

# THE SPENCER CRESCENT

THE FLOWERS COLLECTION

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF LABOR, COMMERCE AND EDUCATION.

VOL. I.

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NO. 46.

## MR. TAFT'S RELIGION

President Roosevelt Says It is His Own Private Concern

PEOPLE SHOULD NOT INTERFERE

The President-Elect's Religious Belief, Declares the President, is Purely His Own Private Concern; a Matter For Which He is Responsible Solely to His Maker, and Not a Subject for General Discussion or Political Discrimination.

Washington, Special.—"Secretary Taft's religious faith is purely his own private concern and not a matter for general discussion and political discrimination," says President Roosevelt in a letter he made public in which he answers numerous correspondents. The President says he deferred the publication of the letter until now to avoid any agitation likely to influence the election. The letter follows:

November 6, 1908.

My Dear Sir: I have received your letter running in part as follows:

"While it is claimed almost universally that religion should not enter into politics, yet there is no denying that it does, and the mass of the voters that are not Catholics will not support a man for any office, especially for President of the United States, who is a Roman Catholic."

"Since Taft has been nominated for President by the Republican party, it is being circulated and is constantly urged as a reason for not voting for Taft that he is an infidel (Unitarian) and wife and brother Roman Catholics."

"If his feelings are in sympathy with the Roman Catholic Church on account of his wife and brother being Catholics, that would be objectionable to a sufficient number of voters to defeat him. On the other hand, if he is an infidel, that would be sure to defeat him."

"I am writing this letter for the sole purpose of giving Mr. Taft all opportunity to let the world know what his religious belief is."

I received many such letters as yours during the campaign, expressing dissatisfaction with Mr. Taft on religious grounds; some of them on the ground that he was a Unitarian, and others on the ground that he was suspected to be in sympathy with Catholics. I have selected your letter to answer because you advance both the objections commonly urged against Mr. Taft, namely: that he is a Unitarian and also that he is suspected of sympathy with the Catholics.

You ask that Mr. Taft shall "let the world know what his religious belief is." This is purely his own private concern, and it is a matter between him and his Maker, a matter for his own conscience; and to require it to be made public under penalty of political discrimination is to negative the first principles of our government, which guarantee complete religious liberty, and the right of each man to act in religious affairs as his own conscience dictates. Mr. Taft never asked my advice in the matter, but if he had asked it, I should have emphatically advised him against thus stating publicly his religious belief. The demand for a statement of a candidate's religious belief can have no meaning except that there may be discrimination for or against him because of that belief. Discrimination against the holder of one faith means retaliatory discrimination against men of other faiths. The inevitable result of entering upon such a practice would be an abandonment of our real freedom of conscience and a reversion to the dreadful conditions of religious dissensions which in so many lands have proved fatal, to true liberty, to true religion and to all advanced in civilization.

To discriminate against a thoroughly upright citizen because he belongs to some particular Church, or because, like Abraham Lincoln, he has not avowed his allegiance to any Church, is an outrage against that liberty of conscience which is one of the foundations of American life. You are entitled to know whether a man seeking your suffrage is a man of clean and upright life, honorable in all his dealings with his fellows, and fit by qualification and purpose to do well in the great office for which he is a candidate; but you are not entitled to know matters which he purely trusts to himself and his Maker. If it is proper or legitimate to oppose a man for being a Unitarian, as was John Quincy Adams, for instance, as is the Reverend Edward Everett Hale, at the present moment chaplain of the Senate, and an American of whose life all good Americans are proud—then it would be equally proper to support or oppose a man because of his views on justification by faith, or the method of administering the sacrament of the gospel of salvation by works. If you once enter on such a career there is absolutely no limit at which you can

## CONDITIONS BETTER

Healthy Showing in Earnings of All Railroads

RECEIPTS PER MILE INCREASED

Commissioner Lane Says Railroads Revenues For the Year Ending in June Broke All Records.

