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The Reply of Hon. Thomas
L. Jones to Governor
Stevenson of Kentucky -
1870.





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REPLY
OF
Hon. THOS. L. JONES
TO
GOVERNOR STEVENSON,
OF KENTUCKY.

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TO THE PEOPLE OF KENTUCKY.

FELLOW-CITIZENS: I come before you in a controversy already prolonged, deprecated by me from the beginning, and in which I had fondly hoped any farther participation of mine would be unnecessary. But the recent communication of Governor Stevenson to Senator McCreery, with the appended correspondence, forbids my silence. It becomes imperative upon me, as a man tenacious of his honor, to defend a reputation which for the first time, in a life of fifty years, much of it public, has ever been at all questioned.

I desire to submit, briefly as possible under the circumstances, a statement, analysis, and conclusion, to which I earnestly invite the close examination and strict scrutiny of an enlightened, just, and brave people, especially of those whom I have the honor to represent in the Congress of the United States. "Hear me for my cause," for it is the cause of truth.

While at my home, enjoying the holiday interval of Congress, I received the following letter from Governor J. W. Stevenson:

[Strictly confidential.]

"EXECUTIVE OFFICE, 30th December, 1869.

"MY DEAR JONES: Accept my thanks for your kind letter of congratulation upon my recent election to the Senate. In return permit me to tender to you and yours a *happy New Year!* I had a short, spirited contest, but I always kept the lead. I made the race against wind and tide, with Trimble, Carroll, Boone, Harrison, and the Senators of Owen and Kenton against me.

"The people (God bless them) were for me, if small political cabals were against me. The race has left no sore places. I am in a good humor with everybody. I had hoped to have seen you in Cincinnati before I left there on 24th. Can't you pay me a visit? I hope so. I should be delighted to see you on the 8th January to my supper. I have thought again and again of your prediction the night I was nominated for Lieutenant Governor, when we slept together at Mrs. Wingate's. Do you remember it?

"I presume my election astonished you, as everybody

nearly seemed to think Tom invincible. He was easily beaten. Out of the first, second, and third districts together I got nineteen to his twenty-two. Write to me, and believe me, very sincerely, yours.

J. W. STEVENSON.

“Hon. T. L. JONES.”

This letter accounts for my luckless visit to Frankfort and the gubernatorial mansion on the evening of the 8th January last, as it also may appear to some as the prelude to a sequel in which, if there has been a contrivance, the contriver should be engulfed for all time.

I arrived at Frankfort in the afternoon of the 8th, registered my name at the Capitol Hotel, and shortly after, accompanied by a friend, went straightway to the executive office on Main street. After sitting with the Governor an hour or more I arose to return to my hotel, when he insisted that I should be his guest, that he had a room prepared for me, and he immediately went with me to the hotel, took my portmanteau in his hand, and escorted me to the mansion. Being shown to a room, I remained a short time, then went back to the hotel to see some friends, and when I returned to the mansion the company had assembled and the supper was going on. Here I met many old friends, and conversed with them upon general topics. At the end of the table I well remember meeting Mr. S. F. J. Trabue; we took wine together and talked probably ten or twelve minutes. The subject of the race for Congress in his district was mentioned; he said he expected to be a candidate, and asked me if I thought Mr. Beck would be. Mr. Beck's course in Congress was spoken of, and some of his votes, as differing with mine and others of the Kentucky delegation, as were also his social relations with Butler and other radical members. I distinctly recollect Mr. Trabue's saying that he would “pitch into” Mr. Beck. The Burbridge matter, I am quite sure, was not, could not have been, mentioned, because I had never heard Mr. Beck's name connected with it, either here, at Washington, or elsewhere. I had no conversation of any length with any member or members of the Legislature except that of the usual salutations among gentlemen on such an occasion, and the name of Burbridge and the Burbridge affair was not mentioned or thought of by me until the banquet was over and the guests had departed.

At about 1 o'clock, as well as I can remember, the Governor escorted me to my chamber, then Sunday morning. Here we sat down, and after much talk, almost entirely of

his own, telling me of his senatorial contest, who were his friends, who his enemies, often using the names of McCreery and Beck, (and here I discovered sparks of unkindness or jealousy;) he at length asked me, "what about that Burbridge matter?" and what I knew about Burbridge being recommended by any of the Kentucky delegation. I told him all I *knew* about it was what Colonel Blanton Duncan said to me, then describing Colonel Duncan's interview with me substantially, just as I have done whenever the matter has been spoken of, and as I have narrated it in my letters upon the subject. There could have been no misunderstanding, for my language was emphatic, and no second question was put to me on the subject. I cannot forget, however, that the Governor said, in speaking of those members of the Legislature from McCreery's region of the State who had voted for *him*, that if McCreery's friends made war upon them he would place into their hands all the material he could with which to defend and maintain themselves. This conversation lasted till between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning, when the Governor bade me good night and withdrew to his own chamber.

The next day, or that day rather, we breakfasted late, and the Governor and I went to church together. After church he accompanied me to the residence of Colonel Grant Green, a connexion of mine, with whom I had an engagement to dine. He sat with the family a short time in the parlor and left. After dinner I passed an hour and a half or two hours in the room of Senator Martin and Representative Lowe, who were boarding with Colonel Green. About dark I took leave of the family, and Colonel Green went with me to see my old friend and partner Hon. George R. McKee, of Garrard, and Dr. Dillie, of Harrison, who were rooming together. We sat and talked for half an hour or more, when Colonel Green and I left, he going to his home and I to the Capitol Hotel, where I took tea with Mr. J. C. Demoss, the representative of my own county. I mention these visits and interviews, as the only ones to or with any members of the Legislature during my stay in Frankfort, and I call upon one or all of these gentlemen to state whether the Burbridge matter was mentioned at all; and, if so, by whom and what was said? I have no recollection that any allusion was made to it. About 9 o'clock I returned to the Governor's mansion, and on entering the parlor found himself, a young gentleman conversing apart, as I thought, with his eldest daughter, and perhaps another lady, the wife of a friend of ours,

then on a visit to the Governor's family. I believe I was introduced to the young gentleman, Mr. Castleman, but have no recollection that a word passed between us during the evening. The conversation was on general topics, and chiefly, almost entirely indeed, at least *that* heard by me, between the Governor and myself. The young gentleman and the Governor's daughter soon withdrew to the next room. I was greatly surprised when the Governor, in his last communication, attempted to locate our conversation on the Burbridge matter in his parlor, and in presence of the persons named. I have no recollection that the subject was there mentioned at all. It is not impossible, however, that it might have been alluded to; but one thing I know is impossible, that however or by whom alluded to, I *could never have said* that I had seen any petition for Burbridge, much less certain names upon it, because it would have been an untruth, and I had no earthly motive in saying it. About the hour of eleven the Governor accompanied me again to my bed-room, and sat down and talked, as on the night previous, at least two hours or more. No further mention of the Burbridge matter, but the senatorial contest and other subjects occupied us until our eyes were weary, and the Governor departed with another kind "good night." The next morning, after a hurried breakfast, he walked with me to the cars and bade me adieu. Had anticipations and designs been accomplished, or had they vanished without an established basis? We shall see.

I have been thus particular in describing this visit to Frankfort and the executive mansion that the public may be the better able to place a just estimate upon the Governor's statement and argument, and upon mine.

