

THE TROUBLE AT SHARON.

A Statement of some of the Unfortunate Differences in that Congregation.

Mr. Editor:—It is now pretty generally known that a most unfortunate state of affairs exists in Sharon church of this county, but it does not seem to be generally known who is responsible for this trouble. Why a kind and loving Father should have sent us to end this affliction upon us, we cannot tell, and we had made up our minds to suffer in silence whatever reproaches might come upon us. But when the character of one of our pastors and best members is publicly and ruthlessly assailed in the N. C. Presbyterian, and that, too, by one who, at least, should wear the emine unadorned, we feel that duty requires us to make a plain statement of the facts in the case, and then leave the verdict in the hands of an impartial public. About two years ago while the Session of Sharon church, were a struggling to find a man to fill their vacant pulpit, their attention was directed to one, Rev. S. W. Newell, who had been preaching at Amity for some time, but had recently departed for Marlborough. Their invitation of the Session, Mr. Newell came to Sharon and a contract was made by which he was to supply the pulpit for half the time during the coming year as stated copy, in order that the people might have sufficient opportunity to see how they would like the preacher, and so the preacher might like them. A provision should be made to establish the pastoral relation, which is a permanent one. At the expiration of the first year Mr. Newell had grown greatly in favor with the people, and having intimated that he might preach for us all the time, if desired, the session immediately called the Deacons together and instructed them to make an estimate of the congregation and see if they could give a salary sufficient for the work of Mr. Newell's time. They made the salary report unfavorable, Mr. Newell, however, thought that the congregation were about ready to pay their agreed salary, and that steps should be taken to pay out a call for him as pastor. But the session thought it safer to visit till the salary could be raised by such steps should be taken. Mr. Newell was not pleased with this idea, and as we are all united, both some of the people privately that the session was the only obstacle in the way of his preaching at Sharon all the time, and that he did not believe that the church would do any more good until there was an election of new officers. In a short time petitions were circulated throughout the congregation asking for an election of new officers. The session, however, in blissful ignorance of what had been done, and being anxious, especially Mr. Rankin, to get Mr. Newell at Sharon, called the Deacons together a second time and urged them to make a motion to convene the congregation to see if they could raise a sufficient salary to call Mr. Newell for the whole of his time. They did so, and this time reported favorably. Whereupon the session called a meeting of the congregation for the purpose of electing and calling a pastor, and Mr. Newell was almost unanimously chosen. Mr. Rankin, being clerk of the Session and Secretary of all our congregational meetings, thought it his duty to prepare the call for the action of the congregation. Now Mr. Rankin had thought that some changes could be made in the wording of the call as recommended by the book of church order, that would be advantageous both to pastor and people. Steps for the pastor in that it would procure the prompt payment of the salary promised, and better for the people in that it would fix a limit to individual responsibility in the payment of the salary. It appears that Mr. Rankin consulted Mr. Newell also, in regard to the changes which he thought of making in the usual form, and obtained his consent thereupon before making them. He then made such alterations as he thought desirable, and in reading the call to the congregation, called their special attention to the changes, which he had made in regard to the payment of the salary, and told the congregation that if they had any objections or any criticisms to make on the changes proposed that now was the time to make them. After considerable discussion of the matter, and an amendment to one of these changes had been made by one of the Deacons and accepted by Mr. Rankin, the call was then unanimously adopted by the congregation, and a committee was appointed to see Mr. Newell, who was in writing and informing of what had been done. Mr. Newell took the call, read it over and signified his willingness to accept it. Two delegates were then chosen to present this call before a special meeting of Presbytery to be held in Charlotte on the 3rd day of February, 1896. How that call was criticized by Presbytery, but it was nevertheless placed in Mr. Newell's hands, and how that