Washington, Special.—In the opinion of Franklin K. Lane, Interstate Commerce Commissioner, the railroad, industrial and financial condition of the country is improving rapidly. "It is a fact," said he "hardly believable, but nevertheless true, that the total operating revenue per mile of railroads for the year ended June 30th, 1908, exceeds that of any other year in the history of railroad-ing in the United States except the one year of 1907. The average operating revenue per mile of line per month for the 226,000 miles of railroad reporting to the commission was \$994, for the fiscal year of 1908. This was less by about \$61 than for the year 1907; but it was more than any preceding year, and was \$118 per mile per month more than in the year of the last presidential election. As I predicted, a local car shortage even now exists. Conditions rapidly are becoming normal and prosperous."

Washington, Special.—In the opinion of Charles T. Williams (D.), Davidson—T. Earle McCreary (R.) Davis—A. T. Grant (R.) Duplin—J. A. Gavin, Jr. (D.) Durham—Y. E. Smith (D.) Edgecombe—Hugh B. Bryant, (D.) Dr. M. B. Pitt (D), re-elected. Forsyth—S. E. Hall (R), J. T. Stimpson (R.) Franklin—Dr. R. P. Floyd (D.) Gaston—D. K. Davenport (D.), N. B. Kendrick (D.) Gates—Lycargus Hofer (D.) Graham—Democratic. Granville—A. W. Graham (D.) Greene—J. T. Grant (R.) Guilford—Thomas J. Murphy (D.) Dr. J. R. Gordon (D), re-elected. Halifax—A. P. Kitchin (D), H. S. Harrison (D.) Harnett—N. A. Smith (D.) Haywood—H. R. Ferguson (D.) Henderson—J. S. Rhodes (R.) Hertford—David C. Barnes (D.) Hyde—J. W. McWilliams (D.) Iredell—Z. V. Turlington (D), M. D. Tomlin (D.) Johnston—J. W. Wyase (D), I. W. H. Crumpler (R.) Jones—Democratic. Johnston—John C. Parker (D.) Lee—D. A. McDowell (D.) Lenoir—E. R. Wooten (D.) Lincoln—H. D. Warlick (D.) Macon—Higdon (R.) Madison—Republican. Martin—Harry W. Stubbs (D.) McDowell—Price (D.) Mecklenburg—W. G. McLaughlin (D), W. A. Greer (D), W. C. Dowd (D), latter two re-elected. Mitchell—Republican. Montgomery—Robert T. Poole (D.) Moore—J. A. McDonald (D.) Nash—J. C. Braswell (D.) New Hanover—George L. Morton (D), re-elected. Northampton—Dr. M. Bolton (D.) Onslow—E. M. Koonce (D.) Orange—T. E. Sparrow (R.) Pamlico—J. B. Martin (D.) Pasquotank—S. N. Morgan (D.) Pender—Joseph T. Foy (D.) Perquimans—Ernest L. Reed (D.) Person—F. O. Carver (R.) Pitt—Cotton (D), Cox (D.) Polk—J. B. Livingston (D.) Randolph—Thomas J. Redding (D.) J. Rom Smith (D.) Richmond—M. C. Freeman (D.) Robeson—W. J. McLeod (D), Marshall Shepherd (D.) Rockingham—Davis (D), Witty (D.) Rowan—John M. Julian (D), D. M. Carlton (D.) Rutherford—L. C. Dailey (D.) Sampson—J. T. Kennedy (R.), B. H. Crumpler (R.) Scotland—T. C. Everett, (D) Stanley—Campbell (R.) Stokes—J. M. Tagg (R.) Surry—R. T. Haymore (R.) Swain—Republican. Transylvania—George W. Wilson (D.) Tyrrell—Democratic. Union—R. W. Lemmond (D), Ney McNeely (D.) Vance—B. H. Perry (D.) Wake—A. L. Cox (D), J. W. Hinsdale (D), E. T. Scarborough (D.) Warren—T. O. Rodwell (D), re-elected.

