

The Jeffersonian

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The Christian Index Again Commemorates Pastor Russell. A Peculiar Effort to Justify a Libel on a Dead Man.

ON the front page of The Christian Index for December 28, 1916, appears the usual mottoes:

"The Entrance of thy word giveth Light."

"THE ORGAN OF THE BAPTISTS OF GEORGIA."

When a family newspaper, claims to be the mouthpiece of a religious denomination, sailing under a pious headlight, whose wording is given above, it owes a moral duty to the whole church for which it assumes to speak.

There was no urgent necessity for The Index to make extended mention of the death of Pastor Russell. To our Baptist church, he was a prominent minister whose faith differed from ours, but he had never given us any especial provocation.

A news-item of his departure would have answered every purpose; and such an item could have been worded in a way that would have defined his position in the religious world, without offending either his disciples or his adversaries.

But the present Editor of "The Organ of the Baptists of Georgia" indulged in the bad taste of cruelly assailing the Rev. Charles Taze Russell before the tears of those who mourned him were dry.

Nature is cruel enough, God knows, but Nature had not wilted the floral offerings at

Pastor Russell's tomb, before The Christian Index was engaged in the un-charitable effort to wilt, wither, and destroy his good name.

The leading editorial in The Index for Dec. 28, 1916, informs us that it has been threatened with a suit for libel, on account of its uncalled-for and unprovoked attack upon the dead.

Commenting on this threat, and by way of excuse for its own conduct, The Index adopts a most extraordinary expedient:

It reproduces *another* libellous assault on Pastor Russell, made by another publication, and declares that, if The Index had repudiated *this other libel*, the author of *that*, could have sued The Index for damages!

The article which The Index republishes in defense of itself was "taken from a tract by the Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn."

The Index asserts that the author of this tract "is a very learned gentleman whose piety and fairness, even to his foes, are unquestioned."

"The Sunday School Board is composed of picked men, whose lives and character will bear the closest scrutiny."

"Surely this Board would not publish and send out an unauthenticated tract, etc."

Friends, isn't that a pitiable retreat from an indefensible position?

Wouldn't a prompt and manly apology have done more credit to The Index?

Accused of libelling the dead, our "Organ" steps behind our "Sunday School Board"—they are "picked men"—and behind an unnamed author, who "is a very learned gentleman!"

What's the name of this very learned gentleman?

The Index handled Russell's name freely enough: why not name the men who assailed him?

Is The Index giving them time to make their property over to their wives, as little General Funston warned our Baptist preachers to do?

First of all, let me say to the Editor of The Index that the law does not permit him to defend one libellous publication by quoting another.

He can plead *the truth*, in his defense, and he might mitigate the offense by proving an honest mistake; but that which is false itself, cannot excuse a second libel.

Therefore the tract published by the Board does not furnish protection to The Index.

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"WHY WAS FRANK LYNCHED?"

Frank's Own Lawyers Caused the Irregularity of the Execution, *One of Them Undertaking to Act Both as PEOPLE'S EXECUTIVE and as FRANK'S ATTORNEY.*

IN The Forum magazine for December, 1916, appears a malicious libel upon me which was probably being put into type by the New York printers at the same time that the Macon preacher, W. N. Ainsworth, was writing the malignant and dastardly attack he made on me, the day before I was to meet the Roman church in a court-house fight, where honor and life were at stake.

Whether Slaton concerted both these attacks, and launched them at that particular time for the purpose of prejudicing my case, no one can say, but the coincidence in time and tone is peculiarly striking.

Why did Ainsworth wait until the Sabbath before the trial?

Why did The Forum choose that particular time?

The author of The Forum article signs himself "A PUBLIC MAN OF GEORGIA."

Who is this public man *that veils his face from the public?*

In what walk of life is he "public?"

If a professional man, has he some reason for wearing a mask?

If an official, does he fear the censures of those whose votes he got?

He cannot be a clergyman, for Ainsworth spoke for the pro-Frank clergy.

The public man of Georgia who goes into a Northern magazine to attack the courts and the people of Georgia, acts prudently in hiding his identity.

The mere fact that he does hide it, proves that he is afraid not to hide it.

And the same proof which shows that he meant to hide from his fellow Georgians, while attacking them, proves that he is a pusillanimous cur, with the morals of a hen-roost thief, and the courage of a midnight assassin.

There has never been a doubt in my mind that the Frank case would figure in politics for years to come.

Because of this belief, I carefully prepared the official record of the evidence for publication in WATSON'S MAGAZINE, and the accuracy of that record as there preserved, has never been questioned.

