

# THE STATE DISPATCH.

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## HONEST ELECTIONS VS. FEES

Charlotte Observer.

In the Burlington News, Democratic, we find it objected against proposed salaries for the Alamance county officers that there is no true analogy between political and business positions. "Any man who is elected to a county office," says our contemporary, "accepts same with the fact facing him that he may be turned out at the end of one term, regardless of his faithfulness as an officer or regardless of his efficiency, and for this reason any sensible man knows that by reason of the uncertainty, the county officer must be paid more than any man would ask for similar work, where, so long as he gives satisfaction, he is continued in office. Again, the bank cashier is appointed and it does not cost him half his year's salary to get elected." In view of the bribery which accompanies both primaries and elections in many counties of the State, the last statement possesses particular interest.

In The Burlington State Dispatch, Republican, of the same date we find bitter assertions that the present remuneration of Alamance county officers under the fee system is not only robbing the people of \$5,000 a year but operating to debase the electorate. "No man of any political knowledge," we read, "will deny that it is being done. It is known to all men who have had any experience in politics and yet these same men will continue to wink at this growing evil for the sake of seeing their side win. We are not charging that this evil is prevalent only among our opponents, because it is practiced by all parties but always more so by the Democratic party. The reason for this is easily accounted for; they are in office and they cannot afford to be beaten, hence the lavish flow and use of money. Are there not enough honest men in both or all parties in this good old county of Alamance to get together and draft a bill and send it down to the lawmaking body that will for once and all put a stop to this nefarious practice?"

The theory upon which advocacy of salaries for county officers is based has no need to ignore the fact that tenure of political offices is precarious. It can and does recognize that fact in fixing remuneration. But remuneration from fees to an extent which no one knows except the officer himself may be and often is quite another matter. In many North Carolina counties there is a considerable excess above what every one would recognize as a fair salary, and nothing could be more inevitable than the use of that excess for more or less legitimate political purposes. The county officers can afford to spend considerable sums for politics, including bribery; it is good business for them to do so. Since these sums in the aggregate are large, bribery tends to prevail, and in fact does usually prevail, wherever results hang closely in the balance. Known salaries would allow for reasonable and legitimate expenditures, but the corruption which naturally attends large and unknown excess of remuneration would shrink hugely at once.

As regards small and poor counties we do not think that the salary question has any particular importance. Perhaps they, or most of them, are better off under the old system. But other counties have waxed in wealth and increase of the business done through their administrative officers until fee payments which were once no more than adequate are now swollen and productive of abuse. For any well-to-do county the fee system is thoroughly bad business, upon whatsoever basis it may be rearranged. Proper fees mean improper compensation. There is an excess, and this excess should go to the people of the county, not into the officer's pocket or a corruption fund. Furthermore, the fee system, with its temptations, causes many helpless people to be unjustly oppressed.

The Burlington News does not oppose the salary system except in so far as the exigencies which it mentions arise. We think it will see upon further considera-

## YELLOW JACK ON THE MARIETTA

Greensboro Daily News.  
One Man Dead and Nine Others Aboard—Hurry to Key West, Fla.

Washington, February 2.—With nine men aboard ill, possibly with yellow fever, and one man dead with that disease, the American gunboat Marietta is now on her way from Puerto Cortez Honduras, Key West, Fla. She sailed from Central American waters under orders from the Navy Department, which were issued as soon as the officials here were advised that the stricken men were suspected of having yellow fever.

The Navy Department was advised of the illness among the crew in a wireless dispatch received today from Commander Cooper, of the Marietta. He stated that the outbreak was only suspected of being the dread malady. The department was unwilling to take any chances, and for that reason immediately ordered the vessel to an American port, where the proper measures could be taken for the treatment of the stricken seamen and the protection of the remainder of the crew.

The departure of the Marietta from Honduran waters will not materially affect the necessary naval representation of the United States in Central America in connection with the Bonilla revolution, as the gunboat Wheeling is now on the way to Puerto Cortez and is expected to arrive at that port Saturday.