On the 15th of January I returned to Washington. During the month of February I received letters from Mr. Silvertooth, of the Kentucky House of Representatives; Mr. Holt, of the Senate, and Mr. Hewitt, quartermaster general of the State, all asking me if I could give them any information touching the report that Mr. McCreery had recommended General S. G. Burbridge for office. I do not preserve my letters generally, receiving such a multitude, but destroy them as soon as answered. My recollection of these letters is, that they were not based upon the idea that I knew the fact for which they inquired, but that I could probably ascertain it. Messrs. Holt and Silvertooth had voted for Governor Stevenson for United States Senator, and intimated that this information would be important to them. General Hewitt wrote in behalf of others in like attitude with Holt

and Silvertooth, saying, I think that I would be conferring a favor upon the Democracy of the State by finding out the fact in reference to this report. My inference at once upon the reception of these letters was, that Governor Stevenson had told these gentlemen what I had said to him upon this subject when in Frankfort, never supposing for a moment that he had told more than what I *did* say, *that* being sufficient for them to make the inquiry. After some delay I answered their letters as satisfactorily as I could, and substantially as detailed in my letters to Governor Stevenson, already published. I had yet no suspicion whatever that any one had represented me as having said that I had ever seen a petition for Burbridge, or that any of the Kentucky delegation had recommended him for office. I heard and thought no more upon this subject until while on a short visit home. On Saturday night, the 19th of March, was handed me the following telegram from J. N. Furber, Esq., the representative from Covington, then at Frankfort. Mr. Furber had heard, probably from the Governor, something of this matter, and, as a true friend of mine, wished me to be set right:

“HON. T. L. JONES: A paper was read in the House yesterday from McCreery and Beck, denying that they had ever signed a recommendation for General Burbridge for office. This raises a question of veracity with you. You had better be here on Monday and set it right.” * * *

This telegram struck me with great surprise and with indignation, for the inference, of course, was, that some one had reported me as saying that those gentlemen had signed a recommendation for Burbridge. I could not then reach Frankfort by Monday, and having determined to speak at Independence on that day, I telegraphed Mr. Furber as follows:

“What do you mean? Who doubts my veracity, or how is it called in question? If any one says that I ever stated that McCreery, Beck, or anybody else signed a recommendation for Burbridge, he says falsely. I have an engagement for Monday.”

It then flashed upon my mind for the first time that Governor Stevenson had misconstrued or misrepresented what I had said to him on the night of his banquet, as he was the only person I had spoken to on the Burbridge subject during my visit to Frankfort.

On Monday I received the following letter from Governor Stevenson:

[Strictly confidential.]

“EXECUTIVE MANSION, 18th March, 1870.

“MY DEAR JONES: During the night of my senatorial banquet you may remember that you spoke of having had a paper presented to you for your signature, by Blanton Duncan, recommending Stephen Gano Burbridge to Andrew Johnson as Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the United States, and that McCreery, Beck, and Golladay signed it, and their names were to it when it was presented to you. Although this thing has been publicly talked of, and Trabue sent word to Beck in January that it was so talked of, though it has been in the papers, especially in the Paris and Lexington papers, a month ago, and although Golladay, Beck, and McCreery must have been informed of it many weeks since, no disavowal of the fact of their recommendation ever was known until Chenoweth received a letter, a day or two ago, from Mr. Beck, denying it; and it was stated last night that Mr. Griffith had received a letter from McCreery and Beck, stating that the statement that they had ever recommended Burbridge as Commissioner of Internal Revenue was wholly false. Last night seven or eight members of the legislature, several of whom had heard your statement as to having seen Beck’s, McCreery’s, and Golladay’s names to the paper, came to my house and asked me to post you as to these denials.

“I heard also that Beck had recently withdrawn the paper recommending Burbridge from the files, and left his receipt. Is this so? If it be, let me advise you to get a copy of the receipt, and lose no time in obtaining it. I have not seen any of the denials; but this matter of their recommendation has been used by Beck’s opponents for this Congressional nomination, as Oscar Turner tells me, and it has been in the Paris and Lexington papers and no contradiction has appeared until now.

“I have told all that I knew that your statement of seeing their signatures to the paper would be substantiated. I would place myself at once in a position where you can be corroborated. I presume all our delegation saw the paper. I write this for your own eye, to put you in possession of these reported denials.

“I suspect —— saw the recommendation of Burbridge, and Blanton Duncan certainly knew who signed it.

“If Beck did withdraw the papers, get a copy of his re-

ceipt, and especially *its date*. I wrote you a long letter to Washington. You must throw your attention to Kenton. — is very active, and will enlist county pride and county feeling in his favor. Is — for you? How is —? How is —? Do you claim —? Can't you come up and spend a night? Sincerely and faithfully, yours,

“J. W. STEVENSON.”

Now let the reader mark well every line of the above letter. “*During the night* of my senatorial banquet you may remember that you spoke of having had a paper presented to you for your signature by Blanton Duncan, recommending Stephen Gano Burbridge to Andrew Johnson as Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the United States, and that McCreery, Beck, and Golladay had signed it, and their names were to it when it was presented to you.”

Now, I ask, “spoke to whom on the *night* of my senatorial banquet?” Not to Trabue, for Trabue says, “I have no recollection that Colonel Jones mentioned the names of either Colonel McCreery or Mr. Golladay.”

I here insert Mr. Trabue's note to Governor Stevenson:

“FRANKFORT, *April 26, 1870.*

“HON. J. W. STEVENSON.

“DEAR SIR: In reply to your inquiry touching the conversation between Colonel Jones and myself in reference to the recommendation of General Burbridge, I have to say that, at your banquet on the night of the 8th of January last, I met the Hon. T. L. Jones, who, in a conversation with me, stated, according to my best recollection, in substance, that Colonel Blanton Duncan had brought to him a paper signed by a portion of the Kentucky delegation recommending General Burbridge to office, and that Colonel Duncan asked him to sign it; that he declined, when the Colonel urged him persistently, and he replied, ‘Crucify me first!’

“I asked Colonel Jones if Mr. Beck's name was to the paper. He replied that it was, adding, I think, that it was high on the list.

“I have no recollection that Colonel Jones mentioned the names of either Colonel McCreery or Mr. Golladay.

“Very respectfully,

S. F. J. TRABUE.”

Trabue, then, is out of the question as to hearing that McCreery and Golladay signed. The Governor has failed to bring any other witness for the night of the banquet, when he first and properly fixes the conversation, and where the

“you spoke” was to him in the bed-room, and to no other human being. Let the Governor turn this point if he can.

2. “Last night seven or eight members of the legislature, several of whom had heard your statement as to having seen Beck’s, McCreery’s, and Golladay’s name to the paper,” &c. I ask what member or members heard the statement? He has failed to bring one to the witness-stand, and I defy him to do it. They heard no statement from me, and if they ever heard it at all, they heard it from the Governor himself, or one of the “eight or ten people to whom he had in *confidence* mentioned it.” It will be observed that our Governor is a “strictly confidential” gentleman, and imparts his confidence to every man in Kentucky. His mouth is a confidential trumpet. But he goes on, “came to my house (these members) and asked me to post you as to these denials.” Now, these members, probably every one except Mr. Silvertooth, if he indeed was one, were strangers to me, and could have had no motive in having me posted, *and I wanted* no posting. He (the Governor) was the man to be posted, for he had given them the false information, and it was about to be developed.

