

# KLAN HAS HARD TIME IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Probably Has Fewer Than  
5,000 Members Among  
180,000 White Voters.

## PEOPLE 'FAIRLY' CONTENTED

State Administrations Have Held  
Taxes Down and Residents  
Are Tolerant.

*Special to The New York Times.*

COLUMBIA, S. C., Nov. 18.—The most un-American State in the Union, as measured by the Ku Klux Klan standard, is South Carolina. Here in the State of nullification, Calhoun, the Butlers, Wade Hampton and Ben Tillman, the Klan is absolutely impotent. Out of more than 180,000 white voters, it is probable that if all the members of the hooded horde were counted they would be less than five thousand.

In a two days' investigation, few of the score of well-informed residents with whom THE TIMES correspondent talked placed the Klan strength at more than 10,000. In two-thirds of the counties evidently there are no Klansmen at all, and in the other third the number is insignificant as compared to the total population.

"There are probably a few Klans in the State," said former Governor Richard I. Manning, but they are so few in number and their strength so negligible that South Carolina has not had the time to take them seriously. The gist of the situation, so far as this State is concerned, is that our people are fairly contented. We are coming out of the woods, and, that being so, we have been busy getting our house in order and working out a program for the betterment in every way of all of our people. Maybe that is the answer to the question as to why the Klan is said to have made no headway in this State."

Thomas C. McLeod, the Governor of the State, as did former Governor Manning, emphasized the soundness of the South Carolina situation, and when asked if he was of the opinion that there are as many as 10,000 "masked knights" in the State, he gave it as his opinion that that number was excessive.

The only two instances in which the Klan issue has been raised was in the recent city election in Charleston and in the ambushing of a farmer in Horry County. In both cases the evidence shows that the charge of Klan influence was not based on facts.

### Fails to Win On Klan Cry.

In Charleston, John P. Grace, the former Mayor, a follower of former Governor Blease and prominent in Irish-American and Anti-British propaganda activities, charged during the campaign that the Ku Klux Klan was behind the effort to unseat him. It was an eleventh hour effort on his part to rally the Catholics and Jews of the city to his support. He was badly defeated and the voters who retired him to private life included some of the leading citizens of the Catholic and Jewish faiths. So in that instance, the Klan issue failed of substantiation.

The young Horry County farmer had closed up a private road through his farm. He received several threatening letters signed "K. K. K." He paid no attention to them, but one day while he was on his way home he was fired on from ambush, and the horse he was driving ran away. The farmer was wounded, but not seriously. The men who committed the crime were promptly apprehended, tried before a Horry County jury, convicted and sent to prison, and all the facts show that the Klan, as elsewhere in the State, is practically without strength or influence in that county. There was no evidence that those who committed the crime were even members of the masked organization.

That the Klan has tried to organize South Carolina, however, is undisputed. The missionaries of the masked tribe have been in all parts of the State, but they found the going hard from the start. They were not long in finding out that the people of South Carolina do not, as a rule, think the same way as do a lot of their fellow-citizens in the neighboring States of Georgia and Alabama.

The South Carolinians simply would not join the Klan, and that was all there was to it. Some of the oldest Jewish families in the United States live in South Carolina. They have been here for generations, have held high office; they fought for the Confederacy, and the average South Carolinian refused to brand them as un-American. The same was true of the Catholics of Charleston, Columbia and the other cities in the State, where there are many upstanding citizens of the Catholic faith.

It appears that South Carolina is the only State in the South without a Dragon. There may be a Cyclops or two at large, but if so, THE TIMES correspondent has failed to find anybody who ever heard of them. As a young Columbia banker expressed it, "We may have a Goblin here and there, and we may even have some furies in isolated localities, but, if so, I don't know where they are, or who they are."

### Tom Watson Prepared the Soil.

The fact that the Klan is strong in Georgia and practically without strength of any kind here in South Carolina probably is due to past political conditions in the two States.

The late Tom Watson, more than any other man, was probably responsible for the great growth of the masked order on the other side of the Savannah. Watson preached anti-Catholicism for years, and in the controversy over the Leo Frank case he was one of the leaders in the anti-Jewish agitation in Georgia. The result was that when the Klan came along the soil in numerous localities was ready for the seed, although, as stated in THE NEW YORK TIMES yesterday, the Klan, even in Georgia, does not include, according to the best evidence obtainable, more than one-third of the electorate.

On the other hand, South Carolina has not developed any agitators of the Watson type. About the time Watson was at the zenith of his influence in Georgia, Benjamin R. Tillman came to the front in South Carolina and for many years dictated the political affairs of the State. Tillman, however, was tolerant, and among his supporters were men of the Jewish and Catholic religions. "Old Ben," his followers say, never would have stood for the Klan as now organized.

Then, of course, there has been the influence of such men as former Governor Manning, George S. Cromer, Governor McLeod, former Governor Hayward and a host of other influential Carolinians. The men in the last decade have steered the Carolina ship of state in a way so efficient that today the State debt of South Carolina is less than \$6,000,000. So it is that, while other States are having their Klan battles, South Carolina is planning a program for the further relief of her people, especially the farmers. They are now considering a proposition which will probably take the tax off farm lands for a period of years, or until the farmers have had a chance to get on their feet again.

Again, South Carolina has steered clear of the road building craze that has played such havoc with the farmers and other land owners in Arkansas, and to a lesser degree in some other States. In Arkansas millions in taxes were piled against the land for roads, while the people who pay the taxes had no word to say about them. In South Carolina they have built a splendid system of top soil roads, and the cost has not exceeded an average of \$3,000 a mile. The roads have been constructed on the "pay as you go" plan. There is talk of a State road bond issue of \$50,000,000, but two-thirds of all the people must vote for the issue before it can be negotiated.

"We will never have in South Carolina any of this road district business, such as they have in Arkansas," said Governor McLeod.

In other words, South Carolina is working to reduce taxes all the time. That is why the State is apparently so contented, and that is also the principal reason why the Ku Klux Klan has failed so utterly to make any headway in the Palmetto State, it is contended by those in a position to appraise public sentiment.