

THE NORLINA HEADLIGHT

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H. C. Coleman Writes.

Merry Mount, N. C.,
Oct. 24, 1914

Editor Headlight,
Norlina, N. C.

Dear Sir:

"Oh, wretched State! Oh Bosom black as Death!
Oh limed Soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more encaged."

Replying to Mr. Jno. H. Kerr in the Record of Oct. 23rd.

Had nature, Mr. Kerr, given you an understanding equal to the task of carrying out the wishes of your heart you would indeed have been a formidable monster between the people and justice, but while it was liberal in one instance it denied you in another in order, it would seem, that your selfish desires could not be imposed upon the people. Nature abundant in one instance is scarce in another in order that the balance may not be destroyed.

The audacity, and deceit, and bluff of your article are no less remarkable than the contempt the expressions would indicate that you have of the common sense of the people of Warren county. The attributes mentioned above can be exercised to great advantage when assisted by ability, as instanced by the career of Napoleon, but when not supported and directed by such they reflect nothing but shame and pity upon their author as in your instance.

It is not my wish to divert the attention of the people from the Judkins and Hawtree irregularities, and the Coleman whiskey affair to your inconsistent acts as district solicitor, along with your "attempts to sometimes serve your Master and Lord," but I am quite anxious to center their attention upon the affidavits you have furnished regarding the fraud in Judkins and the voting of unqualified people at Wise. I shall appeal to the people to decide who has attempted to deceive in this matter. Your own affidavits shall serve as evidence to the truth of the charges I have made. Fraud and irregularity were practiced at Vaughan, and people that were not qualified to do so voted in Warrenton and Hawtree. I appeal to the people to give an unbiased hearing, and if I fail to prove by your own affidavits that the charges I have produced were true then I stand guilty of falsehood in regard to every statement I have made; but before referring to the affidavits you have furnished I wish to call the attention of the people to a few facts made noticeable by your references.

I wish to call their attention to the fact that they will hardly hear any more from you and Mr. Jones about the immoral use of whiskey. After it had been proven to the people that leaders of the moral (?) faction were acting the hypocrite in the matter and were distributing it over the county for election purposes and also attempting to deceive the church into assisting them through their loud abuses of their opponents you and Mr. Jones are as silent as death regarding it, excepting one short reference by you. What do you suppose the church thinks now of your treachery to the main plank of your platform, the one by which they were deceived? You refer to your "attempts to sometimes serve your Master and Lord." True christian people realize that in order to live a reputable christian life the effort to give service must be constant, not "sometimes," but all the time. When you attempted to defend the hypocritical use of whiskey by the moral (?) faction and represent your brother as "yonder publi-

can" we suppose you wish us to understand that as explanatory of why you refer to your christian service as "sometimes." You have the credit given for an honest confession in that case, though it was so expressed as to deserve an explanation. So we, upon your motion, bid "farewell" to the whiskey question in Warrenton county. The silence of you and Mr. Jones is more eloquent than any language that you or I could exercise.

You refer to your life as "having been an open book in this county." Indeed it has, but written in a language that but few people could interpret, and still less understand. The body of the work is so inconsistent with the preface that it is with difficulty we believe you are the author of it. It is a difficult work to translate. I can only speak of it with but short references.

Your reference to the fact that you "hardly know me" is I trust not a matter of surprise to my friends for I do not care to be associated with that criminal class among which you find some of your strongest friends; and as to the belief you express that but few people in the County know me I am surely grieved, you are not my friend or else you would not have hurt me by such an unkind reference, but I try to console myself by reflecting that it were better for me to enjoy but a short acquaintance than like certain others have a very wide one only to be attended by the contempt that familiarity breeds for certain such individuals.

You have reminded me that you "have answered your reply to me in twenty-four hours after it appeared." Wonderful! I should have congratulated myself to have done as much in several day's time.

Now, we will approach the affidavits you have furnished in the order in which they were published.

First—You furnish one signed by the election board of Judkins. I have made the statement in former articles that two men were voted by the Coleman supporters in Judkins after the poll was closed. I charged such as an irregularity. You denied it, and are attempting to do so in your article. Commencing in the thirtieth line in that affidavit is the following statement, "and when the poll was closed, thinking that it would take until after dark to count the ballots, we (the election board) removed the ballot box into the depot at Vaughan, and there counted the votes in the presence of every one who wished to see said counting." This statement is signed by

J. J. STALLINGS,
J. C. HUDSON,
J. V. SHEARIN.

Now, remember that the statement of the election board says "the poll was closed" over there under a tree, meaning that the time for voting had expired. You admit that the "poll was closed under the tree?" Then we will consider Mr. W. R. Vaughan's affidavit. Personally I wish to express my thanks to you Mr. Vaughan, for furnishing this affidavit, without it it was difficult for me to corroborate my charges but now you corroborate me. Commencing at the twelfth line Mr. Vaughan testifies, "at 4:50 or 4:55 they came in with the boxes, and I asked them why they closed the polls before 5 o'clock. Mr. Hudson (a poll holder) said it was by his time," etc. Then he goes on and tells how it was not by his