The remainder of this letter may seem to an uncritical eye to be an argument rather for my benefit, (and I was not disposed at first to criticize it myself,) but on considering the context, and what precedes and follows in this history, it was for his benefit alone. This letter was first read by my fire-side at night, my wife and son being present, and my first remark was, “Well, here is the most incomprehensible misunderstanding or the most unblushing audacity on the part of Governor Stevenson that I ever knew a man guilty of.” I felt amazed and angry, but the long and intimate relations which had existed between the Governor and myself induced me, with as much patience as I could command, to answer him immediately in the following letter:

“AT HOME, *March 21, 1870—Evening.*

“DEAR STEVENSON: I have just received your letter, and I must express my amazement at the statements therein made: 1st. That I had said to you, in our conversation at your house, that Blanton Duncan had presented me a paper recommending Burbridge, with Beck’s, McCreery’s, and Golladay’s names attached to it. In this you are greatly mistaken. It is *impossible* that I could have said so. I well remember the conversation, and what I said was this: that *Blanton Duncan called on me at the House of Representatives and said that the Kentucky delegation either had done so or was*

about to recommend General Burbridge for office, and asked me if I would unite in the recommendation, and that I promptly refused. I could not have said that I saw the paper, for I never did see any such paper. I told you at the same time that it was reported in Washington that McCreery and Golladay had gone with Burbridge, or for him, to solicit an appointment from the President; that it had been charged against Golladay in the papers, and that he had denied it in the papers. I told you that this was all I *knew* about the matter. 2d. That several members of the Legislature had heard me make similar statements, viz, that I had seen the names of those gentlemen to a recommendation for Burbridge, is equally amazing to me. Now, I aver that no member of the Legislature ever heard me make any such statement; and I have no recollection of saying a word upon the subject in Frankfort, except to yourself. I had very little conversation with any members of the Legislature, except Martin and Lowe, in their room at Green's: and there I do not think that subject was mentioned at all. There must be a great misapprehension somewhere, else a willful misrepresentation. Mr. Silvertooth, Mr. Holt, and General Hewitt, each wrote to me to know if McCreery had recommended Burbridge. I took some pains to find out, and could not ascertain; and I detailed to each one of them, just as I did to you, all I knew about the whole matter. I refer you to those letters, especially my letter to General Hewitt, as I suppose Silvertooth and Holt have probably left Frankfort. I do not remember to have used Beck's name at all to you in speaking of the recommendation of Burbridge; but it was used in another connection, viz, his intimacy with Butler and other radicals. No human being ever heard me say that I had seen a recommendation for Burbridge, or that I had seen any name attached to it, for the reason that I never did see either, and I could not have told an untruth. I spoke, when at all, of rumor, and of the interview with Duncan, just as narrated above. I received a telegram from Furber on Saturday, which I did not understand, but to which I replied, utterly denying that I ever made the statement that McCreery or Beck, or anybody, signed a recommendation for Burbridge. This matter annoys me, and if I find that it assumes a responsible shape, involving my veracity, I shall publish a card. I cannot believe that you would willingly misrepresent me. I have written in haste. Yours, truly,

THOMAS L. JONES.

"P. S.—After asking several persons in Washington for

the facts, and learning nothing positively, I told McCreery himself that such letters had been written to me making such inquiries, and he begged me to go to the appointment office in the Treasury and see if there were any applications there for Burbridge, and whose names were attached to them, so that I could report to the authors of those letters. I did so, and found that Burbridge had withdrawn all his papers, and I saw his receipt for the same. This might be significant. I made this statement to Holt and to General Hewitt. (See Hewitt's letter.) If any of the delegation ever signed for Burbridge they *all now deny it*. Blanton Duncan probably knows whether they ever did or not.

"I return to Washington to-morrow. Spoke at Independence to-day with ——, and was well pleased with the result. Will write again from Washington. T. L. J.

"P. S.—I have never heard of Beck's withdrawing any paper. T. L. J."

This letter fully explains itself, and is in accordance with all my statements before and after, and needs very little comment. One important item in it, however, should be now mentioned: 1st. "That I had said to *you* in conversation at your house;" and further on, "I well remember the conversation," meaning, of course, the conversation in the bedroom; and further, "I have no recollection of saying a word upon the subject in Frankfort except to *yourself*," which was of course in the bed room.

It should be observed also in this letter that I refer the Governor to my letters to Mr. Silvertooth, Mr. Holt, and General Hewitt, all of whom were intimate with him, and who doubtless had read them to him, as he says in his statement he had "advised them to write to Colonel Jones and get the statement directly from him." Now, if they read him these letters, written some time before, in which I make the same statement about the Burbridge matter that I make to him in the letter above and made to him on the night of the banquet, how could he write me the letter of the 18th March, and, indeed, the one which follows on the 26th March? I was detained at home by sickness until the 26th March, and I returned to Washington on the 27th. I found in my mail nothing from Governor Stevenson after his letter of the 18th, but I received the anonymous letter which now follows:

"FRANKFORT, *March 17*.

"Colonel T. L. JONES.

"SIR: As a friend of yours, I wish to give you an item of

news that is engaging a good deal of attention in Frankfort, and in which I myself feel considerable interest, that of Beck and McCreery having signed a recommendation for Burbridge. It is now whispered around here that you deny it or evade a direct answer.

"I must confess I can scarcely believe this to be so. The Governor has spoken of it to numbers of gentlemen, giving you as authority, and several others speak of it here, all giving yourself or Blanton Duncan as authority, and I myself spoke of it, not, however, until it became publicly talked of here. I heard you detail the circumstance of the presentation of the petition to you by Duncan, and that McCreery's and Beck's names *were signed to it*, and that you *spurned it*, and I admired you, as all Kentuckians will, for doing so, when you even had such names to justify an act that might at that time have been considered only an act of policy, but which you would not do even to gain influence with the party in power. I suppose McCreery and Beck signed it, only thinking they might be better able to benefit their constituents if they did so, but we gloried in you for *not* signing it.

"I most assuredly would be obliged, if called upon, to certify to the fact of having heard you say that the names "*were signed*" to the petition. So will a number of other gentlemen of the highest respectability. I cannot think, from the moral courage I have always known you to exhibit, that you would even evade a thing of that sort. Where is the petition? Can it not be produced? and, if not, why? Blanton Duncan, I am told, saw the names, and has told a good many gentlemen that those names *were on it*. I have no doubt they were doing what they thought for the best when they did sign it, and just let them say so, and come out and defend their act like bold brave Kentuckians should do; every one would respect them for it, and excuse the deed for the motive's sake.

"I write you this because I am a friend of yours, and I do not think either you or Duncan will place yourselves in the attitude of evading or denying a statement that can be so easily proved by so many people. Certainly you will not back down from a thing when you have all to lose and nothing to gain by it but contempt. FORTIFY YOURSELF WITH PLENTY OF PROOF, and all Kentucky will sustain you, her noble son, who had the courage to do *right*. Creep out of it, and my word for it you are a 'dead duck' sure.

"Wishing to hear from you very soon, I am, truly,

"YOUR FRIEND."

This offspring is without a name. Who shall assume its paternity? Examine it well, my fellow-citizens; whose features does it resemble, and in whose interest or benefit was it brought forth?