At any time since then, anybody could have secured a copy of the record, at the trifling

cost of 10 cents, and satisfied his own mind, by reading for himself, of the recklessness and vindictiveness with which the pro-Frankites and the pro-Slatonites have lied about this case.

It can still be done, at the same trifling expense.

Therefore, I can reasonably say to every one who is disturbed by The Forum article, or by its reproduction in Adolph Ochs' Chattanooga Times, or by its periodical bobbing up in other pro-Frank publications:

"Don't require me to thresh that old straw, again! I've done it, until there's not a grain left."

Send 10 cents to The Jeffersonian Publishing Company and get a copy of the sworn evidence which cost Leo Frank his life.

Read the court-house proof, for yourself! Then, and not 'till then, will you be able to measure the lies that have been told."

The masked bushwhacker of The Forum says:

Watson produced all the vague "rumors" as evidence and warped the testimony of the trial to suit his purpose. Weekly he described the

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vice versa: consequently, a maddened Greek Catholic shot the Roman Catholic heir to the Austrian throne—since which time, thirty million soldiers have been busy shooting one another, and each army is parading the Cross, worshipping with the chaplains, and loudly shouting, "God is with us!"

If an old Catholic church gets riddled with cannon balls, in France or Belgium, more fuss is made over it than when all the folks in the town are butchered.

If a Catholic idol, made of marble and representing "The Mother of God," escapes destruction, pictures of it fly all over the world, and the priests acclaim "the miracle!"

Are we not in a state of transition? Are not conditions rapidly changing? Can you not see that the minds of men are not what they were before the Great War of 1914 broke loose upon the world?

Europe will never be the same. Nor will Asia and Africa ever be the same.

On the very ground where Christ taught Love, modern Christianity has practised Hate.

On the Mount of Olives the cannon has been planted, and the olive is gone.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, the sweat of blood has fallen again; and on Cavalry, Christ has again been crucified.

On the very plains where Cain slew his brother, Cain's sons have been slaying the sons of his murdered brother.

In sight of Mt. Ararat, Christian armies have moved and fought; and there has been another Deluge—wide, engulfing, remorseless—but of blood. In vain, the Dove flies East and West, North and South: there is no spot beneath the skies where her tired wings may be folded, and her feet find rest.

Isn't humanity unhappy, perplexed, bewildered, tortured, despairing?

Are we not tossed hither and thither, uncertain of our course, unable to see ahead, marvelling what it all means?

Are we not dimly conscious of a tidal movement, sweeping us from ancient moorings, and bearing us out upon an unknown sea—where?

"Why Was Frank Lynched?"

Frank's Own Lawyers Caused the Irregularity of the Execution, One of Them Undertaking to Act both as PEOPLE'S EXECUTIVE and as FRANK'S ATTORNEY.

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poor dead girl's body and even paraded descriptions of her soiled underclothing before the public and played on the medical phases of the case, employing every available emphasis to make report and suspicion appear as facts,—which was like waving a red rag before a bull. His paper was hawked on the streets of the cities more noisily than were the daily newspapers. Many who had no confidence in him began reading it and, hypnotized by his artful sophistries, began to accept as inspired gospel every word he wrote. He pursued the subject for a year with violence barely less than incendiary, and whipped the public into a condition of hysteria that made many think the mild-mannered, intelligent Frank a monster beyond the pale of humankind and brought Frank's friends under suspicion.

During the period covered by those articles in The Jeffersonian, I repeatedly challenged Luther Rosser and Reuben Arnold—the leading lawyers of Frank—to debate the case with me in the paper, and I offered to give them as much space as I took for myself.

If I was warping testimony and dealing in vague rumors, why didn't those crack lawyers expose me, then?

That was before the execution of their client by the Vigilantes.

The physical facts as to the little victim's body, and her undergarments, were material testimony pointing to the nature of the crime, and I went no farther than the official record went.

If my paper was hawked on the streets, during the terrific tempest of slander that beat upon the State, it was because The Jeffersonian was voicing the hot and righteous indignation of the State, when the daily papers would not do it!

The State wanted a hearing in its own defense, and The Jeffersonian responded to that demand!

The masked assassin of The Forum calls the murderer of Mary Phagan "the mild-mannered, intelligent Frank!" What's the use of such twaddle?

Whom does it deceive?

It will not dupe anybody who will read the sworn, unimpeached, and overwhelming evidence against the secret, odious, and unnatural vices and crimes of that "mild-mannered" pervert.

Doesn't everybody remember how I gayed his lawyers and his lay-advocates for being afraid to publish the official evidence?

