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The Weather FAIR

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## POSTMASTER GENERAL OUSTS MR. BASNIGHT, R. A. NUNN IN CHARGE

### Developments In The Affair Did Not Come Unexpectedly, Wrangle Has Been Going On For Weeks Postmaster Was Insubordinate

## THE NIGHT CLERK NOT REINSTATED

### "Who will Be Appointed To Fill The Vacancy?" Is The Question Of The Hour.

(Special to the Journal.)

Washington, D. C., Dec. 6.—Postmaster J. S. Basnight, of New Bern, was summarily dismissed today by the Postoffice Department for refusing to restore R. E. Smith, night clerk in the New Bern office, whom he had discharged.

This action is the culmination of a long controversy between the Postmaster, who is a Republican, and Smith, a Democrat, and which was brought to the department in counter charges filed by Basnight and Smith against each other.

It was alleged by Smith that the postmaster ignored the civil service rules by appointing a Republican youth, not of age, to a vacancy in the postoffice. Smith claimed he was entitled to the place, which was a promotion, because of his long service in the postoffice. When the postmaster learned that these charges had been filed against him, and before a postoffice inspector could reach New Bern to investigate the case, it is alleged Basnight discharged Smith.

Subsequently, the Postoffice Department sent a telegram to Basnight ordering him to restore the clerk to his position. This telegram was ignored entirely by Basnight, according to Senator Simmons, who took up the case in behalf of Smith. A second telegram was sent to the postmaster demanding an explanation, whereupon Basnight replied that he had acted within his rights, under the law which he claimed gave him the privilege of choosing his assistants as he saw fit.

Then the Postoffice Department sent a peremptory demand to Basnight that he reinstate Smith, and gave him until today to do so. Basnight, according to Senator Simmons, paid no attention to this demand, and Postmaster-General Burleson ordered that the postmaster be summarily removed from office.

### The Blow Falls.

At last the blow has fallen. Not unexpected, it is true, but nevertheless swift and sure. The message dismissing Postmaster Basnight was received in this city late yesterday afternoon. The message stated that the American Bonding Company of Baltimore, who are on Mr. Basnight's bond, had been placed in charge of the office.

Following this telegram, R. A. Nunn, the local representative of the American Bonding Company, received a message asking him to take charge of the office, and this he did.

At present Mr. Nunn is acting postmaster in the city of New Bern. Shortly after 9 o'clock last night the clerks in the different departments were summoned to the office and at once began the work of inspecting each and every department. This inspection of the office does not, by any means, put the ex-postmaster in a bad light as far as conducting the business of the office is concerned. There has never been any charges

that he was not properly attending to the financial and business end of the office, but is merely the custom of the bonding company to have their representative look into the affairs of any such office under circumstances which now exist at the New Bern postoffice.

### Trouble Brewing For Weeks.

The dismissal of Mr. Basnight has been brewing for weeks. Some time during the month of September R. E. Smith preferred charges against Mr. Basnight and these were forwarded to the Postoffice Department and Congressman Jno. M. Faison became interested in the matter. The latter came to New Bern and asked Mr. Basnight to resign from office, telling him that unless he acceded to this request, that an investigation would be started and that he would be ousted. This the postmaster refused to do and the matter hung fire for several weeks during which time Congressman Faison made several visits to New Bern for the purpose of securing information in regard to the charges against the postmaster.

About three weeks ago Postmaster Basnight filed charges against night clerk R. E. Smith. These charges were trivial and in a letter to Postoffice Inspector G. G. Hemilwright, Mr. Smith denied them, singularly and collectively. Nothing was heard in regard to the matter until last Saturday night when the postmaster dismissed Smith from the office, claiming that he had a right to do this as the night clerk was on six months probation and that his work was not satisfactory and that he was a disorganization factor in the office.

This action on the part of Mr. Basnight is believed by many to be the direct cause for being dismissed. Believing that he was in the right in dismissing night clerk Smith, Mr. Basnight ignored the demands of the Postoffice Department to reinstate him and his dismissal yesterday, followed.