## CORPSE COME TO LIFE

Mourners Thrown Into a Panic When Woman Supposed to be Dead Revives in Her Coffin.

Glasgow Ky., Feb. 1.—Stretching out her hand toward those who had assembled about her coffin, Mrs. Jane Pitcock, an octogenarian, caused a panic at her funeral at Gavaliet, Monore county, yesterday afternoon, according to reports reaching here today. The funeral sermon had been preached and the lid of the coffin was removed to permit friends and relatives to take a last look at what they believed a corpse. It was then that Mrs. Pitcock regained consciousness. She remained alive for several hours, her death following last night. Several physicians examined the body and pronounced Mrs. Pitcock dead before the body was placed in the coffin.

## NEGROES SURPRISE SHERIFF

Shelby, Feb. 2.—Two negroes, who broke jail early Monday morning, surprised the deputy Sheriff J. J. Wilkins yesterday when they accosted him on the street and asked to be entombed again. They had been to their home near Kings Mountain, received fresh and cleaner clothes and returned voluntarily. Their offense was small and the deputy was making no attempt to catch them. They are wanted for breaking into cars at Kings Mtn. and stealing whiskey. With them when they broke jail was Andrew Taylor, another negro held on a charge of stealing money.

tion that these are really arguments in favor of the salary system. The excessive expenditure noted grows out of the fee system itself; no one should urge that an evil be not disturbed because disturbance would create difficulties in relation to another evil, when that second evil is curable. Its curability is not a matter of mere conjecture but has been demonstrated by every county adopting the salary system. None of these would dream of going back to the fee system again. The salary system greatly lessens the need of a corrupt-practices act, which, nevertheless, we should have in North Carolina without longer delay.

## A CRYING EVIL

Greensboro Daily News.

One does not have to go to Adams county, Ohio, to find the corrupt practice of bribery and debauchery in connection with the ballot. We have it here in North Carolina, and representatives of both parties have been guilty of it. In a recent editorial discussing fees, or remuneration to county officers, the Burlington News (Democrat) made the point that they should be well paid for the reason it always costs them so much to get elected. Emphasizing the point, that paper said:

"Again, the bank cashier is appointed and it does not cost him half his year's salary to get elected."

Discussing the same question the State Dispatch (Republican), of the same place, arguing for salaries instead of fees for county officers, says:

"If they were paid a salary they would not have fabulous sums of money to spend each and every election to buy their election and debase the electorate. No man of any political knowledge will deny that it is being done, it is known to all men who have had any experience in politics and yet these same men will continue to wink at this growing evil for the sake of seeing their side win. We are not charging that this evil is prevalent only among our opponents, because it is practiced by all parties."

There we have the evidence from the papers of opposite political faith in the same county. And it would not be a very difficult matter to find it in many other counties. We do not single out Alamance as the worst, for we do not believe it is. We only happened to see the two editorials we have quoted, and use it for illustration. In these matters the consciences of men seem seared and calloused. So completely is this true that men who imagine they are honest, who will pray in public—if not in secret—will steal from his political opponents, engage in buying votes and otherwise debauching the electorate, feeling actually that he is doing his Christian duty.

The press, political, independent, and religious, should cry aloud and spare not against this fearful evil. Instead of worrying about passing some sort of a rank partisan and ironclad primary law, by which it is sought to swear men to do things they may not want to do, and thus in many cases add perjury to bribery, the legislature should pass a stringent antibribery and anti-vote selling law. In a land where popular government exists—government by chosen representatives of the people—it cannot be maintained that "the end justifies the means" when those means are corrupt and dishonest.

Honest men should not be compelled to have their free expression at the ballot-box nullified by the bribed votes of men who have no higher conception of the sacredness of the ballot than to sell it for five dollars, one dollar, or a drink of mean whisky. The man who is weak enough to sell should go to jail or a house of correction where he will be deprived of equal strength at the ballot-box with honest men; and the man who is mean and cor-

All in favor of putting our county officers on Salaries instead of Fees sign the Coupon below and send to the DISPATCH, this means \$5000.00 a year in the pockets of the Tax Payers of Alamance County.