call was then and there accepted by him, and how Presbytery made the usual arrangements for his installation at Sharon, are already matters of public record. As soon as it became known that Mr. Newell had accepted the call and was coming to Sharon to live, there was general rejoicing among the people, and they turned out in a body, elders, deacons and private members to inspect the premises of the parsonage and make such repairs as might be found needful, and to make arrangements to give Mr. Newell a cordial welcome to Sharon. But alas! For human hopes! In an evil hour Mr. Newell met with Mr. Jas. Williamson, pastor of Sugar Creek church, who, by some strange locus poecus, caused Mr. Newell to see hobgoblins, and all things dire and dreadful in that wonderful government, and caused him to reject it and filled his mind with animosity toward Mr. Rankin who had along had been his best friend. When the news reached Sharon of what has happened, it produced the utmost confusion in the minds of the people. In this excitement, some censured Mr. Newell, others censured Mr. Rankin, while perhaps fearfully all condemned Mr. Williamson as a busy-body in other men's matters. The result is a hopeless division in our church, which may never be healed. The writer of this makes no pretensions to being a constitutional lawyer and therefore expresses no opinion about this now famous call further than to say that he has never thought that the changes made would accomplish the end desired. But this much he can say, and that is that he has known Mr. Jas. K. Rankin long and intimately, and he ventures the assertion that no man can thus know him without admiring his candor, honesty, and integrity of character. Every officer in Sharon church knows that Mr. Rankin has always done more than twice as much as any other man in the congregation, in proportion to his means and ability, in paying the church's debts. He owns not a cent of land and has no income save that which he derives from the meager lot of his own hands, and all of this has been spent in deeds of charity, or in paying other people's debts. There are some people who cannot appreciate the motives and nobler purposes that animate men of this kind. It is not claimed of course, that Mr. Rankin is perfect. He has his faults, as all men have. But it seems unkind and unfair to attempt to array public prejudice against one who has always tried to do what he thought was best, even though he might be mistaken as to what was best.

H. K. R.

Train Robbery in California.

TULARE, Calif., March 19.—Two officers were shot and a train robber named Daniel McCole was killed, in an attempt to hold up the South bound New Orleans Express near here this morning at 3 o'clock. The attempted robbery was one of the most daring that has ever taken place in California. It probably would have succeeded had it not been for the treachery of one of the robbers. Last night the officers of the city were informed that an attempt would be made early this morning to hold up the sunset-bound train. The man who gave the information, gave the details of the plot, and said he at first intended to take part in it. Under sheriff Daggert and constable Reed, armed with shot-guns, he went to the place where the robbery was to occur to await them. The officers saw the men and opened fire. The robbers returned the fire, Sheriff Daggert was shot through the lungs, probably fatally, and constable Reed was shot in the shoulder. McCole, who is believed to be one of the Dalton gang, was killed. The others escaped.

Blackburn's New Campaign.

FURKING, Ky., March 18.—Senator Blackburn opened his campaign for the silver at the opera house last night. He made a vigorous speech, claiming that the failure of the Kentucky legislature to elect a Senator was a great victory for silver.

He was followed by Senator Beeson, who denounced the action of Governor Bradley for his conduct during the last days of the legislature.

Colonel Jack China made a few remarks, declaring that it was better for the State to spend \$1,000 for militia than to have to have to pull the shoes from some of the members and say: "Don't they look natural."

THE COTTON CROP OF 1895.

The Agricultural Department's Statistical Bulletin.

The Agricultural Department has issued the following bulletin on the cotton crop of 1895: The statements furnished the Department of Agriculture by all railways and water transportation companies show that from Sept. 1, 1895, to Feb. 1, 1896, the total actual movements of cotton from the States of production to ports for Europe and western mills, Canada, Mexico and all other destinations amounted to 5,235,722 commercial bales. Reports from the officials of the mills show actual purchases during the same period amounting to 609,741 bales; the Department's towns and precinct agents show that on Feb. 1, 1896, there remained on plantations 25,163 bales; in warehouses, 358,741 bales; at public gins, 103,599 bales; at compresses, 171,552 bales; total 987,748 bales not including stocks held at ports. The crop by States is as follows: Alabama, 486,490 bales; remaining on plantations, in warehouses, etc., 100,878; bought by mills 44,950; total 632,318. Arkansas, 365,457; plantations, etc., 115,964; mills, 1,570; total, 482,991. Florida, 32,712; plantations, etc., 3,103; total, 35,815. Georgian, 777,632; plantations, etc., 153,381; mills, 142,641; total, 1,073,654. Indian Territory, 52,259; plantations, etc., 7,538; total, 59,797. Louisiana, 398,137; plantations, etc., 66,918; mills, 1,074; total, 466,129. Mississippi, 787,136; plantations, 158,111; mills, 11,663; total, 956,909. Missouri, 11,056; plantations, 558; total, 11,614. North Carolina, 155,616; plantations, 52,709; mills, 131,183; total, 339,508. Oklahoma, 12,902; plantations, 791; total, 13,693. South Carolina, 291,562; plantations, 80,433; mills, 211,990; total, 783,985. Tennessee, 122,816; plantations, 15,888; mills, 11,112; total, 152,816. Texas, 1,531,812; plantations, 220,082; mills, 3,201; total, 1,755,127. Virginia, 1,105; plantations, 1,294; total, 2,399. Total crop, including 49 bales produced in Utah, 6,788,507 commercial bales. The above mill figures should be added for Georgia, 745; Louisiana, 6,305; North Carolina, 562; South Carolina, 5,898; Tennessee, 2,052; and for Texas, 2,517 bales, taken from ports and otherwise counted in the rail road movement; the Kentucky, Missouri and Virginia figures being also included in the railway movement. The mill purchases by States are as follows: Alabama, 14,981; Arkansas, 1,570; Georgia, 142,350; Kentucky, 10,115; Louisiana, 7,430; Mississippi, 11,662; Missouri, 188; North Carolina, 131,748; South Carolina, 229,978; Tennessee, 16,641; Texas, 5,151; and Virginia, 16,984. Total, 609,741 bales. No deduction has been made of cotton on plantations and at interior points September 1, 1895. The above figures are subject to revision in the Department's final report.