### Smith Not Reinstated.

So far night clerk Smith has not been reinstated and George Howard, over whom all the contention started, was in charge of that department as usual last night. That Mr. Basnight expected to be dismissed there is little doubt. He told a friend last night that he felt relieved, and there is no denying the fact that he has been under a heavy mental strain during the past few days.

Mr. Basnight was appointed as postmaster of the local postoffice in June, 1910, and his term would have expired next June. More than six months remain before the expiration of his term, but regardless of the fact that there are several candidates in the field for the office, it is the general opinion of those who are familiar with the case, that he would have been allowed to remain in charge had not the present trouble arisen.

Now that the postmaster has been dismissed and the bonding company placed in charge until some one can be appointed to fill the office until the end of the unexpired term, there is much speculation as to whom this will be.

There are four candidates for the place. John Thomas, L. G. Daniels, S. H. Lane and Frank Weathersbee. Each of these gentlemen want the office and have excellent reasons to believe that they will be appointed. However, only one of them can fill the office and it is a matter of much speculation

as to who will be the fortunate man.

When it became noised around last night that Mr. Basnight had been dismissed, the wise ones at once began to prophesy as to whom would be appointed. The general opinion of the public is that the race is between Mr. Daniels and Mr. Thomas. Constituents of both these gentlemen kept the Postal Telegraph Company's office open until midnight sending telegrams to Senator F. M. Simmons recommending these gentlemen, and urging that he use his influence in having one of them appointed to fill the office.

### S. H. Lane Talks.

Mr. S. H. Lane, chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee, is one of the candidates for the office who up to a day or two ago had not been very active in the race. However, his friends say that he has just as good a chance to be appointed to the office as either of the other candidates and have begun to make a fight to get him the appointment.

In an interview given a Journal reporter last night Mr. Lane said: "Although some of my friends have possibly come to the conclusion that I have decided to get out of the race for the postmastership at this place, there is no foundation for such belief, and I want to tell you that I am in the race until the finish.

"I have not been out circulating petitions and securing promises until today when my friends told me it was time to get busy. My friends have, today, secured several hundred endorsements from prominent citizens. I have been Chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee of Craven county for six years, and during this time the records show that the Democratic vote has increased from 1,266 in 1906, to 1,946 in 1912. This is a good record I believe and I am entitled to some consideration from the party leaders."

The reporter could not get in touch with the other candidates last night, and was therefore unable to get an interview with them. Acting Postmaster R. A. Nunn stated that he had absolutely nothing to say in regard to the matter.

Just when the appointment of a new postmaster will be made is a matter of much speculation. However, it is more than probable that the office will be filled during the next few days.

## LOCAL MERCHANTS TO KEEP STORES OPEN LATER

### DOING THIS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC.

With Christmas less than three weeks hence, New Bern has already taken on a holiday appearance and from now until after the first of the year the city, especially down in the business district, will present a scene of marked activity.

The scene down in the shopping district is always a busy one, but last night seemed to be an exception. To the casual observer it probably seemed that fully fifty per cent. of the population was out on a shopping expedition. The local merchants have stocked their stores with an extensive line of holiday goods and this naturally, attracts hundreds of purchasers.

The majority of the merchants close their establishments at 7 o'clock during the week, but from now on until after Christmas these establishments will be kept open until a later hour in order that those who cannot come down town during the day will have an opportunity of doing their shopping at night.

## CONDEMNS THE VIRGINIA MEN

### North Carolina Just Freight Rate Association Passes Resolutions.

### SAY VIRGINIANS INSINCERE

### Action Is Heartily Commended By New Bern Business Men.

The citizens of New Bern are just at this very time very much interested in the Just Freight Rate fight. Failing to get satisfaction at the last session of the legislature, a number of the leading business men of the city have banded together and employed an expert to make an investigation of the discrimination against the citizens of New Bern by the railway companies entering the city and he is now engaged in this work.

