

# RAILROADS AND RAILROAD COMMISSIONS

No. 9.

The highest and most obligatory duty of a sovereign state or power is to refrain from oppressing or taking advantage of any citizen subject to that power. Its next duty is to see to it that neither any of its creature nor any of its citizens or subjects oppress any other citizen or subject under cover of law. And as soon as any law or granted privilege becomes unjust and oppressive the law ought to be repealed; and as soon as that privilege is exercised to the detriment, damage or annoyance of the people, it is the duty of the sovereign power to withdraw it, and the state that fails to do this falls far short of its duty to its citizens. When these special privileges to build roads and haul freights and passengers were granted to the railroad corporations fifty years ago, and exempted them from taxation until they paid a dividend of eight per cent. on the capital invested, it was not contemplated, nor even suspected, that these corporations would become the controlling money power of the state, and that they would extend their power and influence into every nook and corner of the state and dictate the nominees for every important office within the gift of the people.

Our fathers in granting these special privileges to these special corporations thought not of the possibility, much less the probability, of these organizations combining and controlling the power that makes and executes the laws of the state. And yet every well informed citizen knows that the railroad Presidents and their paid attorneys absolutely controlled the last three legislatures on the subject of a railroad commission, and to some extent the legislatures for twenty five years past.

Now I am not asking you against these railroad kings. They are elected by the stock holders to look out for the best and greatest interest of these roads. They are discharging their duty as faithful servants. They are doing what they have contracted to do; and if they were discharging their duty in the service of the people as they are in the service of their present employers, the people would say, "Amcn. Well done good and faithful servants."

Now, how shall these wrongs be remedied? Surely not by abusing the railroad authorities, or by breaking down or even crippling these corporations. They are as indispensable to the prosperity of the state as the farmer, the merchant, the black smith, the lawyer or the doctor. They are entitled to make money and control the state as much as any other class of citizens, provided they use no corrupting funds or undue influence. The majority does not exist with the railroad authorities, their attorneys and stock holders. The people constitute the majority in this state, and if they desire to control the legislature and to test the constitutionality of a railroad commission, its expediency and its power to regulate the tariff and transportation, let them see to it in the primaries in all the counties and townships in the state, that none but good and true men are sent to the county and state conventions.

Railroads control just as individuals control—by being kind and extending courtesies to those who can help them when they need help. When they do a favor or extend courtesy they expect a dozen in return. When they allow a man to gather an apple from their orchard they expect to gather a dozen from his. As soon as a man is elected to the legislature they send him a free pass. When a man is elected or appointed circuit Judge or Solicitor they send him a free pass.

All this is wrong. There is no reason why a legislator, Judge, Solicitor or Governor should not pay his fare over the railroads. They have no more interest in these roads than other people, and no more right to ride free than other people. In fact it would seem that the man who gets four dollars a day and ten cents a mile going and coming as a legislator is better able to pay his fare than the man who gets less than twenty-five dollars a month for his labors. Do the railroads send free passes to farmers and laborers of the country? Well, why don't they? Because as a rule the latter have no apple orchards from which twenty apples can be gathered to one. Of course the railroads have never intended to buy any of these Governors, Judges, Solicitors and legislators; nor did these recipients feel like they had been bought when they received and used these free

passes. These little courtesies, running all the way from thirty to three hundred dollars a year produce quite a kindly feeling on the part of the free passers towards the railroads. And perhaps these little courtesies might not influence the most patriotic men that have ever lived, but it is doubtful. Caesar's wife ought to be above suspicion and Caesar ought to hold her above suspicion. These officials ought to be above suspicion and the people ought to hold them above suspicion. How can this be done? By giving these officials pay sufficient to live upon, and then make it a penal offense to give or receive a free pass over a railroad.

Then the railroads would be under obligations to no one, and no one would be under obligation to the railroads. This would enable the railroads to transport every passenger for a little less money. A railroad commission with the proper power would look into all these evils and many others not alluded to in this paper, and would advise against their continuance.

Some motive always prompts the acts of a wise man. And so some underlying motive prompts the tender of these free passes. I leave that motive to the honest judgment of the reader. I have been told by good authority that sometimes the railroads fail to send these free passes, and that they are very soon reminded of the matter.

There are other things that railroads ought not to be allowed to do. I have heard that several years ago the town of Enfield, Halifax county, became greatly agitated because the railroad authorities threatened to move the depot outside the corporate limits of the town. Everybody had bought property, built and started business with reference to the location of the depot. But for some cause the authorities desired to change the location; and I have been informed that a money consideration from the people of the town prevented the removal of the depot. When I was a young man there was a depot on the Wilmington & Weldon railroad called Tuisnot. There were several stores and dwellings there. People had invested, built, started business because there was a depot at that point. From some cause the depot was moved a mile or a mile and a half down the road to a place less suitable for a depot than the first. The town died a natural death, and property became almost worthless.