(Mr. Vaughan's) time and they voted Mr. Tucker and Mr. Thrower. The election board in their affidavit say the poll was closed over under a tree, and then the box carried into the depot. Mr. Vaughan says that after it was brought in two men were voted. The impression you and Mr. Vaughan wish to give is that it was not legal to close the poll by any time in Vaughan except Mr. Vaughan's. Such is the opinion only of you and Mr. Vaughan. The poll was opened again against the protest of Mr. Hudson by whose time they were opened in the morning. Mr. Vaughan states that "the boxes had not been opened." This is just what I have stated all along, but they had been closed, that is the time had expired for voting. The remaining parts of your affidavits simply express the "opinions" of those people as to what they thought was right and wrong about the affair.

But I ask you and Mr. Vaughan this question. By whose authority, we can safely conclude upon whose advice it was done, but please, after the astounding irregularity of voting two men after the "poll was closed," by whose authority did the election board reduce the tallied vote of Mr. J. A. Dowtin so as to cause the total of his and Mr. J. L. Coleman's to correspond with the total number of names put on the poll books as having voted? People of Warren county go see for yourselves in Warrenton the returns from Judkins showing in unmistakable figures that Mr. Dowtin's vote was cut from 67 to 61, letting Mr. Coleman's remain at 97 so as to make the total of the two candidates amount to not more than 158, the number of men voted. Mr. Kerr, you and Mr. Vaughan can not deny this. Mr. Vaughan your conduct in this affair was so unusual as to justify the following questions: For nearly ten years you had been a regular attendant at the Democratic conventions in Warrenton. You were not there on May 23rd. But tell us please why was a lawyer from Littleton employed to appear in Warrenton on May 23rd to defend the Judkins returns? Aha! You know nothing of it. You were not there, were you? You could tell us something of the corrupt efforts put forth by the moral (?) faction, could you not? Do you remember anything of a vote for Coleman being bribed at Vaughan by a quart of whiskey and \$3.00? Silence. The opening the polls after they were closed and two men voted was and irregularity, the changing of Mr. Dowtin's, or any candidate's vote was a fraud, the bribing of a voter was corruption. Why should these things have been done? Was there not a law to protect the people from such? It is, but it is paralyzed. Why should the poll holders in any precinct have feared to exercised corruption only that it should be in favor of certain candidates?

Your next reference is to the irregularities in Hawtree. I wish to call the attention of the people to the fact that it was not a question of who a voter voted for that made him a qualified or unqualified voter, as that is the impression you are trying to make. The question was that you challenged "any one to show that there was any illegal vote cast in the primary election in this Precinct," meaning Hawtree. But now you are shifting your ground after its having been proved to you that illegal votes were cast at Wise, but I shall follow you through your shiftings be they ever so numerous. You produce an affidavit by Mr. Norman Perkinson that

"he heard" Mr. Smith say he voted for Mr. Dowtin, etc., and one by Mr. Gray that he voted for Mr. Dowtin. You wish to make the impression, I suppose, that if they voted for Mr. Dowtin that determined the legality of the vote? I beg to disagree with you. Those two votes were illegally cast matters not for whom they were. The question was whether or not they were legal. Their voting for Mr. Dowtin does not determine the legality of the act in the minds of the people, though it may in yours. I can attest to this and the people can judge the remainder that neither of these men, Messrs. Gray and Smith, are acquainted with Mr. Dowtin, and as I have stated before they were adysed, instigated, and assisted to vote by the strongest supporters Mr. Coleman had at Wise. Personally, I did not know whom they voted for, and did not permit that to influence my statement. Perhaps? We know now. But for all that you have not proved that their voting was legal and the people are not such ignoramoses as not to know but that that was the question.