At a meeting at Greensboro last Tuesday of the Advisory Board of the Just Freight Rate Association of North Carolina the following resolution, which will be of much interest locally, was adopted:

"Whereas, Richmond, Norfolk, Petersburg and Roanoke, Va., through their respective chambers of commerce have appeared before the interstate Commerce Commission in an attempt to prevent the establishment of reduced freight rates from Cincinnati and other western points of origin to North Carolina points of destination, as agreed upon between the railroads and the North Carolina legislature, and

"Whereas the petition of these Virginia cities prays that the carriers be denied the right to establish the proposed rates, because proposed rates are in a few instances lower to North Carolina destinations than to destinations in Tennessee between Cincinnati and points in North Carolina via same routes and because proposed rates are higher to some points in western North Carolina than to some other points in Eastern North Carolina, while they make no mention of the fact that all rates to all points in North Carolina are much higher than to Richmond, Norfolk, Petersburg and Roanoke, and that hundreds of these North Carolina points are between points of origin in the West and the Virginia cities named, and

"Whereas, if these Virginia cities believe as they charge that present rates discriminate in favor of Virginia cities, their remedy lies in a straight forward, dignified complaint covering that point and not in an ignoble attempt to prevent this readjustment by hiding behind the alleged injustice which might be done some unimportant points in Tennessee, and

"Whereas, the petition of these Virginia cities is not made in good faith, but is cleverly devised to mislead the commission in the hope that present rates which are outrageously discriminatory in favor of Richmond, Norfolk, Petersburg and Roanoke, Va., and against the entire State of North Carolina, may be continued in effect to the end that the commerce of North Carolina shall continue to pay unjust tribute to these Virginia cities.

"Resolved, That we heartily condemn the chambers of commerce of Richmond, Norfolk, Petersburg and Roanoke, Va., for their quibbling petition in an attempt to defeat an adjustment that grants North Carolina only partial relief from unjust conditions, we commend the manly position so far taken by Lynchburg and other Virginia cities who have not become parties to this insincere petition, and we call on every loyal citizen of North Carolina to show their righteous indignation against Richmond, Norfolk and Petersburg and Roanoke for their attempt, through the statement of half truths to retard the development of the entire State of North Carolina in the interest of a few jobbers in Richmond, Norfolk, Petersburg and Roanoke."

This resolution is endorsed by every business man in New Bern and the attempt of the Virginia cities to "pull the wool" over the eyes of the Interstate Commerce Commission is being condemned on all sides.

### ATTENTION ELKS.

All members of the Elks Lodge are requested to meet in their rooms at 2:30 o'clock to attend the Memorial Service, which will be held in the Athens theatre at 3 o'clock this afternoon.

## ANOTHER COMPLICATION IN LOCAL P. O.

### Ex-Postmaster Refuses To Turn Over Management Until He Receives Sealed Orders From The Department

## THOMAS EDISON THOUGHT FIRST OF KINEOLPHONE

### WIZARD'S NEW INVENTION SOON TO BE SEEN IN NEW BERN.

When Edison returned to his laboratory recently after several weeks of illness, his first question to Meadowcroft, his personal assistant, was concerning the progress of the Talking Pictures. When told of the excellent new records and films that had been made during his illness, he was delighted.

"That's fine," he said with a chuckle. "I wonder what some of those people who said I couldn't make pictures talk will have to say for themselves now."

Like all inventors he is most earnestly interested in his latest achievement. He has spent eighteen and twenty hours a day working at the minor details of the Kinetophone, slowly and painstakingly perfecting the delicate contrivances which make possible the union of pictures and voices.

At the time that the invention was first perfected and demonstrated Edison was as tickled with it as a small boy with a brand new base ball. A casual visitor who did not know his tremendous capacity for work would never have dreamed that the man who was laughing so heartily at the jokes that were being sprung by the characters on the screen had expended the energy of two or three ordinary mortals in making jokes possible.

The success of the Talking Pictures in the leading cities of the country have been little short of phenomenal. Everywhere they are playing to crowded houses and the interest which they have aroused more than justifies the predictions of the inventor.

