

CHAIRMAN SCALES REPLIES AT LENGTH

Answering Criticism of the Colored A. and M.

A STRONG STATEMENT

If the General Assembly Thinks it can Improve the Management he Feels Sure the Trustees Will Resign but 'T would be a Fatal Mistake to Close the College.

(Special to News and Observer.)

Greensboro, N. C., Nov. 24.—Hon. Alfred M. Scales, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Agricultural and Mechanical College for the colored race, was absent when the report of the State Board on Public Institutions was made to the governor, and did not see the criticisms upon the management of the A. and M. College here until his return, Friday night. Today, in response to a request from this correspondent he gave the following statement, which completely disposes of the criticisms made by the State Board, and was demanded in justice to the institution and its Board of Trustees, who were so unjustly held up to public censure. He says:

"Upon my return to the city yesterday afternoon, I saw, for the first time the synopsis of the report of the Board of Examiners of the State Institutions. A more unjust or unjustifiable attack or one showing a greater ignorance of the true condition of the affairs of the A. and M. College for the colored race could hardly have been made. The college is in better condition in every way, and is going better work than ever before in its history, and will, I believe, compare favorably with any similar institution in the country. It is hard to understand how Captain Patton, for I think it will be safe to say that he drew that part of the report referring to the A. and M. College at Greensboro, could have so badly confused matters, and so injuriously misrepresented the college. Before delivering such a fulmination, it would seem that a careful examination would have been instituted, but if the report is correctly given in the newspapers, the most glaring mis-statements have been made, as will be shown later on.

"In 1899 the General Assembly made an investigation of the college, which had for some years been under a Republican Board of Trustees, and found matters in such a condition that it deemed it best to change the administration; and to this end, it appointed Hon. W. R. Williams, Prof. M. C. S. Noble, Prof. J. Y. Joyner, Sheriff J. L. Currie, M. George T. Dunlap, myself and others as members of the Board of Trustees. These appointments were made without consulting some of the appointees, and the first information some of us, myself included, had of it was contained in the papers of the next day. Believing it to be our patriotic duty, we entered upon the work, but with many misgivings. We found the college heavily in debt, its unpaid debts amounting to \$10,000, its paper hawked about the streets, and its credit so impaired that it was with difficulty that purchases could be made except at high prices. The board found the curriculum of the college much too high for the colored people in their present state of advancement and much too theoretical; and that the college was not reaching the class for whom it was intended. The board had nothing to guide them, as industrial education was largely an experiment in the South even among the white people, and with the colored people the problem was ten-fold greater. Public sentiment among the colored people had ever since the war been in favor of classical schools, the graduates being doctors, preachers or teachers, and it was necessary to form a sentiment among them in favor of industrial and agricultural pursuits. How well the board has performed this great task is shown by the college today, which will stand on its own merits.

"Every dollar of its debt has been paid, a \$5,000 farm has been bought and paid for, its bills are paid in thirty days, its credit has been completely restored; the three highest classes have been cut off and the curriculum brought within the reach of the race. While theory is still taught and every student is given a good English education, the whole course is intensely practical and industrial, and that the trend of sentiment among the race is toward practical education is evidenced by the fact of the largely increasing attendance.

"The board has tried in every way to cut down expenses to the requirements of the college income, and to save expense, it decided to hold meetings of the full board only once a year. An executive committee was appointed, consisting of Prof. M. C. S. Noble, Prof. J. Y. Joyner and myself to act for the board in the interim. The board and especially the executive committee have thought and labored on this problem for nearly four years and were congratulating themselves on the splendid condition of the college, when a committee of examiners, after a few hours spent at the college, solemnly criticized and try to tear down the work of years. It is doubtful if these gentlemen of the committee, and I say it without intending to disparage them, ever gave an hour's thought to the subject of negro industrial education in their lives, and yet they condemn the work of a board, some of whom are experts in educational matters, with about the same amount of thought that they would employ in flogging the ashes from their cigars.

"And what are the criticisms? "First, That the board excluded the women, and the committee says: 'It has unjustly assailed the moral character of the colored race.' The statement is absurd, but not more so than the position of the committee in posing as the defender of the virtue of the colored women, and the next moment stabbing an institution which, in the opinion of many good men, is destined to do more good in making the race self-supporting and self-reliant than any other one agency in North Carolina.

