THE SANDERS SIDE OF THE ST. MARY MUDDLE.

Dr. J. Wofford Sanders Issues Exhaustive Statement in Refutation of Don Caffery's Speech.

Letters, Documents and Balance Sheets, Which Put New Phase on Charges.

Reason Why Chief Deputy Cocke Was Dismissed by Sheriff Sanders.

Lieutenant Governor Sanders' Participation in Controversy, Result of Relationship to All Parties Concerned—Emphatic Denial of Responsibility or Control of Office.

Dr. J. Wofford Sanders, brother of Lieutenant Governor J. Y. Sanders, has come forward with an elaborate array of documents, statements and letters in refutation of the charges made by Mr. Don Caffery against the Lieutenant Governor, in his Washington Artillery Hall speech early in November. In that speech Mr. Caffery presented letters and statements from H. Shelby Sanders and R. R. Cocke, cousins of the Lieutenant Governor, tending to show that there had been a large shortage in the office of the Sheriff of St. Mary Parish; that the Lieutenant Governor dominated the office; that while he was opposing in court the effort of citizens to pay their poll taxes by proxy he was himself paying the poll taxes of his own political friends, and had an open poll tax account on the books of the Sheriff; that soon after an arrangement had been made to get Dr. H. J. Sanders to put up part of the money to make good the shortage, with the understanding that R. R. Cocke should be continued as Chief Deputy Sheriff, Cocke was summarily dismissed, and the payments to Dr. Sanders ceased.

This speech of Mr. Caffery created quite

A POLITICAL SENSATION

at the time, as it was the first open and direct attack on the Lieutenant Governor in his candidacy for the governorship. Ever since then, however, Lieutenant Governor Sanders has been busily occupied with his duties as presiding officer of the Senate, and he intrusted the preparation of the reply to his brother, Dr. J. Wofford Sanders, of New Iberia, who had been intimately associated with some of the incidents mentioned, and was familiar with every detail of the controversy.

The first matter taken up is the letter written by Lieutenant Governor Sanders to Mr. Cocke, Sept. 29, 1902, asking him to get his poll tax stub books ready, as he wished to go over them a day or two later. It is claimed that the purpose in this was to have the Sheriff's office assist the Democratic Parish Committee in getting poll tax receipts in the hands of the voters for the congressional election Nov. 4, and Mr. Sanders, as the political leader of the parish, naturally took the initiative in this. The litigation over poll tax payments did not begin until nearly two months after this date, and the suit in no way involved the issuance of duplicate poll tax receipts. A letter from Sheriff J. R. Sanders, published in a local paper at that time, explains his attitude with regard to the litigation, showing that he did not object to any method of paying the poll tax, but he was determined to see that the receipt reached the party in whose name it was made out.

The next matter is the letter of Mr. Cocke to Mr. Caffery, with a facsimile of the statement from the books of

THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE,

showing poll tax account of J. Y. Sanders, also accounts of Henry Jacobs, W. H. Kramer and P. P. Sigur. Mr. Cocke declared that if any of them were deputy sheriffs he was not aware of it. There is reproduced a copy of the commission issued to Mr. Jacobs, which is in Mr. Cocke's handwriting, and the envelope in which the commission was forwarded to Mr. Jacobs. The alleged deal for the clerk's office, by which W. H. Kramer succeeded J. A. Loret, and which was effected, according to Mr. Cocke, because "Jared wanted to control the clerk's office," is denied emphatically by Mr. Kramer, so far as the control of the office is concerned, and he further gives the full details of the whole transaction. Both Mr. Kramer and Mr. Sigur deny owing the Sheriff's office any money on poll tax accounts.

There are published facsimiles of poll tax lists sent in for payment by John N. Pharr Planting Company and by the Mrs. E. D. Burguieres Planting Company, to show that there was no discrimination in the matter of receiving poll tax payments through agents.

