

CAMPAIGN SPEECH

—OF—

W. D. MAYFIELD.



Compares Records With Col. Rice.

Senator Brown has Introduced No Bill to Give Relief. His only Bill was a Compulsory Education Bill.

Mr. McMahan Sings Rotation and Is a Rotator. He Wants to Spread. He Spread in the Constitutional Convention—Ordinance on Damages, Exempt Mortgages, Competency of Men to Marry, Limiting State's Lien, Protect Forests and Plant Trees, and Religious Belief.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FELLOW CITIZENS: I am a candidate for reelection to the office of State Superintendent of Education. I have three opponents—Col. Rice, Mr. McMahan and Senator Brown. I have been your State Superintendent for seven years. You are all witnesses to the fact that the schools have improved under my administration. They are not what they should be, but they can not be made better without more money. I hope to see the day when there will be in each community a good long-term school, of high grade, taught by a first-class teacher, that the boys and girls may have an opportunity at home to fit themselves for the duties of life. The great bulk of our boys and girls are confined to our common schools for all the education they will ever get; but few of them will ever see the inside of a college, and it therefore follows that our common schools should be provided for more liberally and made to meet the wants of the people. Only this will give our people satisfaction and prevent the country from be-

ing deserted for the cities and towns. But such schools can only be had with money. I have year after year appealed in vain to the Legislature to give more money. We have done the best we could with the money given us. My recommendations, in 1895, for more money, were almost literally adopted by the Constitutional Convention and we are now getting more money, but not enough to give the length of session and kind of schools wanted by our people. This can never be given them without sufficient money. You are sensible men and know what I have said is the truth. The gentlemen opposing me speak as if they had healing in their wings and that their election would cure your ills and give you the relief you need, but I tell you that only a sufficient amount of money can give you the schools you need, it matters not which one of us is elected. I would not have you think I can give them to you without the money, for I know I cannot, and I do not wish to deceive you.

I succeeded Col Rice, who held the office for four years and is now opposing me. He made a good officer. He had his policy and did good work. Every general plans his battle. Col. Rice's plan of battle was a good one, if it had been possible to execute it. But he realized later that one man could not execute it, as shown by the following extract from one of his annual messages to the Legislature, viz.:

"Two years ago I thought the County office might be abolished and we could select eight or ten good men for the entire State, giving them a field coterminous with the judicial districts. These men could be paid \$1,500, or more, and would furnish a splendid body of evangelists to press home this dominant question of elementary education. Such a body of vigorous young men, traveling over the entire State, would acquire a most thorough, practical knowledge of the necessities of the work and wants of the people. They should constitute a most valuable State Board of Education; they could gather facts which the State Superintendent would have leisure to organize. For him to work this State annually is largely a test of muscle. His salary goes to roads and innkeepers, and his energies are exhausted by constant and crowded appointments. The idea is, therefore, a very attractive one. It can only be formulated if the amendment as to School Commissioners be carried and ratified. With some experience and a careful examination of the ground I believe we still need a good man in every County; one always at work, and whose claims for compensation should be examined by the grand jury and paid only on their order. The jurors are his neighbors, patrons of his schools, and necessarily familiar with the details of his work. All teachers should be required to attend County Institutes, their pay to go on during the week of their presence, provided the schools are in session."

It should be remembered that this was in the days of free passes. If Col. Rice found that it took his salary then to partially execute

his plan, and that it was "simply a test of muscle," how could he execute it now? That is, it is an impossibility for him to visit the schools of the State, do the same work forty men are expected to do, and that on \$200, the amount appropriated each year for his traveling expenses. He has said on this campaign that it would take half of his salary each year to execute it. I am sure the people of this State do not expect an officer to spend his salary in executing the duties of the office. I can not afford to do so. I must support my family. If the salary is to be spent in executing the duties of the office, as under his plan, I can not hold the office.

I have had my policy. It differs considerably from Col Rice's. I have planned and operated according to the circumstances which have surrounded me. I flatter myself that my administration compares favorably with Col. Rice's, or that of any of my predecessors. It can not be truthfully said that the schools have in any particular suffered under me.

No measures are proposed by the gentlemen opposing my re-election for the improvement of the schools. I am inclined to the opinion that you would prefer to have them tell you what they propose before you vote for them and against me. The only way in my judgment to improve the schools is to provide more money and better teachers. More money will increase the length of the session and better teachers will improve the teaching service. Is not this true? Is it not the only way to improve your schools? You are sensible men and know that it is. More money will give longer sessions and better teachers will improve the service is now and has always been my policy. Do they propose any thing which would bring more money or better teachers? Not a thing. They cannot show that the schools have suffered under my administration, for the record shows to the contrary. Both private and State colleges, academies, high, graded and common schools—schools of every class—have made great improvement since I have been in office. Then, if the schools have not suffered at my hands, and they suggest no improvement over my management, their pleas for a change are based on an imaginary expectation or want of office.