"The board had several reasons for excluding the colored women. It is doubtful if it was ever intended for women any more than the white A. and M. College was intended for white girls. The dormitory space was absolutely inadequate, the girls being crowded seven or eight in a room, and the sickness rate being much too large. We had to get rid of either boys or girls, or build another dormitory, which we had neither the money nor authority to do. Another reason, and a very patent one was that neither the girls nor boys wanted to engage in the harder kinds of manual labor in the presence of the other sex, but would strive to dress up in fine clothes to impress the other, and thus neglect study and work. It is true that there were scandals, in many cases invented by some designing negro wanting the other hand's job, and sometimes started by some rascally man or boy for the love of sensation, or revenge.

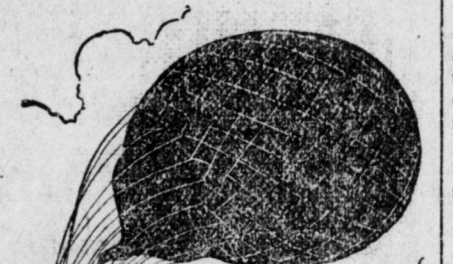
"The change was thoroughly discussed with General Toon, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and was enthusiastically endorsed by him. The improvement since is most marked—an increased willingness to work, more room, and no scandals, and what the examiners condemn is really the best thing that ever happened to the college. What the colored girls need is a school of domestic science and that can be established without extra expense to the State by converting one or more of the colored Normal schools into a female school.

"The examiners next say, if correctly quoted: 'We next note that since the exclusion of girls the number of boys enrolled as students has somewhat increased until now it is said to be as many as ninety-five. Feeling that the true test of a school is not in its enrollment, so much as in its actual average attendance we have tried to arrive at this, but have not been able to do so with certainty because no books have been kept from which it can be ascertained. We have heard reports that it was as low as forty and as high as fifty; we hope either is an under-estimate, and that it is safe to place it at sixty, therefore dividing the expense of maintenance taken from the financial statement, \$27,677.31 by 60 gives a per capita cost of maintenance of \$461.28 for a term of sixteen months. This we certainly consider excessive and indicating an unnecessary expenditure of money.'

"It is not true that no books are kept at the college from which this attendance can be learned. The secretary and treasurer, who is also registrar, keeps accurate records of the attendance and studies of all students, and monthly reports are sent to the parents. Owing to the cutting off of the girls, the attendance was not as large last year as during previous years and during the last few months many of the boys had to leave on account of poverty and the average attendance for the whole year was 64, but the attendance of boys was larger than the attendance of boys in any previous year, and there are now in actual attendance 114 students and an enrollment of 121, which is growing almost daily. Every room in the college, including those formerly occupied by the girls, is full, none having less than two and some as many as five boys. They speak of a term of sixteen months and divide all the money spent by the departments without giving any credit for amounts earned, by the supposed number of boys, and say that the per capita is \$461.28. Why take sixteen months? Would it not be fairer to take a year's per capita? The true test is what the college received and what it does with the money. The regular appropriations are as follows:

United States appropriation... \$8,250.00
North Carolina appropriation... 7,500.00
"In addition to this, the last Legislature appropriated \$5,000.00 for two years as a special appropriation to help pay for the farm and help pay back debts. Taking the guess of the examiners of 60 average attendance as correct and divide the regular appropriation of \$15,750.00, which is all that is spent on their education, by 60, and the cost per capita would be only \$262.50. Divide it by 114, the number now in attendance, and the per capita would be only \$138.15. Divide the regular appropriation given by the State by the number in attendance and the per capita would be only \$65.79 given by the State. If an additional dormitory were built, the per capita would soon be greatly decreased.

"The examiners further say, according to the papers: 'Amount expended on the farm, \$10,052.88, and receipts therefrom



There was a cry in the streets. People rushed from their doors and strained their eyes on the struggling balloonist fighting for life. Even the poor, panting sufferer in the sick room was forgotten while the family gazed breathlessly at this strange tragedy of the air. Then they went back to the sick room to tell of the terrible struggle for life they had just witnessed. It did not occur to them that under their very eyes a more terrible, more pathetic struggle was going on daily.