The statement then declares: "Mr. R. R. Cocke was discharged from the Sheriff's office of the Parish of St. Mary in the latter part of June, 1904, for the reason that Sheriff John B. Sanders ascertained that Mr. Cocke had been, to put it charitably, an incompetent bookkeeper and cashier. Because of this discharge, and for the further reason that Mr. J. Y. Sanders, who is a cousin to both Sheriff Sanders and Mr. Cocke, refused to use his influence to have him reinstated he has nursed his grievance against Mr. J. Y. Sanders. The family feeling which prevented the matter of

HIS SHORTAGE IN OFFICE

being carried any further than his discharge has lulled him into a sense of personal security, and his nursed grievance has made him a pliant witness."

After discussing the various items charged up against various persons, in the statement from the Sheriff's books, the statement continues: "No bookkeeper would fail to see therefore that Chief Deputy Cocke, in paying to the school authorities money not collected by the Sheriff, and not entering the amount of the settlements in the Sheriff's personal ledger, as a loss, but putting each item down as an asset, was padding his balance sheet with 'dead' assets, and also saving himself from having to share in the loss to the office that would be created by charging these accounts to the profit and loss account in the Sheriff's personal ledger."

Then follows an elaborate array of documents and statements dealing with the shortage in the Sheriff's office, and the contract entered into between Sheriff Sanders and Dr. H. J. Sanders, by which Dr. Sanders advanced nearly $4,000 to Mr. Cocke, and took his personal unindorsed note for the amount with the understanding that Mr. Cocke was to be retained in his position, and received one-half the net revenue of the office. The deduction from this is that Dr. Sanders recognized that Sheriff Sanders had been in no way a beneficiary of the shortage, and that he did not consider J. Y. Sanders as the head of the office, or he would have had him present at the conference.

The reason why J. Y. Sanders did not promptly answer the telegram of Dr. H. J. Sanders was that he was quite ill at Covington at the time, and when he recovered he, owing to his position to the family, and being looked upon as an adviser, sought to

STRAIGHTEN OUT THE MATTER.

"If any implied promise to Dr. H. J. Sanders was made and broken, the responsibility lay with Sheriff John B. Sanders, a fact realized by Dr. H. J. Sanders and his family at all times, and he (Mr. J. Y. Sanders) was importuned by them from time to time because of his relationship to all."

The statement of Mr. H. Shelby Sanders that Mr. Cocke was dismissed "a few days, possibly a week after the money was loaned," is refuted by the statement that the money was loaned May 31st, 1904, and Cocke was dismissed June 22d or 23d.

Then follows an account of the interview between Sheriff Sanders, H. Shelby Sanders,, and J. Y. Sanders, in the Cosmopolitan Hotel, in New Orleans, which resulted in Sheriff Sanders agreeing to pay something monthly on account of the note of Cooke held by Dr. Sanders, who was ill at the time.

In refutation of the tenor of the letter of Dr. H. Shelby Sanders to Mr. Caffery under date of Oct. 31st, 1907, there is reproduced a letter of Dr. H. Shelby Sanders to Mr. J. Y. Sanders under date of Jan. 9, 1906, in which he complains of Sheriff Sanders' failure to carry out the agreement to make monthly payments, and says: "I want to ask you

TO ADVISE HIM

to do so." Further on he shows that they looked to Sheriff Sanders, declaring he could institute impeachment proceedings, and would do so if he refused to do what was right, adding "I hope you will talk to him and let me hear from you in reply at an early date."

Dr. J. Wofford discussing the interview between himself and H. Shelby Sanders, says the matter was discussed entirely from a family and not a political standpoint and "I feel personally outraged that he should have misstated to the general public the motive of my visit and the conversation that took place at that time. That I ever spoke to H. Shelby Sanders as an emissary from my brother is not a fact. That I ever admitted to him tacitly or otherwise that my brother was morally bound for the debt due by Mr. Cocke to the estate of Dr. H. J. Sanders is not a fact."