North Carolina.

The State Convention has not been called, but it is conceded that it will elect silver delegates. The Democrats of North Carolina and South Carolina stand shoulder to shoulder on the money question. None of the prominent men have threatened to bolt the national convention should it be against silver, but a large number of the voters have done so, and the situation is serious to that extent. The leading Democrats are for silver. All previous conventions are declared for the white metal.

Regarding a presidential choice, the delegation will want a sound and straightforward silver man, but would probably be satisfied with Morrison or Stevenson, should either pledge himself to let the will of the party decide the money question.

North Carolina's twenty-two votes are regarded as a certainty for silver at Chicago.—Washington Star.

Selfishness.

Selfishness is vile, it matters not what particular form it may take. He whose plans are formed only for personal gain and selfish enjoyment has nothing in him really noble. There is nothing noble in a life-long effort to make all the money and own all the property we can. Nothing noble in the purpose to gratify us as far as we can every passion and desire. True nobility of character rises above selfish considerations. When Christ declared self-denial to be the first condition of discipleship, He held up before the world not only an essential element of Christian religion but also an essential element of a truly noble character.—A. R. Presbyterian.

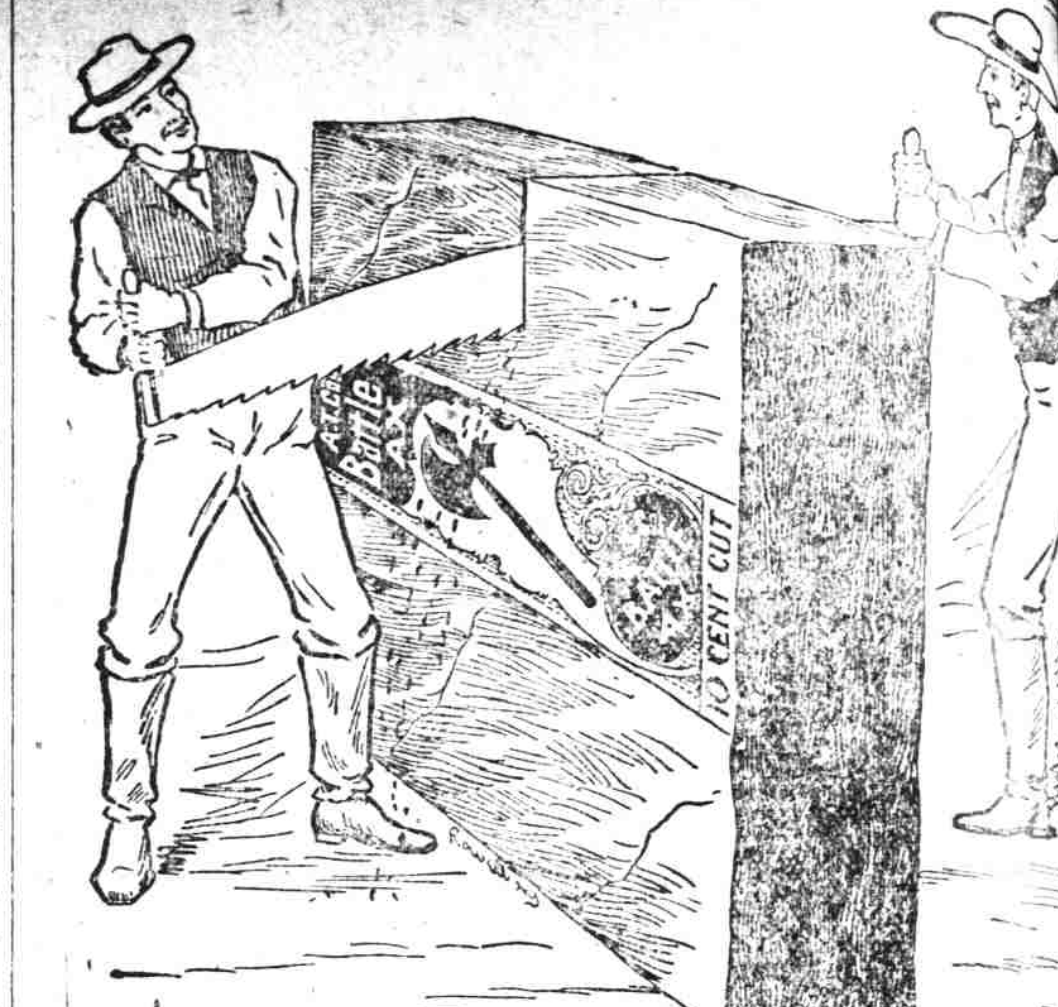
SENATORS BY THE PEOPLE.

