swazey, Bismarck Mahone and John Robinson, advises and urges the Legislature to pass a bill surrendering the stock of the North Carolina Railroad for the old State bonds known as "Construction bonds." This too was the stock in the North Carolina Railroad is paying an annual rent of six and a half per cent on the par value of every share of one hundred dollars worth of stock; while the Construction bonds are only worth in the markets and Robinson is buying them for THIRTY DOLLARS IN THE HUNDRED!

Under this state of things, and open to the suspicion of something worse than a letter "m" transaction, or a default to Montero, a gorgeous gentleman with a palatial mansion in Washington city, Jo Turner began his infamous assaults on the consolidation scheme, which he kept up until the Legislature adjourned for recess. We then hear of him in Norfolk, a rendezvous of Mahone and a stopping place of Robinson—"shooting ducks in Currituck"—but all the time engaged in his warfare on consolidation.

For the past ten days and nights this modern Nimrod of Currituck has been closeting at the National Hotel with a gentleman who openly avows his opposition to consolidation, and comes with a matured plan to defeat it. The fight of the *Sentinel* grows fiercer and more malignant. The basest falsehoods, manufactured abroad, are put forth in the columns of that paper in the hope and with the expectation of defeating the consolidation scheme before this Democratic Legislature.

Hon. Matthias E. Manly, Colonel Walter L. Steele, Colonel Burgess S. Gaither and J. Harvey Wilson, Esq., all Democrats, and the creatures of a Democratic Legislature, have matured, endorsed and urged this plan. The public has approved it; and it has received the sanction and support of the purest patriots and most practical Railroad and business men of the State.

The Legislature has pronounced it one of the grandest and most meritorious schemes of the age.

Now defeat it; either by captious

opposition or frivolous legislation. If defeated, it is defeated by the Democratic party. That party then denies the people of the West a Railroad. It last winter destroyed the opportunity, then present, of its completion; and now kills the last and the fondest hope the people of Western North Carolina, and of the whole State, have ever indulged.

Injecting, as they have, politics and party considerations into this matter, the Democracy are welcome to make up a political issue on it. Republicans would infinitely prefer that politics and Railroad consolidation should stand aloof from each other. Republicans and all patriotic people of the State esteem this a matter far above party considerations; but if such issue is forced upon them, and they are sent before the people, the Republicans of North Carolina will have no difficulty in showing to the people of Western Carolina that their only and future hope of a system of railroads, piercing the mountains, lies in the Republican party; for, twice now, this Democratic Legislature has had it in its power to say whether the people of Western North Carolina shall have a Railroad or not.

The Influence of \$1200—A Question of Why and When?

It has been frequently suggested, that, the State Printing was given to the *News* in 1872 because the *Sentinel* failed to support Vance for the Senate after he had received the caucus nomination of the Democratic party.

The question always has been:—Why did the *Sentinel* not support Vance?

The *Sentinel* has always alleged that it supported neither Merrimon nor Vance, because Graham was its choice. But that paper now says "the times are too disjointed to trust Graham," and surely this was a sufficient reason why the *Sentinel* did not urge Governor Graham for the Senate. But why prefer a man who is not to be trusted in these times, to Merrimon or Vance, either of whom can be trusted? especially Merrimon, who, about the time of this Senatorial contest had credit at the Raleigh National Bank sufficient to make his endorsement of Jo Turner's paper good for \$1200.

The precise date of Merrimon's endorsement of Turner's note for \$1200, which Merrimon has had to pay, will afford a better explanation of the whys and wherefores of the *Sentinel's* golden silence in the Senatorial contest than any hitherto given.

No reflection is here intended on Judge Merrimon. But why should Turner have proven more ungrateful to Swepson than to Judge Merrimon? Or did Turner really never borrow, beg or draw money out of Swepson?

Plain and unequivocal answers to questions like these will much more interest the public than Jo Turner's corrupt and trading opposition to Consolidation.

THE editor of the *Sentinel* has discovered that the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad is mortgaged for two hundred thousand dollars under a provision that a failure to pay interest works the maturity of the mortgage.

A plan to sell out the said Railroad under this mortgage in the way indicated, for \$200,000, is now more than a year old. A certain party has lately acquainted the editor of the *Sentinel* with the plan, and his fight against consolidation is part of the project to freeze out the Atlantic Railroad. Turner is in that ring, and a squire would bring it out.

Jo TURNER has given out that he never reads Republican papers, but that he has a reader employed to look out for what these *Radical* sheets may say of his Butter-milk-swilling-Blue-mass-eating Highness. That reader will find congenial employment over this issue of the *Era*.

The time are trust Graham, field.—*Sentinel*.

This is the first reputation on the ir per or ability has ever got William A. Graham, Manly and R. F. Armfield.

The first was twice elected Governor of the State; served in the United States Senate; was for the term of one administration, Secretary of the Navy, and served in the Confederate States Senate. Honored as no man of the State has been; selected, on account of his high personal character and ability as one of the Trustees of the Peabody Fund, it will be news to the people of North Carolina that he is not to be trusted in any capacity his people may elect to place him.

The second was for years a Judge of the Circuit and Supreme Courts of the State, and no suspicion has hitherto attached to his name that he is not a man in every sense to be trusted.

Colonel Armfield has not figured in public life; but he is well known as a leading lawyer of Western North Carolina, and it will be news to his people that he is so wanting in character and ability as not to be trusted, however much the times may be "disjointed."

THE *Sentinel* keeps as a standing conundrum, "Who is Sibley?"

He is not Oaksmith. He don't sit in the room of the *Sentinel* Editor after midnight, planning and plotting to the damage of the State. He is not John Robinson, the "Currituck duck" buying up aid-bonds of the North Carolina Railroad; nor was he of that recent "ducking" party of which the *Sentinel* Editor was one in Norfolk. Nor is he a dealer in fuse, an article said to be very handy in blowing up printing offices, or that Editor, in his peculiar line of business, would doubtless have established a business acquaintance with Mr. Sibley prior to the great gun-powder catastrophe of 1872.

Fat Carrow, Treasurer Dave and Governor Caldwell are all anxious to fight us by proxy, or with a substitute, and we don't fight that way. We were opposed to substitutes in the late war.—*Sentinel*.

Substituting, and fighting by substitutes, was equally as honorable as being elected to Congress, on a peace or union basis, by Holden, Holden's influence and his friends; and then coming back and saying the reason he (Turner) betrayed them was because he got "afraid."

FRANK CALDWELL has finally, though tardily corrected the *Sentinel* in attaching the name of "Holt" to a communication of his signed *Halt*.

The editor of the *Sentinel* knew better at the start. He deliberately falsified the manuscript, and sent it to his paper to be printed "Holt" instead of *Halt*; and he also suppressed a portion of the article that did not sustain him in the cowardly, mean and corrupt fight he is making against consolidation.

IF Jo TURNER don't like fighting by proxy or substitute, as he says he does not, why did he induce a friend of his to challenge, without the slightest pretext or excuse, a gentleman against whom Jo Turner has a grudge but is too cowardly himself to fight? Perhaps the malicious scoundrel and mendacious liar will deny that he procured such challenge to be sent.

Jo TURNER don't like substituting. Why then does he "substitute" paper furnished him by the Secretary of State to do the State Printing with, to print his own vile sheet on. In the history of this man "overdrawing" was once substituted for a theft. Perhaps in the political dictionaries of 1874 we shall find substitute made a synonym for the verb to steal.

If that Democratic Senator really has the paper and affidavits to show that Jo Turner blew up his own office in 1872, let them come forth. If general reputation were possible, some evidence might introduced nearer home.