Hon. J. Elmer Long,

House of Representatives,  
Raleigh, N. C.

I favor putting our County officers on Salaries instead of Fees, paying them fair and liberal but not extravagant salaries and ask you to have a bill passed making this a law. Signed

## JEALOUS LOVER

Then Turns Gun Upon Himself—Page County's Terrible Tragedy

Harrisburg, Va., Feb. 3.—Fitzhugh Comer, 28 years old, shot and killed his sweetheart, Miss Cora Turner, 20 years old, then killed himself at Naked Creek, Page county, near Rockingham in the Blue Ridge section. The couple were engaged and recently Comer became jealous of Fitzhugh Hamer. Four times he had threatened to kill the girl if Hamer continued his attentions. Yesterday morning Comer heard that the couple were exchanging letters. With a single barreled shotgun he went to the girl's house, the pair strolled to the churchyard nearby. After an hour's talk the girl's little sister heard a shot. Comer fired a shot into the girl's shoulder and when she did not fall he reloaded and fired again below the heart. Again reloading he emptied the load into his breast and died instantly. The girl lived eight minutes.

Mrs. Turner, the girl's mother, is prostrated and in a serious condition. The parents, William Turner and Hiram Comer, are both farmers. The tragedy took place on the steps of the country church.

## DEMOCRATS WANT CAUCUS

TO DISCUSS RECIPROCITY

Washington, Feb. 2.—Some of the Democratic leaders in the house today expressed themselves in favor of a general caucus of the house Democracy to determine the party's attitude on the Canadian reciprocity agreement legislation. So far, however no definite step in this direction has been taken, but 50 signers are all that is necessary to bring about such a conference, which may be called within a few days.

Some of the state delegations are divided in their views. Georgia Democrats, for instance, tried to get together on the question today, but split, six voting for reciprocity and four against.

Kentucky and other state delegations also met, in the main favoring reciprocity.

Daisy Hughes the eleven year old daughter of Robt. and Laura Hughes of Altamahaw died Sunday morning and was buried on the following day at Bethlehem.

rupt enough to buy votes and profit by trafficking in the dishonor of others should go to the penitentiary for a term equal to the tenure of office for which he aspires.

Let the legislature now in session take some steps to arouse the conscience of the people on this subject, and strike some needed blows at the root of this most gigantic evil. Make vote buying and selling a crime and force the people to recognize it as such.

## CORRUPTING THE VOTER

The Raleigh Evening Times.

The corruption of voters as revealed in Adams county, Ohio, and in Vermillion county, Illinois, are suggestive of the thought that these are not the only two counties in which vote-buying and selling has been practiced. These two counties are probably entitled to the prize as the most corrupt in the country, but there are others following in the same paths. Again we wonder to what extent such practices are followed in North Carolina. In the regular elections we think there is very little of this kind of work, but in the primary elections, unsafeguarded as they are by legal restrictions, there is undoubtedly too much money used, money used in questionable ways. Yet in some counties, the close counties, where democrats and republicans are about evenly divided, it is openly charged that money has been used freely to buy the offices by bribing the voters.

In this connection we notice a rather peculiar coincidence in the two Burlington papers of last week. Alamance county is now democratic, we believe, but the majorities either way are small. There is agitation in the county for the substitution of the salary for the fee system in paying county officers. The Burlington State-Dispatch, republican, in speaking for the salary system, uses this argument:

"Why are the office holders opposed to the salary system instead of fees? That is easy: If they were paid a salary they would not have fabulous sums of money to spend each and every election to buy their election and debase the electorate. No man of any political knowledge will deny that it is being done; it is known to all men who have had any experience in politics and yet these same men will continue to wink at this growing evil for the sake of seeing their side win. We are not charging that this evil is prevalent only among our opponents, because it is practiced by all parties, but always more so by the democratic party. The reason for this is easily accounted for; they are in office and they cannot afford to be beaten, hence the lavish flow and use of money."