Sheriff Sanders gives his version of the discovery of the shortage and the arrangement to make good, and declares that Mr. Cocke was in absolute control of the cash in the office, and kept the cash in bank in his own name. Sheriff Sanders declares that he knew nothing about bookkeeping, and had absolute confidence in Mr. Cocke. When he saw that his overdraft was but a small proportion of the shortage he insisted in Cocke assuming one-half of the responsibility, and that was how

COCKE BORROWED THE MONEY

from Dr. H. J. Sanders. Later, when he found out how badly the books were mixed, and became convinced that he was not responsible for the shortage, he became angered, and summarily dismissed Cocke. He felt as much aggrieved over the matter as Dr. H. J. Sanders, as it was at Dr. Sanders' suggestion that he had turned over the affairs of his office to Cocke. He denied that at the interview at the hotel there had been any talk of Cocke giving away political secrets. It was understood at that time, among all three, why he had been dismissed, and there was no longer a demand for his reinstatement, but simply a demand for money. In conclusion Sheriff Sanders says: "Mr. Shelby Sanders has written me some very ugly and threatening letters about the matter. I have paid no attention to same. I was ready for Mr. Cocke or Mr. H. Shelby Sanders to go into court with this matter, or ready to take the matter up with any of them personally, if the threats had been carried out. I don't think I owed this note, and I feel that if I made any mistake at all it was in making those two payments on it."

There are reproduced facsimiles of checks drawn by Mr. Cocke as chief deputy, showing his control of the funds of the office, and two balance sheets of the Sheriff's books, one dated March 31, 1904, showing $3,840.74 in outstanding assets, and a shortage besides that of $5,205.62, and another of May 1, 1904, showing that this shortage had grown to $5,048.44½.

STATEMENT IN FULL.

Dr. J. Wofford Sanders Gives Details of Many Transactions.

TO THE PUBLIC:

Mr. D. Caffery said to the public in his Washington Artillery Hall speech, and in the ex parte pamphlet scattered by him throughout the streets of New Orleans, La.:

"HERE ARE THE PROOFS."

This attack was recklessly hurled against Lieutenant Governor Sanders while in the discharge of his public duties as a legislative officer, and the attention demanded by these duties has not given him the time to devote his personal labor to this refutation.

This refutation of these charges is issued by his brother, Dr. J. Wofford Sanders, who was assisted in its compilation by other gentlemen of competence and standing.

Mr. Caffery has had his day in the public forum, and impartial public opinion will accord Lieutenant Governor Sanders an equal hearing. Upon the charges as presented by Mr. Caffery, and upon the refutation as presented by the undersigned, judgment is asked from the citizens of Louisiana. Respectfully,

J. WOFFORD SANDERS, M.D.,
New Iberia, La.

A man that asperses his neighbor's character upon unverified charges is a more dangerous citizen than one who sets the torch to his neighbor's home.

The house is the edifice in which the body resides, the character that in which the soul lives.

The gentleman will spare his neighbor's honor as zealously as he will guard his own. He will attack it only upon charges of sufficient gravamen, known by him to be true from a personal investigation.

An attack upon the character of a follow-citizen upon charges said to be true, but not verified, does not lose its hideousness by being clothed in the rhetorical sentences of the public speaker.

MR. CAFFERY'S EVIDENCE NOT INVESTIGATED BY HIM.

In his speeches in Donaldsonville and in New Orleans attacking the public character of Lieutenant Governor Sanders, relative to the conduct of the Sheriff's Office of the Parish of St. Mary, Mr. Caffery has based his charges upon evidence furnished him by two witnesses—evidence of a nature and from a source which demanded his most careful investigation before being accepted as truths.

The charges as published, both in Mr. Caffery's speech and ex parte pamphlet, rest entirely upon two balance sheets and two letters furnished him by Robert R. Cocke, a discharged employe of the Sheriff's Office, and upon a letter and a telegram furnished him by H. Shelby Sanders, both known in the Parish of St. Mary, as a matter of common repute, to be most bitterly prejudiced against Lieutenant Governor Sanders.

That he in no way endeavored to verify the charges furnished him by these gentlemen anxious to air their imaginary grievances in public is testified to by Mr. Caffery in his New Orleans speech in the following words: "The letters from Mr. Cocke and Mr. H. Shelby Sanders were not asked for by me until after issue had been joined with me by Mr. J. Y. Sanders. I knew the ground upon which I stood. I knew that Mr. R. R. Cocke and Mr. H. Shelby Sanders would never fail me in writing what they had previously told me orally," etc.

They didn't fail him, but their evidence may, when subjected to the test of honest scrutiny.

THE TIME CHOSEN FOR THE ATTACK UNFAIR.