Report from the Elections Committee on an Amendment to the Constitution.

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 20.—Senator Mitchell, Republican of Oregon, today reported from the elections committee the joint resolutions preparing the amendment to the constitution providing for the election of Senators by a direct vote of the people. The report says the committee studied the matter with the proper appreciation of its gravity. The objections that are raised to the proposed change were fully considered. The committee report concludes that the tendency of public opinion is to discourage the Senate, to depreciate its dignity and its powers. If there is any cause for this it should be removed. The adoption of the amendment will remove the prejudices now existing, which are rapidly becoming dangerously fastened upon the public mind; will dissipate all cause, excuse and pretext for unjust criticism; will tend to elevate the character, advance the dignity and increase the usefulness of the Senate.

Opening of the Grand Opera Season in Chicago.

CHICAGO, March 23.—In several respects the season of grand opera which begins tonight at the Auditorium promises to eclipse that of any previous year. The list of box holders shows that society will be ably represented while the advance sale of seats is far ahead of previous seasons. Tonight Gounod's "Faust" will be sung in French with Melba and the two D'Eszkes in the cast. Tomorrow night the only Calvo will be heard in Bizet's "Carmen." Wednesday evening Nordica will be the Valentina in "Les Huguenots" supported by the greatest cast ever brought together in this country. It will include Mme. Scuderi, Mme. Melba, Jean and Edward D'Eszke, M. Plancon and M. Maurel. Thursday evening acts 1, 2 and 4 of Verdi's "La Traviata" will be followed by "Cavalleria Rusticana" with Calvo as Santuzza. Friday evening Wagner's "Parsifal" and "Lohengrin" will assume the chair of novelty. It will be the first time in appearance in this opera of Nordica and Jean D'Eszke. Mr. Anton Solli will come from New York especially to conduct the performance. The opera for Saturday matinee has not been announced. In the evening a double bill will be presented. Verdi's "Rigoletto" will be followed by the mad scene from "Le Cid de Lamoignon." Mme. Melba singing both main roles. Among the other works to be presented during the season are "Lohengrin," "Faust," "Il Trovatore," "La Navarrese," "Lucia di Lammermoor," "Martha," and "Mignon."



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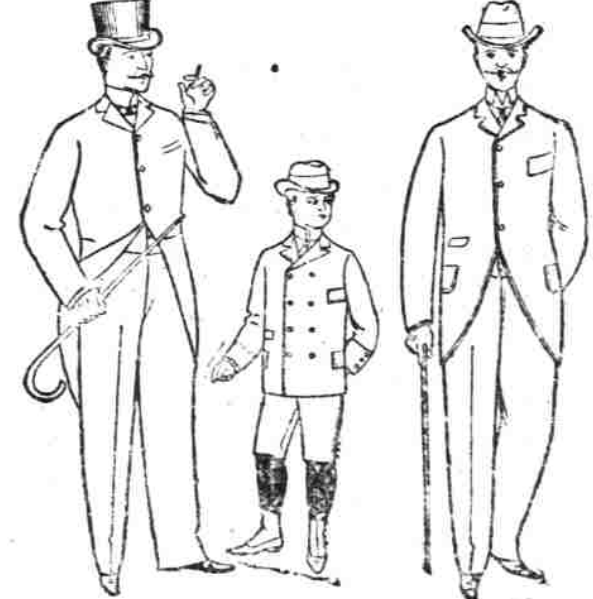
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