Mr. Benton's rule of criticism, in comparing two papers, was, if three words were identical and in the same connection and upon the same subject, it gave suspicion. If nine words were so adduced, the proof was almost positive that they emanated from the same brain. Now, let us examine the Governor's letter and the anonymous one.

The Governor says:

1. As a dear friend, &c.
2. I have told all that I knew.

3. Although this thing has been publicly talked of.

4. You may remember that you spoke of having had a paper presented to you for your signature by Blanton Duncan, recommending—and that McCreery, Beck, and Golladay signed it, and their names were to it when it was presented to you.

5. The paper is the best evidence as to who signed it. Why is it not produced and exhibited?

6. Blanton Duncan certainly knew who signed it.

7. I hope you understand that the only motive in my letter to you was to place you on a proper guard, as a dear friend; and,

8. I would place myself at once in a position where you can be corroborated, &c.

Anonymous says:

1. As a friend of yours.

2. The Governor has spoken of it to numbers of gentlemen.
3. It became publicly talked of here.

4. I heard you detail the circumstance of the presentation of the petition to you by Duncan, and that McCreery's and Beck's names were signed to it.

5. Where is the petition? Can it not be produced; and, if not, why?

6. Blanton Duncan, I am told, saw the names.

7. I write you this because I am a friend of yours.

8. Fortify yourself with plenty of proof, &c.

Are these letters products of the same brain? I shall not determine. What would Mr. Benton say?

The reception of this letter, the silence of Governor Stevenson, and the incidental reports coming from Frankfort impelled me to issue the following card, which might have

been more prudently worded, but nevertheless my honest impulse.

The adage that "falsehood travels a thousand miles while truth is putting on her boots" occurred to me, and I thought the remedy should be quick and sharp.

"To the Editor of the Courier-Journal:

"Information having reached my ears that it has been currently reported at Frankfort, and especially among the members of the Kentucky legislature, that I had made the statement that I had seen a recommendation of General S. G. Burbridge to President Johnson for office, and the names of Messrs. McCreery, Beck, and Golladay were signed to the same, I here avow that no human being ever heard me make any such statement, and I pronounce him who says he did a liar and slanderer.

"THOMAS L. JONES."

"HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

"WASHINGTON CITY, D. C., *March 28, 1870.*"

This card I intended to apply to every one whom it might fit, from Governor Stevenson down. Two days after it was issued, and on the 30th March, I received from the Governor the following letter:

[Strictly confidential.]

"EXECUTIVE OFFICE, *26th March, 1870.*

"MY DEAR JONES: I received your letter of 21st two days ago. I was certainly as much surprised by it as you could have been by mine.

"My letter, which so astonished you, was prompted by the kindest motive. When writing it, I had never conceived it possible that I could have (as it now appears I did) misunderstand your statement made on the evening of the 9th of January, that a recommendation in writing had been presented to you by Blanton Duncan, asking that S. G. Burbridge might be appointed by the President Commissioner of Internal Revenue for United States, *and that the names of Beck, McCreery, and Golladay* were upon it. Hearing incidentally, upon the evening I wrote, that Beck and McCreery were about denying it, I, upon the spur of the moment, and actuated by the warmest friendship, wrote to you advising you of the fact, never doubting then that you had seen their signatures, and your ability to establish that fact. I am truly glad now that I did write to you. It removes an erroneous impression from my mind of what you intended to convey, as compared with what I was positive you said. It enables me to put the matter right with some eight or ten people to

whom I had, in *confidence*, mentioned it, by informing all such that you were misunderstood by me. I am incapable of misrepresenting anybody; but least of all a *valued friend like yourself*, whose honor, truth, and nobility of character I would defend as quickly as my own. Of course you will understand that *your statement* of my having misunderstood you is sufficient. You and I can never be put in antagonism on points like these. I deeply regret that any misconception of what you said took place, and you will not doubt that it was wholly unintentional. I regret that any statement of mine should have done injustice to anybody, especially Beck or McCreery; but as far as I am concerned it shall be O. K. Are you not mistaken in supposing and stating that you did not mention the subject to any one but myself? Did you not mention it to several members of the Legislature on the night of the 8th? I suspect you have forgotten it, but that, on reviewing the past, you will find out that you are unintentionally mistaken, and you will ascertain that you did mention it to many others beside myself at other places and times than the 8th or 9th of January at my house. What you said to me, and those present at my house upon the 9th January, has been communicated to but very few, and to them in confidence.

“The publicity of the rumor of Beck’s indorsement of Mr. Burbridge, which has been circulated since January in this district, and which appeared several weeks ago in the Paris and Lexington papers, did not spring from anything you said to me or others at my house. Did you ever speak of Beck’s indorsement of Burbridge to Edward C. Marshall at the Cincinnati races last fall? Did you remember to have alluded to it at dinner at I. T. Martin’s, in Cynthiana, on the day the Confederate dead were reinterred? Did you not hold a long conversation with S. F. J. Trabue on this subject in Frankfort? He says so: that his recollection is, that you told him “that Beck’s name was high on the list.” I read him your letter, and told him he had clearly misunderstood. I have done the same thing to those who heard the conversation in my house, and who understood you as I did.

I hope you understand that the only motive in my letter to you was to place you on a proper guard as a dear friend in the event of antagonism in statement between yourself and others on the existence of a fact. It is a subject I felt no interest in, and was in no way connected with. Very few know that you even told me, and those few have not spoken of it. The publicity comes from statements made by you at

me first," which he attributes to me in his note to Governor Stevenson, if I know myself, is totally unlike me, and never, on any occasion, fell from my lips. I here insert the following letter, received on my return to Washington on the 27th March :

"FRANKFORT, *March* 17, 1870.

"HON. T. L. JONES.

"DEAR SIR: I have understood that the papers *constituting* the application and its support of General Burbridge for a high official position during President Johnson's administration have been withdrawn from the State Department, and the receipt of Mr. Beck for them left on file.

"May I ask of you the favor of obtaining for me a copy of the receipt and forwarding it to Frankfort.

"Very truly, S. F. J. TRABUE."

This letter surprised me in the mention of Mr. Beck's withdrawing papers as Governor Stevenson's had received at home; and this idea of Beck's withdrawing papers, as I am told by General Hewitt, who has been in Washington for some weeks past, was drawn from my letter to him, (Hewitt,) in which, as we both think, Beck's name was not used at all, but, after speaking of Burbridge, I simply used the initial B. But these gentlemen, so *eager* in their search, *would* have it to mean Beck, although his name was nowhere mentioned in the letter. This is our recollection, but the letter would be the best proof. I kept no copy, but will publish it if General Hewitt sends it in time. I answered Mr. Trabue's letter immediately or very soon, telling him, just as I had told Governor Stevenson, Messrs. Silvertooth, Holt, and Hewitt, all I knew about the Burbridge affair, and saying of Mr. Beck that, so far as his withdrawing papers, I had never heard his name connected with the affair at all; and I recalled to him, too, our conversation at the banquet, in which I expressly said the name of Burbridge was not mentioned. It is singular that Mr. Trabue never replied to my letter, and never intimated in any way that he differed with me in my statement of our conversation at the banquet, although this letter was received by him several weeks before the date of his note to Governor Stevenson. It might give additional light on this part of the subject if we knew who mentioned the matter to the other *first*, Stevenson or Trabue, and between Stevenson and the "several gentlemen who applied to me (him) to know what Colonel Jones had stated to me (him) upon the subject;" whether they *first* heard it

from him or he from them; and also if he had published the calls upon Trabue and Castleman, in answer to which their notes to him were written. *This might be significant.* Here I am reminded of the Governor's comment upon the phrase "might be significant" in the P. S. of my letter of 21st March. It was used in reference to General Burbridge himself, and his objects, not my colleagues.

