

of these taxes would have been lost to the State by reason of the delay of those companies in paying promptly. And while repelling all of the allegations of injustice in my office, a baseless fabrication got a up for political effect, perhaps as a sort of blank movement, because the Democratic speakers have made charges against some of the officials under the present administration. I would not have thought to refer to the fact that Dr. Thompson admits that when he came in I had a settlement and paid over all the public money then in my hands to him. And so I have Dr. Thompson's certificate that I fully settled up, whatever that is worth.

Now for that part of Dr. Thompson's speech which refers to the time of the payments made by me, and the balances which he says were left in my hands, the calls attention to some figures appearing in a statement made by J. M. Denmark, Clerk of the Treasury Department. Let us see how he got into the conclusion that this statement is a copy of the records in the Treasury Department of payment during my term, into that office. If it were, it would show specifically the amounts paid on September 18th, 1896, on account of all collections aggregating \$22,000, which is not endorsed in it. But the printing of that would have spoiled a good part of Dr. Thompson's speech. Nor is Mr. Denmark's statement a copy of the accounts in the Secretary of State's office, if it had been, in incorporating into that statement would have spoiled all of Dr. Thompson's speech. This statement is Mr. Denmark's conclusion from what he claimed to have ascertained in one of these departments. By the way, I have seen a statement of like tenor, which he was pleased to communicate in a letter to Collector Duncan, a Republican, and who, as I understand, had it published and distributed over the State for party purposes. This statement Mr. Denmark signed as Clerk of the Treasury Department, to give it the effect of a official authority. Now this statement is in no sense a copy of the record of the Treasury Department, and I should be glad to believe that the head of that Department would sanction the publication of the Department for any such partisan purpose.

But to the matter. On some of the five accounts the law was for monthly settlements, on others for quarterly settlements, on others the period was not specified. When I entered upon the office, I found that the rule there and in the other departments was to make quarterly settlements. I attempted no change in that respect. The statements were monthly and the payments quarterly. The settlements were made in reference to the balance found due on the day for quarterly payment, and although for some cause or other there might be delay in making the settlement and actual payment, that would in no wise affect the amount that would be turned over to the Treasury. For the amount due on the day of the last quarterly settlement would control. It always happened that between the day for quarterly settlement and the ascertaining the balance on that date, and the payment to the Treasury, that there would be collections, but they would be charged to the books in the office as they came in and deposited in the bank to await the day for the next quarterly settlement. The amount in the Treasury would be credited on the book on the day when it was actually made, and would in order of time and position on the book appear after other collections had been made. The payment always represented the amount due on the last day of the preceding quarter. Intervening collections went in the next quarterly payment. The public will understand this. It would be uncharitably to assume that Dr. Thompson and Mr. Denmark did not understand it too.

The inference that Dr. Thompson wants the public to draw from this part of his speech is suggested by him in these words: "If he had put these arrears at interest and paid the State interest on them, it might have been some excuse for the delay, but that is a violation of the law. But he did not do that."

Yes, Dr. Thompson stumbled on the truth when in saying that I did not do that, that I did not put these arrears at interest, and his purpose to suggest it to the public will fall to be of the political benefit and advantage that he expects to realize from his insinuation. Dr. Thompson has the record of my bank accounts in his office and saw the book daily, and has before him a record of where every cent was. Not a cent of interest was ever charged or received. The deposits for the most part were made in the Citizens National Bank. Less than \$10,000 in the aggregate was deposited in the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Lenoir County. The certificate of deposit was given for the balance in that bank in December, 1896, and for the purpose of passing it over to Dr. Thompson in thing less than five thousand dollars on deposit in the Commercial and Farmers Bank of Raleigh. These I think are all banks of deposit for State funds.

In regard to the charge Dr. Thompson makes with reference to the condition of the stock of books on hand, and the place of storage, I really do not know. Dr. Thompson has the record of my bank accounts in his office and saw the book daily, and has before him a record of where every cent was. Not a cent of interest was ever charged or received. The deposits for the most part were made in the Citizens National Bank. Less than \$10,000 in the aggregate was deposited in the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Lenoir County. The certificate of deposit was given for the balance in that bank in December, 1896, and for the purpose of passing it over to Dr. Thompson in thing less than five thousand dollars on deposit in the Commercial and Farmers Bank of Raleigh. These I think are all banks of deposit for State funds.

teen months. What had former Secretaries to do with it? Why lug in the fact, if it be a fact, that some of the former Secretaries were disposed to show hospitality after their own notions? What had it to do with my office? The condition of my office is a matter of which Dr. Thompson may have his opinion. Persons who had business with the office also have a right to their opinion. I can rely with confidence that Dr. Thompson's opinion is not shared by others. My office was always kept in good condition. And as far as my books of accounts are concerned, I have understood that Dr. Thompson has made no change in their method or the manner of keeping them, and if he has I hazard nothing in saying that the changes has not been for the better.

Here is a copy of the settlement made between myself and Dr. Thompson, Secretary of State, the day he was installed:

"Balance Sheet of C. M. Cooke, Secretary of State, 12 January, 1897:

Exp. and Adm. fees.....	\$ 431.50
License.....	1,314.80
Tax.....	1,517.23
Land Grants.....	5,273.01
Supreme Court Reports.....	516.00
Salv.....	18.95
Post.....	41.20
Laws and Journals.....	27.75
Redemption of Property.....	286.53
	\$9,766.64
Cash in Citizens' National Bank.....	\$2,362.24
Cash in Farmers & Merchants' Bank of Lenoir County.....	6,144.00
	\$9,766.64

"The above is a settlement between C. M. Cooke and Cyrus Thompson, his successor, this day, January 12, 1897.