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"I am 64 years of age, and have lived in St. Louis 27 years, and all this time with the exception of three years, I have served in the Engineers' Department as Inspector. Last winter I contracted rheumatism and was laid up. I tried all remedies and doctors, but all failed until I struck Paine's Celery Compound, which has made a permanent cure in my case. I have recommended it to many, and they have used it with the same result."

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\$4,240.50; amount expended on brick-yard, \$8,252.23, and receipts therefrom \$2,448.15." As to this the examiners say: "We would prefer that an industrial school teach how a farm and brick yard can be run with profit."

"As a matter of fact, during the time mentioned, 16 months, there was spent on the farm, including machinery, etc., \$1,488.81 instead of \$10,052.78, and on the brick yard, installed only about a year ago, including cost of machinery, building and all materials, the sum of \$1,900.19 instead of \$8,252.23, as stated, making errors of \$14,916.11 in these two items alone. The brick yard is paying expenses and the farm is making a handsome income.

"The farm raised this year the following crop: 13 two-horse loads of pumpkins, some weighing as much as 85 pounds. 216 bushels sweet potatoes. About 50 tons of ensilage. About 1,240 bushels of corn, 5 bushels of peas, 6 tons of shucks, 4,022 bundles of fodder, 3,015 bundles of tops. About 11 tons of hay, 1-2 ton of broom corn. About 250 bushels of turnips. About 35 bushels of late Irish potatoes. 33 3-4 dozen quarts tomatoes (canned). 3 barrels krait.

"And this does not include hay and green food used for cow and horses from June 1st to November 21st, neither does it include produce sold for cash, and that used for feeding students.

"The appropriations of \$15,750.00 are distributed by the board to the various departments as follows: \$3,500 to the Department of Agricultural Industries. This department runs the farm, maintains a flourishing dairy, keeps the dining room where board is furnished at \$5.00 per month; has charge of the green houses, pigs, horses, poultry and of the entire campus. It does all of this and does it well, and pays all salaries of the department for practical instruction in these various branches.

"One thousand five hundred dollars to the Department of Agriculture and Chemistry. This department teaches the theory and pays all salaries and expenses with the amount named, \$5,000 to the Mechanical Department. This department furnishes all heat and power used in the college, except in the dairy and farm, and has a brick yard, tin shop, shoe and harness shop, and blacksmith shop. It teaches practical carpentry and to this end has built several houses in the city. It teaches plumbing, brick laying and plastering and cabinet work, all in a practical way. These trades are pursued primarily of course for the purpose of instruction but they are made as nearly self-supporting as possible, and nearly everything taught in the Mechanical and Agricultural Industries Departments pays some return to the college, and some pay satisfactory profits.

"\$5,000.00 to the General Department: "This department teaches the English branches, supplies the library, furnishes water lights, repairs to building, pays all administrative expenses, and everything not included in the other departments.

"The entire salaries of every kind and of all departments for the year ending June 1st, 1902, \$9,919.00, and for the year ending June 1st, 1903, they will be \$9,628.75, the average salary of all teachers, being \$485.05.

"A classical school could be run, for less, for technical instruction is always more costly. Technical teachers are rarer, and more expensive, and more apparatus is required than in classical schools, but by comparison with similar institutions for colored people in other States, the cost is remarkably small.

"The examiners advise against further appropriations until it is shown by experience that this kind of teaching is calculated to promote the best interests of the great mass of our needy people."

"Men and brethren, be honest. If you want to take away appropriations from the negro, do it like men. Don't say you will close up an institution until it demonstrates by experience what it can do. If the General Assembly thinks it can improve the management, I feel sure

that all the board of trustees will willingly resign, but it would be a fatal mistake to close up the institution. The college has been built up under many difficulties to a point of great usefulness, and it would be a pity to have so much effort and invested capital wasted in order to save a paltry \$7,400.00, and because a board of examiners after a few hours' looking around, said it should be done. There are people in North Carolina who would like to take away all aid from the negro, and possibly the examiners thought it would be popular to 'roast' this leading institution of a helpless race, or possibly they thought it was expected of them to 'roast' somebody and recommend a saving somewhere, and not daring to select a powerful white institution, and yet wishing to show a reason d'être, they fell upon a weak and disheartened race.