But the Governor goes on and says he "understood Colonel Jones to say that it was rumored in Washington that McCreery and Golladay had gone in a carriage with General Burbridge to the President's to urge his appointment." Part of this I did say *in the bed-room*, but the carriage, which he seems to make particular and impressive for effect, I totally deny; for everybody knows that Senator McCreery never rides in *carriages*, and I never heard of his being in but one in my life, and that was with me on another occasion.

He says, in his last communication, "I sought to give no publicity to this statement, and yet he says in his letter of March 26 he mentioned it to some "eight or ten people *in confidence*;" that might mean fifteen or twenty, probably did, and *they* each mentioned it perhaps, not so "strictly confidential," to fifteen or twenty others, and *that* covered the whole Legislature and a considerable part of Frankfort.

But he told his friends, and he never "failed to state," that I had, on the night of the 9th, made the statement; but he has failed to give the name of one member of the Legislature or friend who says he, the Governor, told him it was on the 9th the statement was made. Up to the night of the 17th of March the Governor says, "Fully impressed with the belief that Jones had seen Senator McCreery's name, with that of Beck, upon the paper," &c. Now does anybody believe that he had not seen my letters to Silvertooth, Holt, and Hewitt, whom he had advised to write to me, and to whom I had written days if not weeks before, telling them all I *knew* about the matter, viz., the interview with Duncan, just as narrated in my published letters, and on all occasions when the subject was spoken of? This was an important matter; the Governor desired to know it, and so did his friends, who wished to use it in their defence at home for having voted against McCreery for Senator. And just here I will mention, that a gentleman, a near friend of the Governor, informs me that he heard the Governor say, if he knew this report of McCreery recommending Burbridge to be true, he would place it in the hands of his friends to meet attacks from McCreery's friends for having voted against

him; and this exactly comports with his expression, to the same effect, to me in the bed-room. There is no doubt in my mind that the moment, so to speak, that these gentlemen received my letters, they went to Governor Stevenson to give him their contents. He could not, therefore, but have known what I had said upon the subject long before the night of the 17th March. No; the object of his letter of the 18th, written, as he says, "under impulse and excitement, and in great haste," was not for my benefit and for me to be corroborated; he is too cold a man to act thus for a friend; but it was for his own benefit, and to corroborate himself, as I think I shall show before my conclusion. The Governor says that "he (Mr. Trabue) also informed him that the Hon. E. C. Marshall had informed him (Trabue) that Colonel Jones had mentioned the subject of the recommendation of General Burbridge to him at the Cincinnati races." There must be some mistake here again. I have no idea that Mr. Marshall said anything on that subject, as I do not think it was mentioned in our conversation at the races; but if he did, he could have made no such statement as would comport with that of Mr. Trabue's or Governor Stevenson's, and, as the basis of my belief, I insert extracts from a letter of Mr. Marshall to me, of date March 16, 1870:

"VERSAILLES, KY., *March 16, 1870.*

"HON. T. L. JONES.

"DEAR SIR: There has been a rumor in this district that Mr. Beck promoted the nomination of General Burbridge for the office to which Delano was appointed. You would, as a member from Kentucky, of course, know if this is true, and how it may be proved."

Again, after speaking of his being a candidate for Congress against Mr. Beck, or in his district:

"I write to you to ask information in this Burbridge affair, and hope it will consist with your views and engagements to put me in the way of obtaining the proof. I am sorry to trouble you, as I know how fully your time is occupied, but I hope you will not consider it an unwarranted liberty.

"I am, with great respect, your friend,

"E. C. MARSHALL."

There is no allusion in the letter to any conversation about Burbridge as having occurred at the races or elsewhere. I answered this letter at once, telling Mr. Marshall all I knew of the Burbridge matter, as I had told others, and saying

also, if I am not greatly mistaken, that I never heard Mr. Beck's name connected with it.

I insert here the correspondence between Colonel Duncan and myself to show that there is no material difference in our statements:

“LOUISVILLE, *March 29, 1870.*

“HON. T. L. JONES.

“DEAR SIR: Several persons have asked me concerning the appointment sought by General Burbridge, of internal revenue, from President Johnson, alleging that you have given a minute account of my approaching you upon the subject to indorse him. As I never did so, and was not aware of General Burbridge having applied for such a position, I must request you to correct the statements.

“I presume that you have simply fallen into an error and have forgotten what occurred. I was requested by some of General Burbridge's friends to ascertain whether the Kentucky delegation would unite in a request which was written out and handed to me. That was to give General Burbridge a commission in the army. I went in the House, saw you, Beck, Trimble, and Knott, and each expressed a disinclination to recommend General Burbridge for anything. I obtained no signatures, because I had been told they were useless, if any of the delegation declined, and I did not see either of the Senators. The paper was handed back by me just as I received it.

“Some of Burbridge's friends were aiding me in the attempt to recover my property, and their request to me to aid them in this point was promptly acceded to as a *quid pro quo*.

“Whether any of the delegation signed a recommendation for Burbridge as an officer in the internal revenue department I have no knowledge whatever, and certainly had nothing to do with it.

“I would be obliged if you would show this to Senator McCreery, Beck, Knott, and Trimble.

“Yours, truly, “BLANTON DUNCAN.”

“HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

“WASHINGTON, D. C., *April 2, 1870.*

“DEAR SIR: Yours of the 29th ultimo is just received, and I am glad you have written to me on the subject referred to.

“Your statement is quite correct, and almost precisely such as I have made. I have never spoken upon the matter of a recommendation for General Burbridge, except when appealed

to, and then to this effect. All I knew about it was that Colonel Blanton Duncan had called upon me at the House of Representatives, and asked me if I would be willing to unite in a recommendation of General B. for office; that the Kentucky delegation or some of them would do, or thought of doing so, or some words to that effect, and I promptly declined. I do not remember that you mentioned any particular office. I believe I said to one person that perhaps it might have been Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

"You never showed me any paper, nor spoke of any paper.

"The only person who, to the best of my knowledge, alluded to the subject to me at Frankfort last winter, was Governor Stevenson, and I told him all I knew about it was just what I have said above. It seems that he then misconstrued my words, as he has admitted by letter to me. A false impression seems to have prevailed in Frankfort as to what I said upon the subject. Mr. Holt, of the Senate, and General Hewitt, of Frankfort, wrote to me to know if Mr. McCreery and one or two others wrote to me to know if Mr. Beck had signed a recommendation for Burbridge, and I replied, saying in substance just what I have said above to you, being all I knew about the matter. Hearing of these false reports as to my statement, I have ordered a card to be published in the *Courier-Journal*, which you have probably seen. I never imputed any improper motive to you, and was reluctant to mention your name, as you may see by my letter to General Hewitt; and I attributed your instrumentality (however small) in the matter to your kind feelings for General Burbridge, in return for aid given you by his friends, perhaps by himself, in recovering your property from the Government.