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## LEGISLATIVE PERSONNEL

Those Who Will Constitute the Next House and Senate of Our State Lawmaking Body.

Raleigh, Special.—Practically complete returns give the membership and political complexion of the North Carolina General Assembly for the 1909 session as follows:

House.

Alamance—Dr. J. A. Pickett (R.) Alexander—Will Linney (R.) Alleghany—R. F. Doughton. Anson—T. C. Cox (D.) Ashe—T. C. Buie (D.) Beaufort—Frank B. Hooker (D.) John F. Latham (D.) Bertie—A. S. Roscoe (D.) Bladen—G. D. Perry (D.) Brunswick—C. E. D. Taylor (R.) Buncombe—Zeb Weaver (R.) R. J. Gaston (D), both re-elected. Burke—T. L. Sigman (D.) Cabarrus—H. S. Williams (R.) Caldwell—M. N. Harshaw (R.) Camden—J. C. Cook (D.) Carteret—C. S. Wallace (D.) Caswell—Democratic. Catawba—Kilian (R.) Chatham—R. H. Hayes (D.) Cherokee—T. C. McDonald (R.) Chowan—W. S. Privett (D.) Clay—R. E. Cranford (D.) Cleveland—R. S. Lovelace (D.) Columbus—J. G. Butler (D.) Craven—E. N. Green (D.) Cumberland—J. H. Currie (D.) John Underwood (D.) Currituck—Pierce Hampton (D), re-elected.

Dare—Charles T. Williams (D.) Davidson—T. Earle McCreary (R.) Davie—A. T. Grant (R.) Duplin—J. A. Gavin, Jr. (D.) Durham—Y. E. Smith (D.) Edgecombe—Hugh B. Bryant, (D.) Dr. M. B. Pitt (D), re-elected. Forsyth—S. E. Hall (R), J. T. Stimpson (R.) Franklin—Dr. R. P. Floyd (D.) Gaston—D. K. Davenport (D.), N. B. Kendrick (D.) Gates—Lycargus Hofer (D.) Graham—Democratic. Granville—A. W. Graham (D.) Greene—J. T. Grant (R.) Guilford—Thomas J. Murphy (D.) Dr. J. R. Gordon (D), re-elected. Halifax—A. P. Kitchin (D), H. S. Harrison (D.) Harnett—N. A. Smith (D.) Haywood—H. R. Ferguson (D.) Henderson—J. S. Rhodes (R.) Hertford—David C. Barnes (D.) Hyde—J. W. McWilliams (D.) Iredell—Z. V. Turlington (D), M. D. Tomlin (D.) Johnston—J. W. Wyase (D), I. W. H. Crumpler (R.) Jones—Democratic. Johnston—John C. Parker (D.) Lee—D. A. McDowell (D.) Lenoir—E. R. Wooten (D.) Lincoln—H. D. Warlick (D.) Macon—Higdon (R.) Madison—Republican. Martin—Harry W. Stubbs (D.) McDowell—Price (D.) Mecklenburg—W. G. McLaughlin (D), W. A. Greer (D), W. C. Dowd (D), latter two re-elected. Mitchell—Republican. Montgomery—Robert T. Poole (D.) Moore—J. A. McDonald (D.) Nash—J. C. Braswell (D.) New Hanover—George L. Morton (D), re-elected. Northampton—Dr. M. Bolton (D.) Onslow—E. M. Koonce (D.) Orange—T. E. Sparrow (R.) Pamlico—J. B. Martin (D.) Pasquotank—S. N. Morgan (D.) Pender—Joseph T. Foy (D.) Perquimans—Ernest L. Reed (D.) Person—F. O. Carver (R.) Pitt—Cotton (D), Cox (D.) Polk—J. B. Livingston (D.) Randolph—Thomas J. Redding (D