Let us look at the situation for a moment. I succeeded Col. Rice, one of my opponents, who had just closed an administration of four years. When I took charge every County school in the State, except two, which had been closed by legislative enactment, in order that they might get on a cash basis, was in debt and running on a credit. Under my policy, without closing the schools in a single County, or shortening their sessions, (in fact, the sessions have been lengthened,) about two-thirds of the Counties have been put on a cash basis and, after paying every claim for the year, they have from \$2,000 to \$10,000 cash on hand. Do the gentlemen running against me make any suggestion which would be an improvement on this part of my policy? Not one.

Since Col. Rice turned over to me in the Fall of 1890, under my policy, year after year have school houses been built, until now all the white schools, except about six hundred, have their own houses. Do my opponents condemn this policy, or suggest an improvement? They do not. Many of the houses ought to be improved, and new ones built for the schools without houses, and this the trustees should and will do just as soon as there is money in hand which can be spared for the purpose.

The establishment of graded schools, high schools and academies, so as to fill in the gap between the colleges and the common schools as far as practicable, has been encouraged by me as the large number established since Col. Rice turned over to me witnesseth. Do my opponents condemn this policy, or suggest a single improvement? Not a word from them on the subject. The enrollment under my administration has increased seventy-five thousand over what it was under Col. Rice's, and there is no criticism or suggested improvement of my policy on this line made by either of my opponents. The standard for teachers has been raised gradually year by year, and notwithstanding this fact there were employed last year over two thousand first grade white teachers, less than seven hundred second and only about two hundred and fifty third. Every thing that could be done for their improvement has been done. Each year teachers' institutes have been held in many Counties, and this year they will be in every County in the State except three. These institutes are almost entirely without cost to the Counties. Dr. Curry, General Agent of the Peabody Fund, is a strong believer in the good to be accomplished by institute work and annually makes a liberal contribution for this purpose from this fund. The ablest educators in the State are employed by me to conduct them. My opponents do not criticise my policy on this line, nor do they make a single suggestion as an improvement. So, the policy that has marked my administration from the beginning to the present, and under which prosperity in all lines of school work has manifested itself so clearly that it is to be observed by all, and disputed by none, has been such that it has not been criticised by my opponents and they suggest no improvements.

The school officers and teachers have performed their duty faithfully and well, notwithstanding Mr. Brown's insinuations to the contrary. The enrollment has increased; more and better houses have been built; the sessions have grown longer; there is more general and more special tax levied; the trustees are as faithful as could be wished for; the chief school officer, in many of the Counties, is better qualified, and all are as faithful; the teaching corps has greatly improved, and the greatest pains and most ample opportunity possible for their advancement has been given them, and the teachers have been as faithful to duty as heart could wish for; the number of graded, high and supplemental schools have largely increased and are fast bridging the gap

between the common schools and the colleges; the interest in higher education has increased and all the colleges are better attended. Who can say this is not true? These gentlemen opposing me will not do so, nor will they say one word in praise of what has been done. They speak as if the whole school system will go to destruction if they are not elected. What a terrible calamity this would be!

Senator W. A. Brown, one of my opponents, has at last waked up. He now stands before the people and says the standard of the schools should be raised and that the people should not be forced to leave their country homes in order to educate their children. This is what I have been saying each year in my annual report, and he must have been reading what I said. How strange this very great interest, so recently developed, on his part? Why, fellow citizens, Senator Brown has been Chairman of the Committee on Education in the Senate for the last six years and my annual report has each year been referred to his committee, and although I have made demand upon demand for help for you that your schools might be improved he has never taken the first step, or introduced a single bill, to give you any relief whatever. Last winter I reported that there was seventy thousand dollars Dispensary school money on hand and asked that a law be passed authorizing its distribution, and at the very last of the session, no bill having been introduced by him, I had to get another man to introduce a bill and engineer its passage. How greatly interested he is now, since he is a candidate, but how little interested he was then. He is awfully solicitous now, but he has never introduced a single bill to give you relief during his four years in the House and his six years in the Senate, though he has been annually asked to do so and has been chairman of the committee since he has been in the Senate. Is it not a wonder that his solicitude for the education of the children could have remained pent up so long? But he wants office now. The only bill Mr. Brown ever introduced, of his own accord, so far as I know or ever heard of, was his bill providing for compulsory education in this State. He is wedded to the idea that we should have compulsory education. Compulsory education may do in some States but it would not do in this one. There are in this State, of school age, five hundred and one thousand children. One hundred and eighty-eight thousand (188,000) are white and three hundred and thirteen thousand (313,000) colored. Of the one hundred and eighty-eight thousand (188,000) white there were in the public schools last year one hundred and nineteen thousand (119,000), leaving sixty-eight thousand (68,000) not in the public schools, but many thousands of these, perhaps fully one half, were in private schools and colleges, which leave some thirty or thirty-five thousand white children not in any school. There are more than two thousand colored children not in any school. He is willing to force all these children on the schools but he is not willing to give an additional dollar

to their support, judging from his past record. To force all these children into the schools would be impossible. More houses and more teachers would be required. To provide these would require more money, which means higher taxes, or else the sessions must be shortened. Are you willing to do either? If you are, vote for Mr. Brown. Do you want compulsory education? If you do, vote for Mr. Brown, for he is the advocate and apostle of this doctrine. Do you want the doctrine of compulsory education pressed on you and your people? If you do, vote for Mr. Brown, for he has already tried to pass a bill through the Legislature and, if elected, no doubt will advocate the doctrine wherever he goes among your people.