"This is an unpleasant affair to all; but so far as I am concerned, the truth shall be made manifest.

"Truly, yours, &c.,

THOS. L. JONES.

"Col. BLANTON DUNCAN."

The Governor also says: "I had heard also from a gentleman of the highest character, whose name I will not, unless it hereafter becomes necessary, drag into this controversy, say that he heard Colonel T. L. Jones, at Colonel I. T. Martin's, in Cynthiana, upon the day of the inauguration of the Confederate monument, allude to this recommendation of General Burbridge, and the distinct impression left upon my informant's mind, from what Colonel Jones said, was,

that all the Kentucky delegation in Congress had recommended Burbridge except himself." Now, I defy the Governor to bring out the "gentleman of the highest character;" and it is a little remarkable he did not bring him out or allude to him more particularly, as he does not hesitate to bring ladies on the stage whose identity many cannot doubt. This is a delicacy of the Governor somewhat difficult to explain, and especially as he calls Mr. Beck's opponent for Congress and his own would-be son-in-law. But, in reference to the dinner in Cynthiana, I call upon the *host* himself, Colonel Martin, on whose immediate left I sat at the table, and who doubtless heard every word I uttered, to say whether the Burbridge matter was mentioned at all, and what I said upon the subject, if it *was* mentioned. I have no recollection that it was then spoken of, but if it *was*, I *do* know that I made no statement of having seen paper or names, and nobody could justly have inferred any such thing from what I said, or that the Kentucky delegation had recommended Burbridge. The Governor referred me to Colonel Pennabaker to find out something for him, in the same spirit, no doubt, which prompted him to try and put me as a spy upon McCreery and Beck, all to *corroborate* me in a statement which *he knew* as well as the God that created him I *never* made. It was all for his own purposes, as will appear in the sequel.

As evidence of the Governor's desire to fasten a stigma upon Senator McCreery, and to give his friends material to defend themselves, I here submit an extract of a letter from him, dated February 9, 1870:

"I learn from a letter written by — to —, that McCreery is using his influence with radicals to have me rejected. Can this be possible? — has no doubt of it, and says the squibs from Washington of Mack and others are prompted by McCreery. I will not credit this until it is confirmed. If true, I want it known through the length and breadth of Kentucky. The indignation of those who have heard the rumor is vehement and denunciatory. McCreery is the last man whom I could have supposed would have stooped to such a course. It is unlike him, as I have known him. Do you think it is so? If you can find out incidentally from the Republicans, I wish you would write to me.

"Very faithfully,

"J. W. STEVENSON.

"Col. T. L. JONES."

Now, if he possessed the Burbridge material, which he admits he had told his friends on the 10th of January, as communicated by me, already sufficient to destroy McCreery, why would he be appealing to me for additional material to spread "through the length and breadth of Kentucky?" Indeed, is it not remarkable that in none of his correspondence with me since the Senatorial banquet has he mentioned or alluded to this awful Burbridge matter at all.

I replied to this letter, saying I could hear of no such thing against Senator McCreery, and could not believe him guilty of it. Why did not the Governor here, if he were the *fair* and *frank* man he assumes to be in this business, "appeal to Senator McCreery himself," or ask me to do so, as he had advised his friends to do, saying, "He is a man of truth and honor"—"his word is his bond," &c.

Now as to the origin of this slander, the Governor says in his statement: "Senator McCreery must know that I neither originated nor circulated the rumor of his alleged recommendation of General Burbridge for office," and he goes on to argue adroitly and tries to prove that the slander had its origin in Washington, refers to the interview of Colonel Duncan with me, and says: "If what Colonel Duncan said was true or untrue," &c., and represents me reporting the slander "as emanating from Colonel Blanton Duncan." Now, nobody has charged Colonel Duncan with untruth. He did not say to me that McCreery *had* recommended Burbridge, nor did I ever state that he said so. There is no material difference in the statements of Colonel Duncan and myself. The slander was not in the rumor, but in the actual statement of a falsehood. Who first made this statement and began to circulate it?

The Governor admits, in his letter of the 26th March, that he misunderstood me; he now admits, in his statement, that he did allude to the subject on the 10th January, and then, no doubt, he began to circulate his misunderstanding of what I said.

The slander was not in what Duncan said to me, or what I narrated, but the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of Governor Stevenson was and is the only slander in the case, which, under a fair construction of the Governor's admission, had its birth on the 10th day of January. But it may have had it long before. In other words, the Governor admits that he misunderstood me. This is an admission that I never said that I had seen a paper with the names of McCreery, Beck, and Golladay upon it. What I did say in

my conversation with him appears in the correspondence now published, and this is *all* I said, by *his own admission*. Now, I submit, can he, from anything I *did* say, have understood or construed me as he afterwards reported me, and does it not inevitably follow that it was a pure fabrication on his part, all this about the names and the paper? and is it not to be set down alone to the eagerness of the Governor to injure McCreery.

I now desire to call attention, with a little weariness no doubt to the reader and repetition of my own, but still amusing, if not instructive, to the fact that the Governor, although in his letter, written "under impulse," when the truth is most likely to come on a given point, fixed the date of our conversation on the night of the banquet, yet since he has required witnesses fixes it in his statement on the 9th, and, to make *it very truthful*, no less than eight times, as follows: 1st. "Upon Sunday night the 9th of January, a lady friend," &c. 2d. "Colonel Jones had upon the night of the 9th of January," &c. 3d. "Viz, on the 9th of January, and certainly three persons besides myself were present, and heard every word which was said by Colonel Jones in regard to it." 4th. "That Colonel Jones did state upon the 9th of January;" and, 5th. "That Colonel T. L. Jones had stated to me on the night of the 9th that he had seen the written recommendation," &c. 6th. "Colonel Jones admits in his letter of the 21st, that on the night of the 9th January," &c. 7th. "Again Colonel Jones, upon the night of the 9th January, tells us," &c. 8th. "Now, I assert that from the day the Legislature assembled to the 9th of January, I never heard this rumor directly or indirectly alluded to."

It often happens that one untruth requires another and many to support it.

What shall I call these eight distinct assertions without the slightest foundation of truth? I deny emphatically every one of them. And so far as the 6th is concerned, that "Colonel Jones admits, in his letter of the 21st, that on the night of the 9th January," &c., I admit nothing on the 9th. Reader, examine my letter of the 21st, and see for yourself; and I never can admit the statement of the Governor, which I shall ever believe he himself knows to be untrue. But I place right here the statement of one of his nearest friends, Dr. J. Russell Hawkins, of Frankfort, long and now the clerk of the Kentucky Senate, whose character stands unimpeached, whose word no man will doubt, and whom Governor Stevenson has known nearly all his life:

“SUNDAY, *April 4, 1870.*

“Had conversation this day with Dr. J. R. Hawkins, who says Stevenson told him that he only inferred from conversation with Jones that he, Jones, had seen the signature of McCreery to papers of Burbridge, and that Jones did not say he had seen any such papers, but he (Stevenson) only inferred it from the conversation.

GEO. B. HODGE,
“J. TAYLOR.”

I certify on honor that the above is a true copy from a memorandum of the conversation with Dr. J. R. Hawkins, taken down and signed by myself and Colonel Taylor within three minutes after its utterance by Dr. Hawkins. The original is in my possession.

GEORGE B. HODGE.