We will consider the irregularities in Warrenton. You say I was "misinformed about Professor Futrell's voting; he voted in the Primary." I quote you, "He came to Warrenton to live after May 1912, was not eligible to taxes for the year 1913, he lived in this Township four months and in this county six months, and he was eligible to vote, and he voted." You say he came to Warrenton "to live" after May 1912, but was not liable to taxes for 1913. Why was he not, please? Why was he not liable for taxes for 1913? You say he was living there. Something crooked. The rest of us in the County are liable for taxation if we are residing in the county only the month in which taxes are listed, but according to your statement this man had been living there from May 1912 to May 1914 and still not liable to taxes. And does not the election law plainly say that a man to be eligible to vote must also in addition to the residential qualification have paid his poll tax for the year previous to the one in which he is voting prior to May 1st of that year? This man had paid no poll tax in Northampton, of course you will come with that statement now, but he stated the day of the Primary that he had not. Then what in the name of justice entitled him to vote? Nothing but your sanctioning it. You have admitted in the same statement that he came there to live after May 1912, was not liable to taxes for 1913, but was entitled to vote. You make these statements in the face of fact that the people are conscious of the fact that we should have paid our poll tax for previous year prior to May 1st of the year we are voting in, in order under the election law to vote. Ah! Surely you must have a most contemptible opinion of the intelligence of the people of Warren county. I charge, sir, that that man was not entitled to vote in Warrenton, and that your defending it is only an evidence of the boldness with which you sanction injustice. That was not the only instance of irregularity in Warrenton. A member of the chaingang sentenced there by court, and at that time serving his allotted time of service was sent for and brought to Warrenton, and assisted to vote by members of the moral (?) faction. Why should you have sanctioned such? Was that consistent with the moral (?) platform represented to the people in general and the church in particular? Was it consistent with

your official position as district solicitor to refuse to encourage investigations of the Judkins, Warrenton, and Hawtree irregularities? Was it not even less consistent with the moral (?) platform represented to the church for you to attempt a defence of such things? You yet have an opportunity to disprove the charges of fraud in Judkins, Warrenton, and Hawtree. I refer you to the job department of the Record for willing service in getting out replies in circular form. But in conclusion I wish to suggest that all public characters and you in particular should regulate their conduct with that old political proverb of log-cabin origin: "You can fool some of the folks all the time, and you can fool all the folks some of the time, but you can't fool all the folks all the time."

To the People of Warren County:

It is appropriate to reflect upon the proposition before you and to be decided by you on Nov. 8rd. Personally I have no interests at stake other than those in general with you. There are no favors for me to ask and less to expect. I have written these articles with no other view than that the honest people of the county might be aware of the great political scheme that is being endeavored to be imposed upon them by unscrupulous politicians.

With respect to Messrs. Jones, Rodwell and Kerr my position before you is different. They were pleading with you to uphold a system upon which depended their political existence. The success or the failure of their own political plans is at stake. I attacked the hypocritical system upon which these plans were founded, and not the men themselves, until forced to do so. With you and me it is not a question of whether a ring of politicians fail or succeed, but whether a political system, represented by these men, and founded upon the base of principles, hypocrisy, ingratitude, and treachery, shall succeed or fail. It is not a question with you or me whether Mr. Coleman or Mr. Dowtin shall win in the election of Nov. 3rd., but one of deeper importance. It is whether Mr. Coleman, supported by Messrs. Jones, Rodwell and Kerr sanctioning the above vices shall win or Mr. Dowtin, supported by the people shall lose. I shall indulge in no unkind comment upon Mr. Coleman further than facts shall justify, it is only his misfortune to permit himself to be the choice of a faction begotten by treachery, nurtured by hypocrisy, and secured by fraud.

It is not a question of the choice of two men but of the two different principles represented

by them. It is not necessary to go into details relating the motives that prompted the origin of the opposition to Mr. Dowtin, that when he refused to throw the strength of his political influence to Mr. Kitchin, for the Senate, but supported Mr. Simmons instead, Mr. Kerr and others commenced a fight against him, the object of which was his utter destruction, knowing no other charge to produce against him they advanced with the plan of ensnaring the church into politics the claim that he used whiskey to build political support, a charge as false in its practice as hypocritical in its preaching. He was selected as "yonder publican" to have poured upon his head the abuses of his enemies and the suspicions of his misinformed friends. For twelve long years he has met upon the political arena of Warren county every form of fraud and immorality that could be produced by his enemies, and not a single instance of their charges have they been able to prove.

The hypocrisy and inconsistency of the charges of his enemies can be seen by the fact that when they were representing to the christian element of Warrenton county instances of his immoral use of whiskey; Mr. Jones was offering quarts of it to public officials in the office of the Supt. of Public Instruction and Mr. W. G. Coleman, brother of Mr. J. L. Coleman, was distributing it to be used on May 16th. from Wise to Littleton. In the same breath that you were asked not to support him because of his long duration in office they displayed their inconsistency by asking you to support Mr. Rodwell who has been an office holder in the county for nearly thirty years.

But even for all these things it would be only just for us to submit to the results of the May primary but for one fact evident to all and disproven by none. Mr. Dowtin's defeat was brought about by fraud and corruption. You already know how at Wise illegal votes were instigated to be cast by Mr. Coleman's strongest supporters there and whiskey was close and how votes were bribed by high representatives of the moral (?) faction with whiskey and money and but for the sake of a friendship formed in boyhood with his victim's son upon the base ball diamond, the purchaser should blush before you for his act; and how at this same place the election returns were change, cutting Mr. Dowtin's vote from 67 to 61 and permitting (Continued on the 8th. Page.)

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