

(11)

Seventh Judicial District of North Carolina,

JUDGE'S OFFICE,

A. W. TOURGEE,
Judge Superior Court.

Greensboro, January 2, 1859

Col. W. C. Sturtevant:

Sir: The effusions of the Sentinel for the last two days require in reply, but three brief statements. 1st I left Hillsboro on Friday morning of the term after all State cases, and all civil causes which were ready for trial had been tried. The ~~statements~~ ^{only cases} which could be tried on account of the Stay Law, and which had been properly transferred, were tried, settled, referred or continued for course. The old causes coming under the Stay Law, and actions not transferred before the first day of the Term were transferred of course. A few orders in confirmation of sales, Dower &c were directed to be taken at Chambers and have since been granted there. The statement of the Sentinel that I tried only the State docket, is utterly false.

2nd The Grand Jury had been instructed to report upon the condition of the Jail and Poorhouse. This report had not been made out, and I directed the

clerk, Mr. Geo. Saws to receive that report and forward it to me, after any departure.

3 - Mr. Turner's "Fence-Corner Presentment" was made to Mr. Saws who refused to receive it, considering it not fit to be received as a part of the Court Record. In writing to me under date of Dec. 17th, speaking of this "fence corner presentment", "I treated it with contempt and threw it aside among the rubbish, not thinking it fit to keep as a Court paper. I came very near throwing it in the fire as soon as it came into my office." This statement is repeated in a subsequent letter of Mr. Saws, and shows the light in which he regarded the "Fence Corner Presentment".

Thus, this remarkable document, most happily styled by its author one of "the curiosities of Reconstruction", is a "Presentment" (?) made out of Court, after the close of a term, to an officer who refused to receive it but flung it aside with contempt as soon as he learned its nature. Truly a curiosity, a legal curiosity too. Out of the rubbish of the Clerk's office, from the ^{usual} ignominious doom of waste papers, Mr. Turner rescued his ^{precious} writing only to consign it to a more ignoble fate - publication in the Sentinel.

Is it it Durris that speaks of the careful housewife
"Whu + wi' her needle an' her thread

Sars and claes look ~~unmaist~~ as weel's the new?"

What a treasure Mrs. Turner would be in petticoats!

^{what a splendid she-tailor!}

Even the fame of ~~Davis~~, Jefferson's Davis' lush exploit would
be eclipsed, should he but play "Achilles among mailers!" ~~There~~

If he could make a coat last as long and serve as
many purposes as he can ~~say~~ ^{say} speech he would be
the curse of Chatham Street. Here we have his old thread-
bare speech, grown old and ragged on his hands, and only
shoddy in its best days, re-vamped and trizzed up in
a sort of legal guise, its confederate gray given a strong
dash of orange, pressed and scented by the defenestration ^{curious of a}
Gury in a fence corner, and tried to be palmed off upon
household George Sars as a "presentment." It won't do.

He is an old man but he has seen that piece of shoddy
too often not to know it. ^{He treats it with contempt} It goes over ^{very properly} into the waste
basket. Rescued thence at great hazard and trouble, the same

old speech, his darling, his stock in trade, reappears, re-patched
and starched anew, as "one of the curiosities of Reconstruction"

^{in the columns of the Sentinel.}
The shirt of Saint Anthony loses all preeminence beside this
"King of Shreds and Patches." And the beauty of it is, that the old sleazy
thing looks now, not "unmaist as weel's the new," but a mighty
eight better. A few years more of hard labor would make it
almost respectable, of its kind. Of course he will stick to it. It is his
only hope.

A. W. Tourger

Letter for Standard

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