

The Times-D

WHOLE NUMBER, 17,241.

RICHMOND, VA., SUNDAY, JULY 1, 1906.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

"OULD NOT LET BUTTON QUALIFY

orporation Commission
Refuses to Recognize
Commissioner.

IT HELD TO BE UNCONSTITUTIONAL

Least Grave Doubt of Legality
Expressed—For That Reason
Commission Declines
to Act Under It—Col.
Button is Un-
decided.

Only the expected happened yesterday when the Corporation Commission declined to allow Colonel Joseph Button to qualify as Insurance Commissioner, to which office the recent Legislature had elected him.

Colonel Button has for some months been diligently preparing himself for the work of the newly created office, having visited New York and other cities in studying the duties of the position to accept which he resigned the clerkship of the State Senate, an office he had held many years.

Recently while in New York City, he was invited by Mr. Thomas F. Ryan to make a trip to Europe, and in order to take the oath of office, Colonel Button was forced to hasten back to this country.

The officers of the Insurance Commissioners are all ready and waiting, the furniture having been put in place and the name painted upon the doors. Mr. Jacob Brenaman has been appointed Clerk to the commissioners at a salary of \$1,000, and there remained but the formality of taking the oath before the Corporation Commission before the new office would be open for business.

Colonel Button alone visited the Corporation Commission room shortly before midday yesterday and formally asked permission to take the oath of office and to present his bond for the faithful performance of his duties.

The commission declined to comply with the request and stated its reasons in the formal order and letter, which are printed below.

Quotation of Law.
The question arises whether the insurance law, giving the right to appoint an Insurance Commissioner, whether the appointment rests in hands of the Corporation Commission or the question arises in the language of our Constitution, section 5, of the act on Corporation Commission which does:

The General Assembly may establish within the department, and subject to the supervision and control of the commission, subordinate divisions, or bureaus, of insurance, life or other special branches of business of that department."

Legislature acting under this section created the Department of Insurance and elected Colonel Button as Insurance Commissioner at a salary of \$1,000 and power to appoint a clerk and to draw directly on the treasury for all expenses of the office. Colonel Button was the patron of the bill, was opposed by Senator (Judge) one of the ablest lawyers in state formerly on the Supreme Court on the ground that the Legislature had no right under the law to a commissioner who was subject to and under the control of the Corporation Commission.

Commission takes this action to its rights in the matter.

No Unpleasantness.

At no time any unpleasantness in the interview between the commissioners and Colonel Button. In this matter one of the commissioners

replies to the question, "What is the purpose of the appointment?"

He says that the appointment is legal, we have to say,

nothing unfriendly in the commission, for it is on pleasant terms with members of the Corporation Commission.

The matter was solely a legal matter, which required for the good of

the Insurance Com-

missioners and therefore no objection upon his appointment.

Undecided.

It has been seen just as he home near Lynchburg referred not to determine what he had not given it exactly what he

the Corporation Commission came in the case. It is true the members of the Legislature did not vote on the appointment, but

that I shall

make, never any

says that imply

that he voted.

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