I remember that some years ago the depot in or near Asheville was located about seven or eight hundred yards, or perhaps farther, from its present location. I was informed that some trouble arose between a citizen and the railroad authorities; and, regardless of the rights of others who had bought lots and built there because it was near the depot, the railroad authorities moved the depot. Without very good reasons these removals and attempts at removals ought not to have been allowed. Railroads ought not to be allowed to establish depots and induce people to invest their money there and then pull up stakes and locate elsewhere without good cause. A railroad commission could prevent these corporations from practicing such unbridled injustice upon the free citizens of the state.

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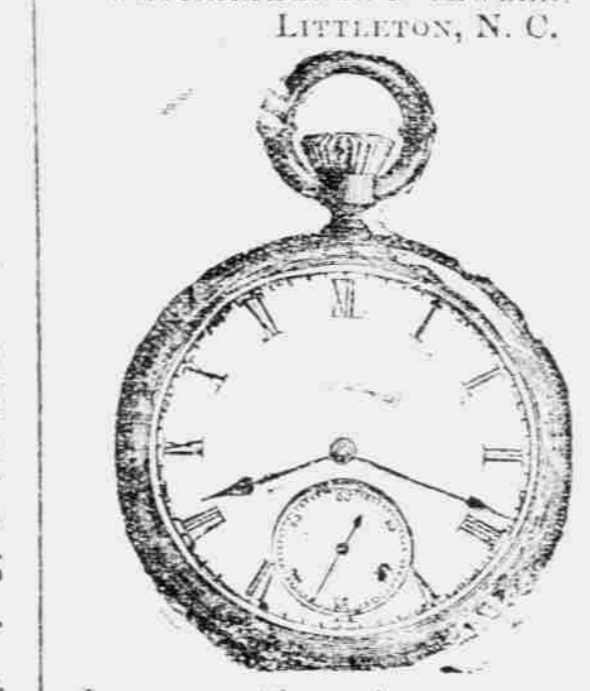
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TRAINS GOING SOUTH.  
Initial Dec. 8th 1889. No. 27, Daily. No. 27, fast, daily. No. 27, Daily. No. 27, Daily.

Initial Dec. 8th 1889.	No. 27, Daily.	No. 27, fast, daily.	No. 27, Daily.	No. 27, Daily.
Leave Weldon	11:16 p.m.	12:31 p.m.	5:43 p.m.	6:00 a.m.
Arrive Rocky Mt.	12:19 p.m.	1:41 "		7:10 "
Arrive Tarboro		3:47 p.m.		
Leave Tarboro		10:24 a.m.		
Arrive Wilson	12:47 a.m.	2:47 p.m.	5:00 p.m.	7:43 a.m.
Leave Wilson		3:30 "		
Arrive Seima		3:59 "		
Arrive Fayetteville		6:04 "		
Leave Goldsboro	12:19 a.m.	3:47 p.m.	7:10 "	8:00 a.m.
Leave Warsaw	2:21 "			8:10 "
Leave Magnolia	2:51 "	1:22 "	8:47 p.m.	8:10 "
Arrive Wilmington	3:59 "	6:04 "	9:55 p.m.	11:20 "

TRAINS GOING NORTH.  
No. 27, Daily. No. 27, Daily. No. 27, Daily. No. 27, Daily.

No. 27, Daily.	No. 27, Daily.	No. 27, Daily.	No. 27, Daily.
Leave Wilmington	11:10 a.m.	12:01 a.m.	5:00 p.m.
Leave Magnolia	12:38 p.m.	1:47 "	6:10 "
Leave Warsaw	1:07 "	2:15 "	6:40 "
Arrive Goldsboro		3:25 "	7:10 "
Leave Fayetteville		3:47 "	
Arrive Seima		4:19 "	
Arrive Wilson		4:52 "	
Leave Wilson	2:29 p.m.	2:59 p.m.	4:47 p.m.
Arrive Rocky Mt.	2:57 "		5:14 p.m.
Leave Tarboro	3:45 p.m.		5:45 p.m.
Leave Tarboro	10:24 a.m.		10:24 a.m.
Arrive Weldon	3:57 p.m.	1:30 "	2:40 p.m.

Daily except Sunday.  
Train No. 27 South will stop only at Wilson, Goldsboro and Magnolia. Train No. 27 North will stop only at Fayetteville, Seima, Wilson, Goldsboro and Magnolia. Train No. 27 South will stop only at Fayetteville, Seima, Wilson, Goldsboro and Magnolia. Train No. 27 North will stop only at Fayetteville, Seima, Wilson, Goldsboro and Magnolia. Train No. 27 South will stop only at Fayetteville, Seima, Wilson, Goldsboro and Magnolia. Train No. 27 North will stop only at Fayetteville, Seima, Wilson, Goldsboro and Magnolia.