This attack, more in the nature of a personal issue than a public one, made by Mr. Caffery in Washington Artillery Hall on November 16, 1907, during an extraordinary session of the Legislature, when Lieutenant Governor Sanders' time, labor and thought belonged to the State in the performance of his duties as the presiding officer of the Senate, was violative of that spirit of "noblesse oblige" which remains with a true gentlemen even when he enters the arena of public life.

In the heat of a political campaign Governor Blanchard called "Time!" and, until the session had completed its labors, the members thereof—even though candidates for public office—should have been permitted to remain at their posts, with mind free from personal controversy and devoted to the problems of public moment. Mr. Caffery did not exhibit that spirit of high-minded patriotism, or of fair play, which in the exaltation of personal commendation he claimed for himself.

MR. CAFFERY DISMISSED FROM THE CONTROVERSY.

Mr. Caffery asks the people of the State for judgment upon the evidence presented by him, and so do the friends of Lieutenant Governor Sanders. In preparing and setting forth the accompanying analysis of the evidence, further discussion of Mr. Caffery's personality is dismissed from the controversy, and the claim for a public judgment is based solely upon the merits contained in the refutation herewith presented.

If our demand be well founded, we ask that the public will accord Mr. Caffery and his charges that condemnation which he prescribed in the opening remarks of his New Orleans speech for such an emergency:

"When into that arena enters malice, or self-seeking, or rage, or uncharitableness, let such misshapen and deformed thinge be derided and scourged thence by the people, whose intelligence they insult and whose dignity they outrage."

THE PROOF ANALYZED.

Testimony of Robert R. Cocke.

(Letter No. 1.)

New Orleans, La., Sept. 29, 1902

Hon. Robert R. Cocke,
Franklin, La.:

Dear Cousin Bob—I wish you would get the stub-books of 1900 and 1901 together, so that we can go over them and make a list of those who have paid their poll taxes, and whilst you are doing this I wish you would make me a duplicate poll tax receipt for 1900 and 1901, as I have lost mine. Please attend to this at once for me and I will see you next Friday and get them from you. Have all of your stub-books handy, as I want to go over them with you next Friday and Saturday.

Your cousin,
J. Y. SANDERS.

There is no denial of the authenticity of this letter. It was published by Mr. Caffery for the purpose of proving two things: First, that Lieutenant Governor Sanders at that time had the Sheriff's Office under his personal control, and, second, that, having such control, he exercised special privileges which he denied to others—to-wit, the watching of the poll tax payments of 1902.

Mr. R. R. Cocke is a cousin of Lieutenant Governor Sanders, and at that time was the Chief Deputy Sheriff of the Parish of St. Mary, in full charge of the office. Mr. Sanders was at that time, as he is now, one of the leaders of the Democratic party in the Parish of St. Mary, with his law office both in New Orleans and St. Mary.

Pretermitting the question as to what control Lieutenant Governor Sanders exercised over the Sheriff's office then, which we will discuss fully in this refutation, this letter was just such a letter as a Democratic leader of any parish might write to the Democratic Sheriff on the eve of an election; and we will show, both from that time and condition of political affairs in the Parish of St. Mary, when this letter was written, that it had no reference to the watching of the payment of anybody's poll tax for 1902 (not finally due until Dec. 31, 1902, but to the getting up of a list of those who had paid for 1900 and 1901, in order that duplicate poll tax receipts could be issued to Democrats desiring to vote in the congressional election of Nov. 4, 1902, and that this privilege was accorded to the general public. The date of the letter is Sept. 29, 1902, and written from New Orleans, La.

The St. Mary Banner (official journal of the Parish of St. Mary), under date of Saturday, Oct. 4, 1902, contains the following notice:

"MASS MEETING."

"The congressional campaign will open up in this parish by the Democrats giving a grand rally at Morgan City to-morrow," etc.

J. Y. Sanders was advertised among other speakers.

This shows that Mr. J. Y. Sanders left New Orleans and came to St. Mary at the time stated, and that his purpose in coming was to take up the Democratic fight in the congressional election then close at hand.

From the St. Mary Banner, Oct. 11, 1902:

"Democratic Executive Committee.

"Franklin, La., Oct. 4, 1902.