Didn't I emphasize the fact that they spent oceans of money on pamphlets, magazine articles, detective yarns and similar stuff, but refused to invest a few dollars in publishing a verified COPY OF THE RECORD?

Again and again, I called upon Frank's lawyers, and the Haas Finance Committee, and then later upon Slaton himself, appealing to the court-house evidence.

Would they lay that record before the public? No!

Why not? They feared it.

Then I did it; and now, I again appeal to it, and beg you to examine it, FOR YOURSELF.

If that is not a fair way to deal with such a matter, tell me, in the name of God! how I could be fair.

WHO INVOKED THE RACE-FEELING?

It was the leading attorney of Frank who flung the firebrand of race-hatred into the case, by stressing the fact that he was a Jew.

The State had not done it: the defense did it.

But if the Jews are so rash as to identify the whole race WITH ITS WORST MEMBER, what can they expect?

Other races do not make that mistake. No Italian wants his race identified with its Black Hand: no German wants all Germans classed with the priest, Hans Schmidt.

Why should the Jews, and the Gentile champions of Leo Frank, virtually claim that the whole Hebrew race was struck at, when one convicted pervert and murderer was punished, as Mosiac law would have him punished?

If all Jews are incapable of crime, why the Decalogue and Leviticus?

The vast sums of money poured into the propaganda "to save Frank," after the highest court had affirmed the death-sentence, had its influence upon newspapers, upon public men, upon ministers of the Gospel, and upon widely separated lawyers who were connected in corporation practice with lawyers higher up.

Those pro-Frank advocates were intensely chagrined when the Vigilantes executed upon the guilty man the sentence which, by the most extraordinary proceedings, had been appealed to the highest Court in the world, AND THERE AGAIN AFFIRMED.

Moreover, these incensed pro-Frankites were resentful beyond measure, when the people of Georgia elevated to the highest office in their gift, the prosecuting attorney who had baffled the defense in every intrigue, and beat them in every battle.

Not being able to reach Dorsey, these pro-Frank advocates concentrate their fury against The Jeffersonian, believing that by following the Jesuit policy of continually flinging mud, they will be gratified by seeing some of it stick.

SLATON BEHIND IT ALL!

Of course, the motive underneath it all is the ambition of John Slaton to "come back."

Naturally he is wretched; full of gall and wormwood; his heart festered with disappointments, hatreds, and hunger for revenge.

Life had been easy for John Slaton, who never went up against a real fight in his life until he overtaxed his strength in the Frank case.

Born on a farm, as so many others have been, he followed the plow when a boy, as so many better men have done—and are doing.

He went to Atlanta to practice law, and his handsome face, stalwart figure, insinuating manners, and perennial smile, made him a social favorite.

He soon married a rich wife, and picked up one soft snap after another in politics. To the legislature, money often accelerates the passage; and in the legislature, gracious department and corporation backing sometimes elevate a member to Speakership and Presidency.

Then by logical process of political ascent, the Speaker may become something else—say, Governor.

Slaton paced over the beaten course, as so many other political pacers have done; and, having become Governor, the next thing was to pace into the Senate.

That also can be done, by patience, perseverance, and sweet oil; and Slaton had all three of these elements of success: consequently the U. S. Senatorship was almost within his grasp.

One thing, however, he lacked, and that was Honesty.

I don't mean to say that no dishonest person can go to the U. S. Senate; but the misfortune of Slaton was that he was publicly put to the test, at a time of intense excitement, and about a matter of Life-and-Death!

The test was in the open, with the whole State for witnesses; and there was no opportunity for covering it up, lying out of it, or laying it on somebody else.

The main, damnable facts were as plain as day, and were known of all men, and had been placed on record.

Hence, John Slaton had no chance to outrage Justice, prostitute his gubernatorial office, defy the People, and get away with it.

The Veiled Prophet of The Forum continues:

SLATON WAS WARNED BY MOB.

Naturally riots followed the action of Governor Slaton commuting Frank's sentence, no sensible person expecting otherwise. Slaton himself knew there would be demonstrations from the mob—he had been so advised by representatives of the mob, one of whom was Watson himself.

Watson sent a messenger to Slaton and offered his continuous support in return for the hanging of Frank. Though the bribe would have meant the realization of Slaton's dearest ambition—a place in the United States Senate—it was spurned.

The statement that I was one of "the mob," or one of its "representatives," is a childish fiction.

The statement that I "sent a messenger to Slaton" is one of Slaton's own lies, first told when he was a fugitive from the State.

The alleged messenger was Dr. J. C. Jarnagin, of Warrenton, Georgia, and he was sent as a messenger from Slaton to me!