"I worked as hard as any one to get the negro out of politics, but I thank God that I am not so narrow and so small of soul as to want to deprive him of a chance in life.

"We must be patient with the negro and we can afford to be magnanimous. "Because a man has been used to a wooden plow, is that any reason why you should not teach him to use a better one? So far as I can learn nearly every graduate is earning an honest living, is doing well and commanding a good salary, or making good wages.

"The management of the college is an open book, and the board of trustees courts the fullest investigation. They do not claim that the college is perfect, no colored college is ideal, but we do claim that it is the best we could make it so far, and that it is steadily improving.

"At the proper time the board of trustees will make a full report of the affairs of the college to His Excellency, Governor Aycock."

THE PLYMOUTH NORMAL.

Leading Citizens Deny the Justices of the Criticisms of the Examining Board.

To the Editor: We find in the issue of November 19th a report of the examiners of State Institutions.

In reference to the Colored Normal School of Plymouth the following language is used by said examiners in speaking of said school: "In further evidence we find that the negro man employed by the directors is utterly unfit to fill so important a position." We have known Prof. Eppes, the negro man above alluded to, about four years, ever since his induction as superintendent or assistant in the Colored Normal at this place, and we have no hesitancy in saying that the examiners of State Institutions were misinformed in regard to him. And the language used by them in regard to him is unjust and absolutely untrue.

He is a man of bright intelligence, thoroughly qualified, intellectually, as well as by long experience as a teacher to fulfill all of the duties of superintendent of any "Colored Normal" in the State, and he is the peer of any teacher in any of the Colored Normal Schools.

And, we the white citizens, take pleasure in saying that in the administration of his school, from the increased attendance and building up of the school for the time he has had charge of it and from our observation of the management of said school, he has shown not only that he is mentally and morally qualified, but that he has good executive ability.

We are credibly informed that the examiners only made a flying visit to this place, stopping less than half an hour at the school, making no personal examination of his mental or moral qualifications as a teacher; and yet they make the grave charge of his unfitness, which proves clearly and conclusively that they did not qualify themselves to judge of his competency and have done him a cruel wrong, which we take pleasure in refuting, and assure his many white friends elsewhere that there is no colored man in this community who is more highly esteemed by his white fellow-citizens than Professor Eppes.

The examiners who visited Plymouth seem to have been singularly unfortunate in that they happened to meet during their too brief visit, exactly such persons as had, for causes unnecessary to mention (save to allude to the fact that certain well-meaning people are prejudiced against negro education in toto) reason for speaking ill of the school and its principal.

To all appearance they are as guilty of great negligence as the board of directors in failing to properly investigate.

W. J. JACKSON, Sheriff.
F. R. JOHNSTON, Register of Deeds.
J. O. EVERETT, County Supt. of Schools.
LEVI BLOUNT, Chairman of County Board of Commissioners, Washington County.
C. J. NORMAN, Chairman of County Board of Education.
J. H. BUFFALO, Minister of M. E. Church, South.
H. S. WARD, Attorney.
JAS. SKITTLETHORPE, County Commissioner, Washington County.
W. W. E. LY, Physician.
S. E. SPRL LL, Mayor of Plymouth.

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A Hay Fever sufferer writes: "I have had Hay Fever for 14 years. I bought a package of your remedy (Schiffmann's Asthma Cure), of our druggist and due to its use this is the first summer that I have not been troubled." Mrs. Frank Gullfogle, 6237 Ridge Avenue, Roxboro, Philadelphia. Sold by druggists at 50c and \$1.00. Send 2c stamp to Dr. R. Schiffmann, Box 890, St. Paul, Minn., for a free sample package.

EXECUTOR'S NOTICE.

Having qualified as Executor of the estate of Augustus Carter, deceased, of Wake county, notice is hereby given to all parties indebted to the estate to come forward and make payment, and all persons having claims against the estate are hereby notified to present them for payment on or before November 24th, 1903, or this notice will be plead in bar of their recovery.

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