"Pursuant to a call from Chairman A. C. Allen, the Democratic Executive Committee of the Parish of St. Mary met at the courthouse at 11:30 a.m.

"After explaining the object of the call Hon. J. Y. Sanders offered the following resolution, which, upon motion, was adopted:

"'Whereas, at the approaching election all those who desire to vote will have to produce at the polls their poll tax receipts for the years 1900 and 1901, and,

"'Whereas, it is necessary for the democracy of the Parish of St. Mary to be thoroughly and efficiently organized in order to bring out its full strength.

"'Therefore, be it resolved by the Democratic Executive Committee of the Parish of St. Mary, That the Democrats of the various wards of the Parish of St. Mary are hereby requested to meet at the places hereinafter named, at such time in the evening as may suit local conditions, on Saturday, Oct. 11, 1902, for the purpose of organizing ward clubs, which shall be known as the ——— ward Democratic Club, etc.

* * * * * * *

"H. W. KAPPEL,
"President Pro. Tem.
"F. C. MARSH, Secretary."

Every resolution presented at this meeting was offered by Mr. J. Y. Sanders.

Mr. Sanders said in this letter: "Have all of your stub-books handy, as I want to go over them with you next Friday and Saturday." The foregoing clipping from the St. Mary Banner of October 11, 1902, shows that the Saturday referred to was Saturday, October 4, 1902, the date upon which the St. Mary Parish Democratic Committee met in Franklin, La.; that Mr. Sanders was at that meeting, and was one of the Democratic leaders of the parish, introducing all the resolutions offered at said meeting, and was leading the Democratic forces and organizing the Democratic Party of said parish for the congressional election, just one month from that date; further, that one of the purposes of said organization was the getting of poll tax duplicates for the years 1900 and 1901 for each Democrat desiring to vote in said election.

MR. CAFFERY'S CHARGE FALLS TO THE GROUND.

"While his opponents were stumbling around and freezing on the outside, clutching at injunctions and mandamuses, Mr. Sanders was in the Sheriff's back office thumbing over, at his ease, the records which the law did not give the public access to." (New Orleans speech, November 16, 1907.)

The injunctions and mandamuses mentioned refer to the incidents of the suit of Young vs. J. B. Sanders, Sheriff, which suit was filed November 25, 1902, nearly two months after the date of Mr. Sanders' letter to Robert R. Cocke, and nearly one month after the election, and which suit in no way involved the principle of the issuance of duplicate poll tax receipts to the voters of the parish. Mr. Caffery mixed his dates.

Mr. Sanders' visit was made Friday or Saturday, October 3d or 4th, 1902, for the sole purpose of having the Sheriff's Office assist the Democratic Parish Executive Committee in getting poll tax receipts in the hands of the voters for the congressional election of November 4, 1902.

Now, did Mr. Sanders ask of the Sheriff more than the Sheriff was according to the general public?

The St. Mary Banner, Saturday, November 1, 1902, has the following leader in large-size caps:

"GET YOUR POLL TAX RECEIPTS.

"Next Tuesday, November 4th, is the election, and everyone who has paid his poll tax for the years 1900 and 1901 is entitled to vote. If you have lost or misplaced your receipts call at once at the Sheriff's office and get duplicates. It is absolutely necessary that you show your poll tax receipts for 1900 and 1901, otherwise, you will not be allowed to vote."

The citizen, whether he appeared at the front window or sat in the rear room of the Sheriff's Office, was accorded the same opportunity of receiving his duplicate poll tax receipts, and none were barred from voting who were entitled to the privilege.

THE MERITS OF THE YOUNG VS. J. B. SANDERS, SHERIFF, SUIT.

This suit was filed Wednesday, November 26, 1902, immediately set down for trial in the District Court and decided December 6, 1902. The issue involved was the right of one citizen to pay the poll tax of another citizen, and was decided against the Sheriff, appealed by him suspensively to the Supreme Court and there decided against him in June, 1903.

In the St. Mary Banner of December 13, 1902, appears the following letter from the Sheriff, explaining his position, demonstrating that, even though he had taken his appeal suspensively, he did not intend that any public interest should suffer by the controversy:

"COMMUNICATION.