Slaton had been down to the Doctor's town to make a speech, and while there told the Doctor—alluding to me and other political friends—"we must stick together."

The Doctor visited me afterwards to deliver Slaton's message, and my immediate answer was to the effect that, if Slaton stood firm for the Law, we would stick together.

Slaton did not spurn my message—no sir! He sent another messenger, with a very definite offer to me!

It was I who spurned his offer.

I have already stated in *The Jeffersonian*, months and months ago, that if Slaton demands of me the facts in regard to this offer, *those facts will be forthcoming.*

The messenger is a man whose word will be taken as true, from Montana to Florida, and from North Carolina to California.

Does the Veiled Prophet want to know who that man is, and what message from John Slaton he bore to me?

If so, let the bushwhacker drop his mask, come out into public view, place himself on a level with me, and make his demand.

I WILL INSTANTLY RESPOND TO IT!

The masked assailant says further:

Watson openly advocated the lynching of Frank and commended and defended the mob which attacked Governor Slaton's home, in such words as, "When mobs are no longer possible liberty will be dead." He defended the mob which later lynched Frank, calling them "vigilantes."

The statement that I advocated, secretly or openly, the lynching of Frank, is false.

If it were true, I would not deny it, because, within certain limitations, I believe that the people, who authorize court-executions, retain the power, *themselves*, to put down crime.

Within those limitations, all peoples enforce Lynch law.

Why does the Code give you the right to expel the trespasser, with just such force as you find necessary? And to kill a man, to prevent him from stealing your horse, or burglarizing your house? Or to anticipate and slay the assailant who manifestly means to attempt your life?

It is because *the law* is too slow to save you, and you must *save yourself*.

In like manner, the law may be too slow and uncertain to save a menaced community, and that community must exercise its inherent right to defend itself.

General W. T. Sherman helped to hang white men in San Francisco, under Lynch law, who were not as bad as Leo Frank, and whose guilt had not been *judicially ascertained*.

In the South, such men as Generals Forrest, Toombs, DuBose, Hampton, Butler, Gary and Gordon put into practice the principle to which I have referred.

The Law could not have accomplished what was done by the Vigilantes of the West and the Ku Klux of the South.

PLEASE READ THIS!

So far was I from advocating the lynching of Frank, that I was in correspondence with Solicitor Dorsey and others, with a view to bringing a Writ of Habeas Corpus against the Manager Smith at the State Farm, to test the legality of the Slaton commutation.

I considered it null and void, and believed that Frank could be legally remanded to Fulton County, for execution by the Sheriff, under the sentence of the Courts.

As to Slaton, and "the mob" which scared him within an inch of his life, he and his apologists misrepresented it to such an extent, and were so scurrilously abusive, that I defended it, as a very natural outburst of civic wrath against a traitor to the public service.

Yes, I *did* say, that when mobs of that kind are no longer possible, liberty will be dead! What of it?

AS TO CHIEF JUSTICE SALLY.

The masked Public Man pretends to believe that I dragged the wife of John Slaton into the controversy. *Slaton did that, himself.*

In his guilty confusion, he gave out statement after statement, supplementary to the prodigiously long defense which he pub-

lished explaining the commuted sentence of his condemned client.

In his flight, North and West, his tongue wagged at every stop, and the admiring dailies were full of the sayings of the sublime lawyer *who had used his power as Governor to do what his firm had not been able to do, FOR ITS CLIENT, in the courts.*

It is fair to assume that those admiring dailies did not know of *Slaton's active participation in Frank's defense, AS ONE OF FRANK'S LAWYERS!*

Telling in detail how he had agonized over the case, after it had been lost *everywhere*, Slaton spoke of sitting up at night, laboring and doubting, and how he finally turned to his wife and asked

"Sally, what must we do?"

And Slaton himself said that "Sally answered.

Jack, let's commute."

The sub-head in the paper struck me as funny, reading as it did,

"SALLY COMMUTES!"

So when I was relating how Slaton had reversed our State Supreme Court, and the U. S. Supreme Court, and the Prison Commission, I jocosely referred to the final decision as having been made by Mrs. Slaton, and not by her husband.

As he had called her Sally, and had represented her as having been in fact the chiefest of all the Chief Justices, I saw no harm in giving her the title.

She herself did a lot of talking for the papers, up North, and it was not easy to keep from laughing at some of it, particularly her description of how sweetly John Slaton snored, while the melish were keeping off "the mob."

As I remember it, she said that John had on pink silk pajamas, and was lying abed, "snoring sweetly," at the time his barbed wire had been electrified, his grounds picketed, and his mansion encircled with soldiers.