Dr. Hawkins, on the same day, and after my noting his previous conversation, had his attention called to the facts, and repeated the expression *verbatim*.

G. B. H.

These gentlemen, General George B. Hodge and Colonel James Taylor, both of Newport, Kentucky, are well known to the country. I am credibly informed, also, that Dr. Hawkins made the same statement at the residence and in presence of his brother, E. W. Hawkins, Esq., of Newport.

I repeat the 8th assertion of the Governor: “Now, I assert that, from the day the Legislature assembled to the 9th of January, I never heard this rumor directly or indirectly alluded to.” Again he says: “If the subject of this recommendation was ever talked of prior to the 8th of January, by me or my friends, it is susceptible of proof. I aver that *no one* can be found who will assert it.” I place now in answer to that a letter from Major J. J. Marshall, of Oldham county, brother of the Hon. Humphrey Marshall, and a gentleman well known in Kentucky:

“OLDHAM COUNTY, KY., *May 11, 1870.*

“Colonel T. L. JONES,
“*Washington City.*

“DEAR SIR: Your favor of the 30th ult. was received on Saturday evening last. You wish to know if ‘Mr. J. T. Berry asked me if I could support a man who had recommended Burbridge for office,’ and also, ‘if I will do you the favor to state *when* it was he asked me that question and in what connection.’ I have no objection to answering *all* your interrogatories, and for that purpose will give you a short *resumé* of the whole affair as it occurred, as nearly and as clearly as I can remember. I *think* it was the evening before

the municipal election in Louisville this spring—February or March—I forget which. I walked into ‘Rufers’—the ‘St. Charles’—in Louisville, to get my supper, or dinner, as you please, for I had eaten nothing since I left home in the morning. It was about 8 o’clock. Mr. B. and some other gentlemen were in the room as I entered. I was invited by the company to take a drink with them, which I did, and then went into one of the little boxes to eat the supper I had ordered. In a short time Mr. B. came into the box where I was and took a seat. We commenced talking, but upon what subject I do not remember. During our conversation, however, the name of Mr. Vories, the Senator from *this* district, was used, and I made some remark—I do not remember now what it was—in regard to his legislative action, when Mr. B. said, ‘He is a sharp fellow and a first-rate hand to electioneer.’ I made no reply, and in a minute or two after B. said, ‘You don’t like him because he voted for Stevenson for Senator.’ I replied, ‘No, I do not like that.’ He asked me ‘Why I was opposed to Stevenson.’ I told him I thought Colonel McCreery, under all the circumstances, was entitled to a re-election, and I believed the people of the State wanted him re-elected. We talked the matter over for awhile, of course neither convincing the other of the ‘error of his ways,’ when B. remarked, I think in these very words: ‘Would you support a man who recommended Burbridge for office?’ *Unhesitatingly I said I would not.* He then said McC. had done so, and I am of the impression, *although I am not certain,* that afterwards, in reiterating the above, he connected Mr. Beck’s name with that of Colonel McCreery as among those who had recommended Burbridge. I said I did not believe the statement, when he repeated it, and he said, ‘I suppose you would believe it if Tom Jones said so.’ I told him if *you* were to say you knew it to be a fact, I supposed I would believe it. The *exact* words of his reply I do not know that I can quote, but I think they were these: ‘Well, Colonel Jones does say so, and I can show it to you in his handwriting,’ or ‘it is in his handwriting.’ The impression made upon my mind was, that you had written to *that* effect, although I was still incredulous both of the fact of Colonel McCreery’s recommendation of Burbridge, and of your having written to that effect, or even of your assertion of it. As it was neither pleasant or profitable to me to discuss the matter any further, I remained silent, and in a short time Mr. Berry left me, saying, however, previous to his going, that ‘*Governor Stevenson knew of this before the Senatorial elec-*

tion, but he made no use of it, for he would scorn to do such a thing, and if he could not be elected without using such things as that, he would not have the office." On that point I did not choose to make any observation, and there the conversation ended, and Mr. B. left me.

Respectfully,

"J. J. MARSHALL."

Colonel James T. Berry, the gentleman alluded to in the above letter, is a brother-in-law of Governor Stevenson, and I have always esteemed him as a man of strict integrity, and my warm personal friend. He was in Frankfort during the senatorial contest, and one of the Governor's most active friends.

The Governor says: "Senator McCreery seeks indirectly to produce the impression that his alleged recommendation of General Burbridge was fabricated by me, and secretly used to his prejudice during the senatorial election;" and further on he says: "That truth and justice alike would seem to demand that no insinuation should be made that the scandal had been used during that contest in my behalf and to his prejudice." In answer to these bold paragraphs, I subjoin the following voluntary, timely, and manly letter:

"LOUISVILLE, KY., May 10, 1870.

"HON T. L. JONES.

"DEAR SIR: Having seen your letter in the *Courier Journal*, and believing that you are being unfairly dealt with, I have concluded to communicate one fact. Mr. Pierson, of this city, who is a member of the House of Representatives, says that the report that McCreery signed General Burbridge's recommendation for office was circulated by Stevenson's friends during the canvass for United States Senate between McCreery and Stevenson, and that this report was the principal reason that caused him to vote for Stevenson. That he intended to vote for McCreery when elected, and until he learned this report. So Stevenson must have heard the report long before you came to Frankfort. For particular reasons I do not wish my name mentioned in connection with this matter.

"I suppose Pierson would give a statement to that effect, if requested by some friend of yours, as I heard him say to-day that he would sign a petition requesting Stevenson to resign his office of United States Senator."

The author of this letter is as true a gentleman as any in Kentucky, but I withhold *his name* for the present at his own

request. I would prefer Mr. Pierson's statement, of course; he will not deny, I presume, what is said in this letter. He can easily be found.

I also insert the following extract from a letter of a well-known gentleman in the county of Jefferson:

"I heard from a friend that Mr. Pierson, a member of the Legislature, had said in his and my brother's presence, that he was a McCreery man, but in consequence of the Burbridge charges had voted for Stevenson, and that he knew positively of a number of others who were influenced by the same cause. The parties mentioned above are responsible and reliable."

I withhold the name of this gentleman, although he has not desired it, but his integrity will not be questioned.

A word now upon the term "strictly confidential," which the Governor so frequently mentions, as if to imply that I had been guilty of a breach of confidence or propriety in reading parts of his letters to the few individuals I named to him. I explained to him that I thought it necessary to read them in order to set us both right, and this is the opinion of all those to whom I did read them. It is the habit of the Governor to mark his letters "strictly confidential," and I do not think there are two out of ten of the numbers I have received from him without this mark, although one is surprised to know, in reading them, what he desires to be kept in confidence. It is so common with him, that I have attached but little importance to it. But I deny that he could impose confidence in regard to these letters. A man may claim confidence in matters personal to himself, but I deny that he can defame another, or attempt to involve a friend under the seal of confidence and secrecy. As well stab a man, and say don't show the blood or send for a surgeon, it is a confidential stab; I am chief of State, you are my friend; you must suffer, and, if needs be, die to save the State. What! engender the loathsome spawn of slander and cast it into my nest for incubation, to be warmed into life and be defended by me? No! I dash back the foul offspring into the face of its progenitor, that it may defile only the seat of its origin.

I have now adverted, I believe, to all the points in the Governor's statement which I need answer. It has required time, and has tried the patience of the reader, it is true, but he will remember that character is at stake, which to a proud man is dearer than life.