There it is plainly charged that money has been used for purposes of corruption. Perhaps some one will say that this is simply republican partizanship, used for political effect. Then let's see what the democrats of Alamance say. The Burlington News, democratic, arguing against the salary system, says:

"In the second place, it is not fair to say that you can get a bank cashier on \$2,000 per year, and if this is so you ought to be able to get a county officer for this amount. No man who is competent to act as a cashier of a bank would give up his business in order to accept said position with the chance and prospect of being kicked out of office after serving one term, regardless of whether he has given satisfaction or not. He couldn't afford to accept the position at twice the amount if he had any kind of a business sacrifice. So that a county officer cannot be considered from the general business standpoint."

"Any man who is elected to a county office, accepts same with the fact facing him that he may be turned out at the end of one term, regardless of his efficiency, and for this reason any sensible man knows that by reason of the uncertainty the county officer must be paid more than any man would ask for similar work, where, so long as he gives satisfaction, he is continued in office. Again, the bank cashier is appointed, and it does not cost him half his salary to get elected."

Note the last sentence. It is plainly implied therein that the officers are paying large sums for their offices. So both democratic and republican papers are making the charge, one using it as an argument against the salary system and the other as an argument in favor of the salary system. Both use the same ba-

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## NEGRO SHOTS TWO OFFICERS IN WILSON

One Dead and the Other Is Dying—Negro Was of a Gang Wanted for Breaking in a Store—Has Not Been Caught.

Wilson, N. C., Feb. 3.—Wilson tonight is appalled at the awful tragedy which happened this afternoon when two popular officers, George Mumford, deputy sheriff, was shot to death, and Chief of Police O. A. Glover was most probably fatally wounded in the attempt to arrest a number of negro thieves, the one or two murderers escaping.

The city was thrown into a frenzy of excitement when it was learned that these two popular officers had been fatally shot and was astounded when it was learned that the murderer or murderers had escaped. The fact that two fine and popular young men were shot down in broad daylight in three blocks of the court house and the murderers made their escape is difficult to comprehend and makes the tragedy the more awful, and while the public mourns the most awful tragedy that ever happened in the history of the city, the primeval savage instincts of man is again born and the public (advisedly) will not be satisfied to learn that the criminals are shot down, but want torture, for that will give the only reparation possible.

This morning Sheriff Sharpe showed the writer a telegram from Sheriff McGeachey, of Cumberland county, stating: "Look out for three negroes with guns and pistols, one a mulatto, charged with robbing a hardware store in Dunn. They are headed your way."

The police were at once notified of the message and this afternoon about 2 o'clock a strange mulatto negro was seen on the outskirts of the town in company with three other strange negroes.

The police got on to this clue and plans were made to corral the gang. Officer Wyan disguised himself in hunting clothes and carrying a shotgun, was sent out to watch the parties while the other officers gathered.

Officer Wynn's account of the tragedy in brief is as follows:

"On being informed of the location of the suspicious characters, I put on hunting clothes and took a gun and saw them approaching town from Five Points, a suburb. I told a storekeeper on the edge of the town to watch the parties while I was gone. I then went up town to notify Glover and Mumford, and on returning found that one or two of the parties had gone up town and entered a negro house near the Norfolk-Southern freight depot. According to our agreement Mumford and Glover were to enter the front door, while I and Officer Warren were to watch the rear. Mumford and Glover went into the house and firing immediately began, probably twenty shots in all being fired. Warren and I did not leave our position, fearing the parties would escape by the rear."

Mumford and Glover were shot down with automatic pistols, without having fired a shot. Mumford fell down at the door but was conscious, and one of the negroes fired a bullet into his head as he passed out of the door and escaped.

Glover was shot through both lungs.

After the firing ceased the officers stationed at the rear of the house, seeing that one escaped that way, went around to the front and fired at the mulatto negro as he made his escape, but without effect.

Then the news spread. The military was called out and a raid was made on the hardware store for guns by those who did not live near the center of town. Bloodhounds were sent for and hundreds of citizens formed into posses and scoured the surrounding country in vain for the murderers.

Mumford and Glover were sent to a hospital at once, but Mum-

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