A complete performance of these marvelous Talking Pictures, including drama, comedy, vaudeville, minstrel shows and other interesting numbers will be shown at the Athens theatre in a few days.

### PREMIUMS FOR STAR PATRONS.

A twenty-six piece silver service set of Rogers Silverware will be given away at the Star Theatre next Thursday to the holder of the lucky coupon. Several other premiums also. Premiums now on display at Bradham's new drug store.

### HARRY PARKER'S LATEST NEW YORK SUCCESS

## "THE CARABET GIRLS"

Will open a week's engagement at the Athens tomorrow (Monday). A grand display of mirth, melody, ragtime singing, piano playing, dancing, pretty girls, funny comedians.

### PICTURES.

"Joyce of the North Woods." Edison's two reel special feature from the novel by Harriet T. Comstock. Harriet T. Comstock spent months in the North Woods living in the atmosphere of the lumber camps, that she might study the lives of the people of whom she wrote. When the Edison company determined to convert her well-known novel into a photoplay, a strong company of players went to Maine in order to get the exact atmosphere for the story. It is a fresh, virile story—like a breath of the great outdoors in which it was taken.

### "A Saturday Holiday."

A Biograph farce comedy.

### "The End Of The World."

Another farce comedy.

This week's offering at the Athens is unsurpassed for the money. Matinee daily at 3:45, two shows at night, first starts at 7:30, second about 9:15. No advance in prices.

Another complication in the postoffice wrangle occurred last night when Mr. Basnight, who had earlier in the evening been dismissed by Postmaster-General Burleson, refused to turn over the management of the office to Acting Postmaster R. A. Nunn until he had received a written order, properly sealed, from the Postoffice Department.

Mr. Nunn had earlier in the evening taken an inventory of the all moneys and stock in the office and was prepared to take charge when Mr. Basnight stated that he would not give up the keys or the management of the office until sealed orders had been received by him.

In making this contention, and again refusing to comply with the commands of the Postmaster-General, Mr. Basnight claims that he cannot be dismissed by anyone except the Senate and that he can only be suspended by the Postoffice Department.

This unexpected turn in affairs has caused another sensation and even as late as 3 o'clock this morning there were many persons on the street discussing the affair. Just what action the Postoffice Department will take in this matter cannot be conjectured, and the Journal makes no effort to predict.

It is very probable that the sealed orders will be forwarded at once and according to his own statement, Mr. Basnight will then turn over the management of the office to Mr. Nunn.

## HYMAN'S NEW GARAGE CREDIT TO NEW BERN

### LARGE NEW BUILDING IS MODERN IN EVERY PARTICULAR.

In the opening of the new garage by the Hyman Supply Company, New Bern has added to its list of motor driven vehicle hostleries, one of the finest in the State. The building, which is located on South Front street just opposite the Hyman Supply Company's office and supply building, was erected especially for the purpose and nothing has been left undone that would tend to make it complete in every detail.

The entire building is well lighted by large skylights during the day and numerous electric lights at night. The floor is of concrete and in the front part is the storage room for the machines. In the rear is the repair department and this is equipped for any variety of work.

Taken as a whole the new garage is as modern and well equipped throughout as any in the South.

### BLACK SWAMP ITEMS.

### INTERESTING NEWS ITEMS FROM ONSLOW COUNTY.

Black Swamp, Dec. 6.—We are having some fair weather now. Everybody around here is most through killing hogs.

J. H. Collins sold his plantation on Black Swamp, and has purchased a plantation in Onslow county with his brother-in-law, Frank Trott.

N. H. Collins went to Trenton on business Tuesday.

A. L. Collins went to Trenton Monday on business.

S. S. Waters made a flying trip to Trenton Wednesday.

The school at Hopewell is progressing nicely under the skillful management of Miss Veetee Hadnot, of Maysville, N. C.

It will soon be time for "Old Santa" to come. The little one's had better be good so they can look for Old Santa to come down the chimney.

The wedding bells will soon be ringing again.