Now, what has the Governor done, and how am I in future to regard him? He has, in my opinion, told to his friends, and for purposes of his own, perhaps now understood by the public, that which he *knew* to be false, and against his long-tried and best friend. When the denial of McCreery and Beck went to Frankfort the falsehood was developed, and the Governor, "under impulse and excitement and in great haste," finds it necessary to write to me in order to vindicate him with those to whom he had told the falsehood, and make a statement which he knew to be untrue, and knowing at the same time that I would deny it. He reflected, however, that he could accept my statement; say he had unintentionally misunderstood me, and could set me right and himself too, with all those to whom he had so falsely spoken!

All this, indeed, he says he *did*, and quite overcomes me with praise and adulation. He has now, he thinks, recovered from his great indiscretion and is safe, and here I would have covered him with the mantle of charity and bid the matter rest forever. But the still aggrieved Senator projects a missile which disconcerts and seems to destroy him. He looks about and considers long and well; finally determines that the only hole for him to escape will be through the character of his friend; he must acknowledge himself false, else so prove his friend, and he sets about the work to weave a net around him in the meshes of which he is to be bound to death. Yes, he forgets all his fond love and praise, for (he says) my "honor, truth, and nobility of character," and after having *urged* even "Mr. Trabue and Mr. Castleman that it was due to Colonel Jones that we should accept his statement of what he did say," yet he sets about to prove me a falsifier, and calls these men and only these to the witness-stand. He concludes with Iago in his soliloquy—

"Ay that's the way;
Dull not device by coldness and delay."

He goes to Louisville and to Covington, and sends others also, as I have been informed, to find out whether I had made the statement in those places; he might have gone to my immediate friends and relatives—my father-in-law, brothers-in-law, even my wife—and he could have heard nothing that would have made evidence, for it never existed. He is driven back to his own domicil, the sanctity of his own family, which he violates, and there he thinks he has found the material. He has even attempted to skulk behind the drapery of fair woman, and place her husband in antago-

nism to me; said even on one occasion, as I am informed, that I would have to settle the matter with a gentleman, well-known to me, of courage and honor, and the report went forth involving our names in a difficulty. But I had no apprehension that *that* gentleman would place himself in defence of anything which he did not *know* to be true, and especially against a friend. But the Governor! Oh, shade of Virginia chivalry, canst thou veil the deformity of thy degenerate son!

Look for a moment at the reason and sense of this thing. I go home and mingle with my constituents freely, have daily intercourse with gentlemen all around me in Covington and Newport, never a word about seeing a paper and names upon it for Burbridge, to them, or even in the inmost recesses of my family circle; but I am invited to the Governor's banquet, and there, before the assembled Legislature and many others, I raise this dreadful hobgoblin, and slander my colleagues, with whom I am on terms of perfect friendship. I even present the frightful apparition in the Governor's private parlor and before ladies. What the impelling motive? What the intent? Fellow-citizens, is it like the man who addresses you, or does it bear the slightest shadow of reason and truth? The motive was not with me, but facts and circumstances point in another direction.

But even if these charges which the Governor brings against me were true, which I never can admit, or I had inadvertently used any language capable of misconstruction upon so *portentous* a subject, was it becoming in him on the 10th, as he admits, and perhaps before the smoke of the engine which carried me away was lost in the air, (for I left him at the depot,) to begin to circulate his recollection of a private conversation, under the sanctity of his own roof, even if it occurred, as he pretends, before a few of his family circle? Why, if he thought there had been anything in it, or attached any importance to it, as the "dear friend of mine," which he calls himself, can you imagine that he would not have referred to it in the long conversation in the bed-room the second night, probably again and again, or on the walk to the depot in the morning, to have satisfied himself as to my words or meaning? But he never alludes to it once, by word or letter, to me from the hour it was spoken until that "haste and excitement letter" came of the 18th March. It might be well for Kentucky gentlemen to beware how they visit the "Governor's palace," for the present term at least, unless indeed their honors are insured before they enter its portals.

See the infamy. A man high in position appeals "to God and the people of Kentucky for honor, truth, fidelity, and uprightness, in both official and private life," and makes a statement which, I am convinced, *he knows* to be false, and then attempts to prove it upon one who has been his best friend. Oh, Heaven! I had not supposed that human meanness could have descended so deep. I have known this man long and well, but owe him nothing. The obligation, if any, is to me, and he knows it. I have stood by him when others faltered and abandoned. I have always overlooked his weak points, which were not few, and appreciated his stronger ones; but his present showing reveals what was probably always in him, and what now in his dilemma would "no longer down." To save himself he would tarnish the honor of his friend of twenty years, and although he oils him with his tongue, yet presents him to the people of Kentucky as a liar.

I may forgive, but never, never forget. The unpleasant memories of this friendship I throw to the dogs; the purer ones I blow to heaven.

The executive mansion of Kentucky has been occupied by illustrious names—the Shelbys, the Deshas, the Garrards, the Scotts, the Clarkes, the Letchers, the Wickliffes, the Crittendens, Moreheads, Powels, Helms, and others; but it was reserved for this ignoble son of noble Virginia first to tarnish the honor of the house. What would a man not do who has done as he? Might he not pour poison in the cup of his invited friend, or draw with deadly chloroform the breath of his sleeping guest? For what is honor but life; yea, sweeter than life itself. Has the executive mansion of Kentucky become a corner for gossip and falsehood and foul slander, to "knot and gender in?" Has the blood of the Borgias sprung from the tomb of ages, and become vivified in the person of Kentucky's Governor?

But the inquiry is now one of veracity between the Governor and myself. We are both in responsible places. I shrink not from the investigation, and invite it from infancy to present age. I call up the proud men of Virginia and Carolina, where we and our families are both well known; let them speak from boyhood to early manhood, *yes, early manhood*, and on. I call up the brave and gallant men of our adopted State, who have known us for twenty years and more, and I place before them my word and integrity as a man against his. But in this business, in which he is the arch perpetrator, has not the "mischief of his own lips" covered

him? "Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth."

I now dismiss this subject, and would fain *hope* for good and all. It has been long and tedious to me, perhaps more so to my readers. But how shall I dismiss this whilom friend, now so false and treacherous?

Hence, from my sight and memory forever! go thou—shall I say, liar, slanderer, coward?—from the presence of honest men and gentlemen; and if before this unhappy strife shall end, blood shall flow, whether I or another may fall, I brand thy brow with the blackness of Cain; wander up and down in the earth; wear the mark as long as thou livest; and when thou diest thou shalt surely so appear before thy God!

My countrymen, if in what I have said language is employed which falls upon your ears as violent and unnecessary, I ask your pardon, but beg you to reflect that it comes from a man sensitive in the extreme, who feels that a serious attempt has been made to wound his honor and blast his reputation before the State and the world. But I trust that in your judgment the coils so artfully woven around me are shivered into atoms, and that I stand before you in the sunlight of truth. But "come what, come may," I am at peace within; for as I stand before God and saints and angels, in all I have said, to the best of my knowledge, I have spoken the truth.

Falsehood and vice oft for a season prevail against truth and virtue, but I calmly and confidently abide the issue.

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again;
The eternal years of God are her's;
But error, wounded, writhes with pain,
And dies among her worshippers."

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS LAURENS JONES.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *May* 16, 1870.

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