Franklin, La., Dec. 11, 1902.

"To the Editor of the St. Mary Banner: Dear Sir—As an insidious attempt is being made by certain persons and interests to create in the minds of the people of this parish an erroneous and false impression as to the attitude of my office in the collection and payment of poll taxes, and as my attitude has been persistently and insistently misrepresented, I have taken the liberty of writing you this letter, which I request that you publish in your next issue, so that the people of this parish may get a proper understanding and true conception of my stand in this matter.

"The first question is one of the payment of poll taxes. Now, my position on this question is this: I do not believe that any man or set of men have the right to walk into my office and pay the poll taxes of a number of citizens, to get their receipts therefor and to lock them up and keep them, from the owners thereof, until they shall have determined at the next election how the parties whose receipts they hold are going to vote, and then give them to the citizen if he is going to vote for them, and to withhold them from the citizen if he prefers to exercise his right and vote against the man or set of men who have obtained his receipts. It is idle to say that this will not be done, because I know of my own knowledge that it has been done, and I feel certain that what was done in the past will be attempted in the future.

"In order to prevent this I adopted a rule of my office that all receipts issued for poll taxes should either be given to the owners thereof in person or mailed to him at his address. I have received and will continue to receive the money for poll taxes from any source offered, but I have insisted, and will continue to insist, that the citizen himself get his poll tax receipt, and if he does not apply for same in person, and his poll tax is paid by another party, I will mail him his receipts, so that every citizen of the Parish of St. Mary, who either pays his poll tax himself or has it paid by someone else, will get actual possession of his receipt direct from my office and thereby be in a position to know that his poll tax is paid, and in a position to cast a free and untrammeled ballot.

"This is the head and front of my offending in this matter, and I am perfectly willing to leave it to the great body of the people of this parish as to whether or not my action has been oppressive, vicious and wrongful, or whether it is correct in principle and good morals.

"The second question that has arisen, and in which my actions have been distorted and misrepresented, is the right of the citizens to make copies of my books. My position in this matter is simply this: I am Sheriff of the Parish of St. Mary, charged with certain duties and responsibilities. I cannot and will not turn the books of my office over to any man, or set of men, for them to do with said books as they see fit. Should I do this, I could not be responsible for either their safety or their accuracy; but I have stated to private individuals, and take this opportunity of stating to the public, that, upon proper application, I will cheerfully furnish, as far as the clerical force of my office will permit, a copy of my poll tax books, or any other records under my control and custody. And if, as this is my busy season, my clerical force is too busy to make out the copies as may be requested, I am perfectly willing to put anyone to work upon these books and make copies, provided, that the person suggested to do this work is one agreeable to myself, and by this I do not mean to say that I will alone pick the man to make the copy, but anyone in whose ability and honesty I can rely will be perfectly satisfactory to me in making said copies.

"Can I be blamed for wishing to keep my books free from inaccuracies and perfect in condition? This I could not do unless I have the control of my books, and unless I have at least the satisfaction of feeling that they are being copied and treated accurately and fairly.

"To sum up, therefore, anyone in the parish who desires me to make them this copy will cheerfully have the same done if it be within the power of my clerical help whilst attending to their other duties to do so, and, if my help is too crowded to do this work, we can certainly agree on some other man who will do it—some man in whom the party applying has confidence; some man in whom I have some confidence. Respectfully yours,

"JOHN B. SANDERS, Sheriff."

The public at this date, looking back to the early days of the testing of the poll tax laws, will deem the controversy a tempest in a teapot, unworthy of the importance of being the foundation upon which Mr. Caffery built his charge. In so far as the rights of the citizens were concerned, the Sheriff in no way, as shown by his prompt public notice, made it a difficult problem for them to have their poll taxes paid.

That Mr. Caffery's party availed themselves of the right to have the poll tax list copied is evidence by the fact that the same was made for them by Mr. J. G. Martel.

That no public interest suffered in any way from the controversy is shown by the following statement published in the St. Mary Banner of Jan. 3, 1903:

"THE POLL TAX.

"On the 31st day of December, 1902, the books of the Sheriff's office showed that there had been 2,861 poll taxes. Out of this number there were 2,460 white men who had paid their poll taxes and 401 negroes. For the benefit of our readers we give the following totals of white men who have paid their poll taxes in their respective wards.

