

"The DESERET NEWS at one time named one of the registrars in connection with a questionable transaction, but before the Commission had time to investigate, the charge was publicly and explicitly withdrawn as to the registrar named, and a majority of the members of the Commission were of the opinion that the general charge as reiterated, without naming the persons claimed to be engaged in the work, was probably as devoid of foundation as the former explicit charge was confessed to have been."

This statement is entirely and most shamefully false. The DESERET NEWS did not name one of the registrars as described, neither did it withdraw any such allegation, either publicly or privately, or in any manner. We here "publicly and explicitly" deny the charge, and challenge the Utah Commission to produce from the columns of the DESERET NEWS either the item which named the registrar or that which withdrew the accusation.

The object of the falsehood is seen by what follows in the report. Allusion is made to the correspondence between the Commission and the editor, and while the importance of the DESERET NEWS is dwelt upon, the evident effort of the report is to cast doubt upon the veracity of the NEWS and to exonerate the Commission from the stigma that ought to attach to that body, for its failure to investigate the charges that were subsequently made against the registrars who were engaged in the notorious Rio Grande Western railway registration. As the latter part of this correspondence has not before been made public, we here reproduced it from pages 16 and 17 of the report:

SALT LAKE CITY, May 1, 1890.

Col. G. L. Godfrey, Chairman Utah Commission:

Gentlemen.—On the 7th of February I had the honor to receive from you a communication of which the annexed is a copy:

"SALT LAKE CITY,
February 7, 1890.

"Mr. Charles W. Penrose, Editor DESERET EVENING NEWS:

"Dear Sir.—In your paper of yesterday evening in an editorial headed 'Questionable Sincerity,' you make among others this direct charge, 'that two of the registration officers of this city made a trip on a special car over the Rio Grande Western and registered by wholesale gang after gang of employes found at various points between here and the Colorado line.' And further charge, 'the members of the Utah Commission, it is presumed, have full information of this flagrant crime.' The Commission and each member thereof emphatically denies having such information.

"Will you have the kindness to furnish the Commission immediately with the names of the registration officers referred to in your article and oblige,

"Yours respectfully, by order of the Commission,

"G. L. GODFREY,
Chairman."

To this I at once replied as follows:

"OFFICE OF THE DESERET NEWS
COMPANY,

"SALT LAKE, February 7, 1890.

"Col. G. L. Godfrey, Chairman Utah Commission.

"Gentlemen.—Your favor of even date in relation to an article which appeared in the DESERET EVENING NEWS of the 6th instant is received.

"Although I never wrote or inspired the article referred to, and did not see it until it was in print, I do not wish to avoid any responsibility which attaches to me as editor of the DESERET EVENING NEWS. I therefore reply to your assertion directly.

"You say that I 'make among others this direct charge: That two of the registration officers of this city made a trip in a special car over the Rio Grande Western and registered by wholesale gang after gang of employes,' etc. I clip from the article the exact language used, as follows:

"It is believed to have come to be as well understood to every citizen as is the season of the year or the state of the weather, that two of the registration officers of this city made a trip in a special car over the Rio Grande Western and registered by wholesale gang after gang of employes found at various points between here and the Colorado line. The members of the Utah Commission, it is presumed, have full information of this flagrant crime."

"You will observe that instead of making any 'direct charge' of the kind you mention, the DESERET NEWS simply commented upon something that is a topic of common conversation. The charge did not originate with the DESERET NEWS nor with any of its writers.

It is fair to presume that the Utah Commissioners present in this city have as "full information of this flagrant crime" as is current in the community. And I must confess my surprise at your statement that the "Commission and each member thereof emphatically denies having any such information."

I also respectfully suggest that if the Commission really desire to go to the bottom of this notorious affair there must be better means of reaching it than through newspaper channels. The names of the appointees of the Commission who are said to have perpetrated one of the most shameful attempts at fraud ever committed in the country are bandied about by the public, and, as the DESERET EVENING NEWS has intimated, must surely have come to the ears of the Commission.

I am, gentlemen, very respectfully yours,
CHAS. W. PENROSE,
Editor DESERET NEWS.

At that time I was satisfied that the reports commonly circulated concerning illegal registration along the line of the Rio Grande Western Railway were true. But the direct evidences which have been obtained in proof of those reports were not then within my reach. Even if they had been at my disposal it is probable that I should have deemed it prudent to withhold them for a time, in consideration of the intense party feeling that then prevailed, and the indisposition to deal justly with the People's Party exhibited by all who possessed power to correct the wrongs that were being perpetrated.

As the contest is now over and the bitterness it provoked is somewhat allayed, and as I think you should be informed as to some of the disgraceful facts known to many members of the People's Party who consider they

have been defrauded, I submit to you certified copies of a few out of a large number of affidavits which I have examined, which are bona fide, and which will be carefully preserved for future reference. The affidavits in regard to the train registration, some of which I send you, coupled with the fact that the names of the men illegally registered appear on the registration lists without any address and chiefly in the Second Precinct, established, in the minds of those who have well considered the matter, the assurance that three at least of your registration officers were parties to the fraud.

I also send you a few out of a very large number of affidavits concerning the conduct of the registrars, sitting as a court of first and last resort and depriving hundreds of legal voters of the right to cast their ballots at the Salt Lake City election.

And further, I add some samples of hundreds of other affidavits, showing that the judges of election violated the law in rejecting votes offered under the provision of section 2007 Revised Statutes of the United States.

With this information at hand I feel it my duty to place so much at least as I now send at your disposal; not, however, with the view of making this correspondence public, but that you may not, through silence on my part, be left in ignorance of the wrong that has been done to the majority of the voters of this city, and the culpable conduct of those officers of your appointment who are now enjoying the pecuniary reward of their unlawful work.

Very respectfully,
CHARLES W. PENROSE.

The report says further:

What purported to be affidavits of several parties accompanied the communication, but as none of the parties purporting to have made them were known to, or ever heard of by, the Commission, with one exception, the Commission had no means of knowing whether they were deserving of weight and credence, even if the facts alleged in them were worthy of notice."

The "one exception" mentioned is the affidavit of James B. Ray, which the Commission singles out because he was said to have been a detective in the employ of Capt. Bonfield and some reflections were cast upon his character. But they made no effort to find out the "several parties" who swore to the facts of the alleged registration and their identification of the registrars who conducted it. Many of these are well known and reputable citizens. If the Commission had been imbued with any desire to investigate this matter, ample evidence would have been furnished by those who had it in their possession at the time. As soon as it came within our reach we placed a portion of it in the hands of the Commission, sufficient to convince any ordinary mind. We could not do so before. We reserved some for good and sufficient reasons. We did not expect any effort from the Commission in the proper direction.

We say the Commission mani-