"C. M. COOKE,
Former Sec. of State.
"CYRUS THOMPSON,
Secretary of State."

My books contained detailed accounts showing where each one of the balances charged in that settlement came from. There were my accounts with the banks. There were the checks I had drawn and which had been paid. All these were turned over to Dr. Thompson at the time of our settlement. From then until now he has never complained to me that the settlement was not in every respect fair, correct and just to the State.

It would be difficult to convince the fair minded that this attack by Dr. Thompson is inspired by anything except the consciousness of an exigency in the fortunes of his party—that would seem to him to justify a resort to unscrupulous methods.

C. M. COOKE.
Raleigh, N. C., Sept. 9, 1898.
Capt. C. M. Cooke:

Dear Sir—I have read Dr. Thompson's criticism of your administration as Secretary of State in his speech at Clinton.

As I was, during your whole term as Secretary of State, your chief clerk, it is fair to you that I should state what I know of your conduct of the office.

I know that your books were carefully and accurately kept, and present a true statement of every dollar which was received in the office, what it was received for and what disposition was made of it. Every dollar which came in was deposited in bank to the credit of the Secretary of State, not a cent to you privately, and at no time did you or could you have diverted any part of the money collected by you as Secretary of State to your personal use, even temporarily.

The great bulk of the collections of the Secretary of State are in checks and drafts. These were always endorsed to the cashiers of the several banks in which they were deposited. Not a cent of the proceeds ever came into your hands. There was not over \$1,000 collected in currency during your term. Further than this, it was the rule that every Saturday you and I should go over the accounts together, and while this rule may have been varied, whenever we did not examine the accounts on Saturday we did so within a few days thereafter.

I have recently examined all the checks given by you as Secretary of State. With one exception, they were filled out by me, and on their faces specify for what purpose they were drawn.

In regard to the charge that a number of the articles of agreement of corporations were not copied in the record books, I have to say that while this is true, the blame for it should attach to me, and not to yourself, as you turned over to me not only the duties, but the fees of this part of your office. These articles were left duly filed in the Secretary's office, and neither the State nor any individual can have suffered from the failure to copy them.

SEC. COOKE'S LETTER OF AUGUST 8

Answering Statements Made in The Progressive Farmer.

From the Democratic Hand-Book.

The books and records of the various departments of this State have been in the possession of the enemies of the Democratic party some more than eighteen months. These enemies have had time and opportunity to search them through and through. The only suggestion of any failure of duty on the part of any Democratic official comes from a newspaper against two brave and patriotic men, who are no doubt, and cannot speak for themselves, but Hon. C. M. Cooke, late Secretary of State, has so fully and completely answered the insinuations of this paper, that we give his letter to the public. Neither he nor the letter needs any words of commendation, both speak for themselves, and no one can discredit either. The letter is as follows:

"Loulburg, N. C., August 8, 1898.
"My attention has been called to a publication made by the Progressive Farmer in its issue of April 9th last, containing the present administration of the Secretary of State with the administrations of his predecessors, which does injustice to the latter. There have been other references to the subject in other papers and other papers in the State, and unjust deductions drawn from the estimates and figures given in the said article. The article referred to gives what is claimed to be an exact statement of the taxes from insurance companies collected and paid to the Treasurer by the present Secretary of State, from January, 1897, to April 1, 1898, and compares this statement with the reports reported collected and paid over by Secretary Cooke, from September 1, 1895, to January 1, 1897. To one unacquainted with the law, this comparison might seem to show that the law, with the law, it would appear, as is the fact, that the period covered by the time selected from Dr. Thompson's administration is for the purpose of collecting the commission on insurance, to which it refers, practically two years; while the period covered by the time selected from Secretary Cooke's administration, in respect to this same subject-matter, covers practically only one year.

"The law in respect to the commission taxes on insurance companies is: The commission tax is two per cent on the receipts of the insurance companies, is due and payable within thirty days after the reports of the companies are filed, and that such reports are to be filed on or before the first day of January and July, respectively. A much larger business is done by the insurance companies during the fall months, and the taxes on January reports are much larger than the July reports. It will be seen that while there were sixteen months of the Cooke administration, it only embraced the times for the receiving of two semi-annual reports, in respect to the taxes, namely, January, 1896, and July, 1896, while the fourteen and two-third months taken from Dr. Thompson's administration include the return periods of January, 1897, July, 1897, and January, 1898.

"There are two taxes on insurance companies. The one is the commission tax, referred to above, and the other the specific and license tax. The commission tax has been uniformly two per cent, but the law allowing a reduction of this tax to one per cent, for investment of the companies' receipts in the State, has been uniform in respect to its requirements. For years this reduction was allowed on the investment of one-half of the premium receipts in this State, and a number of the State companies complied with this law and only paid one per cent taxes on their receipts. In 1886, during the last year of Secretary Cooke's administration, the law was changed so that the State should receive one-fourth of the entire assets of the company to secure this reduction. None of the companies, except those chartered in North Carolina, availed themselves of this law. The law is now considered in favor of Colonel Cooke and Colonel Saunders in considering the increase of the amount of taxes collected by the Cooke and Thompson administration over theirs. The license tax has been several times changed. At the commencement of Colonel Saunders' administration, in 1879, it was \$100 on both fire and life insurance companies, as required by the Act of the Legislature preceding the adoption of the Code in 1882, when it was raised to \$120, and it was so written in the Code. But in 1885, this license tax was increased to \$200 on fire insurance companies, to \$150, and so continued to 1891, when it was again increased to \$100. In 1896 the tax on fire insurance companies was left at \$100, but as required by the Act of the Legislature, it was increased to \$200 on fire companies and \$250 on life companies. 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