"We are gratified to state that there is no parish in the State of Louisiana whose population has paid as many poll taxes as St. Mary. The total registration of St. Mary to-day is 2,052, and there are now 408 more who have paid their poll taxes than the present registration shows. The following is the total number of whites who have paid their poll tax by wards:

"First Ward, 302; Second Ward, 150; Third Ward, 614; Fourth Ward, 147; Fifth Ward, 397; Sixth Ward, 670; Seventh Ward, 74; Eighth Ward, 206. Total, 2,460."

TESTIMONY OF ROBERT R. COCKE.

(Letter No. 2.)

"Ellendale, La., Oct. 31, 1907.

"Don Caffery, Esq., New Orleans, La.: Dear Sir—Inclosed please find a statement made from the books of the Sheriff's office, which explains itself. Then pencil checks and figures on it were made by Mr. Jared Y. Sanders, and are thus explained: He, Jared, in looking over the statement, saw that A. G. Bernard and S. J. Bourgois' poll taxes were not paid; took my pencil and checked their names, and then checked his own name, and he said to me as he made the figures $350—to charge them to his account, making it three hundred and fifty dollars, and said that Gus Smith must pay his own poll tax, which you will see by statement was due at the time.

"In regard to the Clerk of Court's Office, the following are the facts: When Mr. Jos. A. Loret, Clerk of Court, became a candidate for Railroad Commissioner he sold the unexpired term of the Clerk's Office to Mr. Wilbur H. Kramer for the price of $2,000 a year; this deal was made by Messrs. J. Y. Sanders, John B. Sanders, Sheriff, and W. H. Kramer, of this amount the Sheriff's Office was assessed and paid $1,000 a year, in monthly installments of $83.33 each month, as I was Chief Deputy at that time, and was to get one-half of the net revenues of the Sheriff's Office—I protested against this deal, but Jared told me he wanted to control the Clerk's Office, and Sheriff's Office, and that the deal must stand, of course, I had no option, and it did stand—You will see by the statement that P. P. Sigur, W. H. Kramer and Henry Jacobs have each a poll tax account, now, if they were Dy. Sheriffs, and had the legal authority to issue poll tax receipts at that time I was not aware of it, and I don't think their commissions were issued from the Sheriff's Office at that time. You might see Sigur about the matter.

"Mr. J. Y. Sanders was in daily and frequent communication and touch with the Sheriff's Office at that time—in an advisory capacity. Yrs. very truly, R. R. COCKE."

MD. COCKE'S LETTER OPEN TO SUSPICION.

This letter as evidence is open to honest suspicion, having been written by Mr. Cocke after issue had been joined between Mr. J. Y. Sanders and Mr. D. Caffery, and further that it was written and given to Mr. Caffery for the purpose of substantiating Mr. Caffery's side of the joinder of issue.

Mr. Caffery would have appeared to a better advantage had he first required the grievances of Mr. Cocke and Mr. H. Shelby Sanders to have been reduced to writing, and then investigated the same, before hurling his charges. It is carrying satisfaction with one's own righteousness too far to be content with saying: "The letters from Mr. Cocke and Mr. H. Shelby Sanders were not asked for by me until after issue had been joined with me by Mr. J. Y. Sanders."

The letter cannot escape the suspicion of being self-serving evidence.

MR. R. R. COCKE A DISCREDITED WITNESS.

Mr. R. R. Cocke was discharged from the Sheriff's Office of the Parish of St. Mary in the latter part of June, 1904, for the reason that Sheriff John B. Sanders ascertained that Mr. Cocke had been, to put it charitably, an incompetent bookkeeper and cashier. Because of this discharge, and for the further reason that Mr. J. Y. Sanders, who is a cousin to both Sheriff John B. Sanders and Mr. R. R. Cocke, refused to use his influence to have him reinstated, he has nursed his grievance against Mr. J. Y. Sanders. The family feeling, which prevented the matter of his shortage in office from being carried any further than his discharge, has lulled him into a sense of personal security, and his nursed grievance has made him a pliant witness.