If the husbands of ladies drag their names into controversies, or if the ladies themselves see fit to take a hand, they shouldn't complain of mere badinage, entirely within the proprieties.

It doesn't increase my respect for an adversary, to see him hide behind either *his wife, OR A MASK.*

THE UNDERWOOD CAMPAIGN OF 1912.

The Veiled Prophet of The Forum says:

In 1912 Watson "came back" with the most dramatic feat of his career. Taking advantage of the rivalry among the leading Democrats, he espoused the cause of Oscar Underwood for the Presidential nomination and carried the presidential primary for the Alabaman. If I mistake not, he was the "original Underwood man;" anyway Underwood's victory in Georgia was most distinctly a Watson victory. Watson was so keen over this evidence of his dominance in State politics that he announced he must be one of the State's delegation to Baltimore. It had been all right to let this Populist settle their primary fights, but to send this avowed enemy of the Democratic party, this perpetual bolter, as the party's representative to its National Convention was another matter. Those who believed some party dignity should be maintained protested. Watson made a spectacular journey through the country to Atlanta and, surrounded by courtiers and armed guardsmen and backed by a horde of his followers, went on the convention floor and forced his election as a delegate at large. He not only forced them to name him a delegate, but by a mere trick of clever diplomacy was kept from making himself chairman of the delegation!

The above is almost, if not quite, interesting.

I espoused the candidacy of Oscar Underwood because he passed the Free Trade bills through Congress—legislation known as the Farmers' Free-list bills.

They were in exact accordance with my life-long antagonism to tariff monopoly, *which fattens the hogs of one national industry upon the corn of the others.*

It is no exaggeration to say that The Jeffersonian carried Georgia for Underwood. Afterwards, did it seem unnatural for me to be Chairman of the delegation?

I did not go to Atlanta "through the country," except as the Georgia Railroad goes to Atlanta through the country.

Edgar Thomson laid out the right of way—I didn't: and in going from the town named after the engineer who made the Road, I naturally had to stay on the track. Even I, can't afford to be *always* running off the track.

In campaigning the State, I have been all over it, in my old Chalmers-Detroit, and may do so again, for the Chalmers is still able to go, and so am I.

But my old run-about hasn't been in Atlanta since 1911, while I was there in July 1912, having used the Railroad which Edgar Thomson, built, many years ago, in anticipation of its being needed by myself and a few other persons who might be in a hurry to get to where they are going.

I attended the Convention, just as other delegates did; took part in the pow-wow, as others did; was hilariously howled down by the spectators, as others were; was put on the delegation to Baltimore, as others were; and voluntarily threw the Chairmanship to a political foe—the late Charles Pendleton—when I saw that there would be a contest over it.

They had placed Bosh Felder on the delegation; and while it may be a rare privilege to be Chairman of a delegation that has Bosh on its list, I didn't at the time consider it worth fighting for.

So, the delegation went to Baltimore, and it there presented a truly rural and exquisitely regular spectacle to mankind.

It didn't do anything in particular. With a delicious Bourbon stupidity, it kept on voting for Oscar Underwood, day after day, night after night, when a blind mule might have seen that Oscar wasn't in it; and the net result was, that Champ Clark, whose continued and decided majority-vote entitled him to the nomination, was treacherously slaughtered by HIS INSTRUCTED DELEGATE, William J. Bryan.

I am perfectly willing for the whole world to know that, after it became transparently clear that Underwood *could not possibly be nominated*, I telegraphed most urgently to the Chairman, and other prominent members of the delegation, *to go to Champ Clark.*

But they still believed—or said they did—that Underwood was really in the running, and would get the nomination Monday morning; and, so, they let the opportunity pass.

Georgia has never been for Woodrow Wilson, and is not, *now.*

But Georgia goes for the nominee?

Oh, yes; Georgia goes for the nominee.

In Georgia, Judas Iscariot could beat the Apostle James, if Judas was the nominee.

We Democrats haven't got any too much sense, *before* the nomination, but *afterwards*, we haven't got any at all.

The nominee might publicly confess that he got the nomination by fraud, by liquor, by lies, by bribery, or any other political crime, but that wouldn't make a bit of difference.

We Democrats would vote for him anyhow. We were raised that way.

"FRANK SACRIFICED TO CIRCULATION."

The masked Public Man—brave fellow! says that The Jeffersonian saw a chance to build up its circulation on Leo Frank.

The truth is that when the Frank case was on trial, I never referred to it.

The alleged obscenity which was used to inflame the Attorney General against me, had been printed from day to day in the Atlanta dailies, during the taking of testimony.

The alleged obscenity did not begin to rival