My other opponent is Mr. McMahan. He sings the old, old song of rotation in office. He does not seem to know that this doctrine does not apply to school officers. Massachusetts has the best system of schools of any State and she has not changed her State Superintendent in thirty-six years. New York has elected the same State Superintendent for a number of terms irrespective of whether the Legislature was Democratic or Republican. All the States with the best systems hold on to their school officers. Such is the policy of the United States government. President Cleveland, during his first term, upon the death of Mr. Eaton, appointed W. T. Harris United States Commissioner of Education, and every President since has reappointed him. The superintendents of graded schools are seldom changed and the presidents of colleges rarely ever. Note the cases of Dr. Carlisle, of Wofford, Dr. Grier, of Erskine, and Dr. Furman and Dr. Manley, formerly of Furman University. It is a low idea that places public office below the fact that it was created for the purpose of securing public service. So long as the people get the service it makes no difference to them who holds the office. Rotation is impossible and is the song of the "outs." There are more than seventy-five thousand white male citizens in this State who are old enough to hold this office, and to rotate and give each man one year would take seventy-five thousand years. So you see it is impossible and is only the song of the "outs." So long as proper service is rendered there is no reason for a change. The effort has been, and ought to be, to divorce education from politics. But while Mr. McMahan cries out for rotation he fails to tell the people that he rotated around and around in one office for seven years—just the length of time I have been your superintendent—and now that he has passed out of that he wants another office. He wants a bigger office that he may have an opportunity to spread himself. He says he was an instructor in the South Carolina College but quit there and went to the law. I suppose he thought the law would afford him an opportunity to spread. He says, after practicing for a time, he returned to the South Carolina College as an instructor. I suppose he

failed to spread at the law as he thought he would. He concluded to return to public office and again took shelter in the South Carolina College. He says he concluded to again leave the South Carolina College and to run for State Superintendent of Education. I suppose he was again unable to spread and he thought, if he only had a new field, how he could spread. He is nearly thirty-three years old and unmarried and he has been unable to spread to suit himself. While the world is full of men who have made opportunities for themselves he thinks he must have an office that he may reveal to the world what great things within him lie. He wants a big office that he may spread big. We always like to have an idea of what we may expect. We judge a man by what he has done, usually. So, if Mr. McMahan should be elected, we imagine that there will be many radical changes. He will spread things. Just what they will be, or what he will do, no man can now tell. He says he wants to spread himself. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention and spread himself there. He introduced quite a number of ordinances, not one of which passed, as I remember now. He introduced one to make a County "liable in damages to a family, or any actual dependent, of any person unlawfully killed within its bounds." Such a law would keep the Counties all the time paying damages. He spread. He introduced another "to exempt mortgages on real estate from taxation." This would force the landowner to pay full taxes and exempt the mortgage holder from all taxes. He spread. He introduced another "to empower the Legislature to enact laws regulating the competency of men to marry." He wanted to have them examined by a board of physicians. He spread. He introduced another "limiting the duration of the State's lien for taxes." He spread. He introduced another "to protect and foster the forests of the State and to regulate the destruction of timber and the planting of trees." He spread. He introduced another that "no person shall be debarred from being a witness; or a juryman, or from voting, or holding office, or from any other right or privilege enjoyed by any other citizen of this State, on account of his opinion respecting religion." This means that atheists and infidels should not be discriminated against by law. He did spread. Judging from the ordinances introduced in the Constitutional Convention by him there is no telling what he would do if he were turned loose and allowed to spread himself. There is his ordinance to render Counties liable to damages, to exempt mortgages, competency to marry, limiting State's lien, to regulate destruction of timber and the planting of trees, and to protect atheists and infidels. If these are fair samples of his idea of spreading there is no telling what strange things he would introduce into the schools were he elected. If you want spreading after this manner, vote for Mr. McMahan. If you want to take chances and allow him to put into force the many new

ideas he says he has on education (spreading, I suppose,) vote for Mr. McMahan.

I am much obliged to you for your attention. I can only promise you a continuance of a business, progressive administration if I am again re-elected. The progress in the work will at all times be commensurate with, and only limited by, the amount of money for school purposes. The promises of my opponents to visit all the schools are vote catchers only. They would have to visit about sixty schools each school day to get around. Besides \$200 wout allow it and that is all that is given for that purpose.

I thank you for your support in the past and will thank you for it again.