This question of shortage and the responsibility of Mr. R. R. Cocke therefor, will be fully exhibited to the judging public in this refutation, under the head of an analysis of his statements. If what he has said in his letter were true, he has condemned himself a "weakling."

MR. COCKE'S LETTER CHARGES.

First—That Mr. J. Y. Sanders was a part yto the Sheriff's Office of the Parish of St. Mary carrying poll tax accounts for the year 1903 with citizens of the Parish of St. Mary, and a poll tax account for that year and instructed him, Mr. Cocke, then chief deputy, to charge to this account the sum of $850.

Second, Mr. J. Y. Sanders was a party to the arrangement made between Mr. J. A. Loret, Clerk of Court, and Mr. Wilbur H. Kramer, whereby Mr. Loret resigned his office in Mr. Kramer's favor, and to the further arrangement entered into, whereby, of the amount that was paid by Mr. Kramer to Mr. Loret, the Sheriff's Office was to pay $1,000 per annum, at the rate of $83.33 per month.

Third. When Mr. Cocke, then chief Deputy Sheriff, and enjoying one-half of the net proceeds of the office, protested against the arrangement, Mr. J. Y. Sanders told him that he (Mr. J. Y. Sanders) wanted to control the Clerk's Office and the Sheriff's, and that the deal must stand; and as he, Mr. Cocke, had no option, it did stand.

Fourth. That Mr. J. Y. Sanders was in daily and frequent communication and touch with the Sheriff's Office at that time (1903 and 1904) in an advisory capacity.

The third and fourth charges, being more ridiculous than serious, will be taken up first. We believe the citizens of the Parish of St. Mary know the following facts so thoroughly that their statement is ample refutation of these two charges.

Mr. Wilbur H. Kramer, who was appointed by Governor Heard to succeed Mr. J. A. Loret as Clerk of Court, could not have been controlled by Mr. J. Y. Sanders, even if he had desired to do so. Ever since his appointment he has run the office independently of advice, either legal or political, the chief complaint of the bar at this time being not against his efficiency, but against his independence of action. In the year 1904, one year following the so-stated conversation, Mr. Kramer supported Mr. Placide P. Sigur in his campaign against Mr. W. K. Wilson for District Attorney, the latter being generally regarded as having the Lieutenant Governor's support.

If Mr. Sanders expected political control over the Clerk's Office during the incumbency of Mr. Kramer, he did not get it. That he did not expect such results is evidenced by the mutual friendship and esteem held by these gentlemen for each other, existing then and now, and during the times when Mr. Kramer has had friction with Mr. Sanders' law firm and opposed him in matters political.

Mr. J. Y. Sanders has his home in Franklin, in which his mother and sisters live. He has a summer residence in Covington, La., where, on account of the health of his boy, together with his wife and child, he has at times sojourned. The bulk of his legal work was in the City of New Orleans, La., and his visits to St. Mary were flying trips from time to time to see his mother and sisters, or when his services were required by his firm before the St. Mary bar.

It has been a notorious complaint of his friends in Franklin that they have seen little of him since he has established his main office in New Orleans, and this knowledge of the citizens of his parish is in flat contradiction of his being in daily and frequent communication and touch with the Sheriff's Office in an advisory capacity.

Charges third and fourth were inserted into his letter by Mr. Cocke in order to give good measure, or, in a lagniappe sense. "He was saying so much he might add a little more." The gravamen of the letter lies in charges one and two.

POLL TAX ACCOUNTS.

This is the first charge in Mr. Cocke's letter to Mr. Caffery, and, as these accounts are set forth in two balance sheets of the Sheriff's Office, furnished by him to Mr. Caffery, we will take up these balance sheets, but at this time only in so far as they relate to these accounts, leaving the question of the shortage in the Sheriff's Office to be discussed further in our refutation.

The parties charged with having poll tax accounts with the Sheriff's office for the 1903 poll taxes, were P. P. Sigur, J. Y. Sanders, W. H. Kramer, D. A. Sanders, Henry Jacobs, Ed. Bourgeois and Alfred Pecot. Of these parties all but P. P. Sigur, J. Y. Sanders and W. H. Kramer were Deputy Sheriffs of the Parish of St. Mary, reporting to Mr.