

Title:Page 05

Category:GEORGIA GOVERNOR JOHN SLATON

the dignity of her laws, and if the choice must be made between the approbation of citizens of other States and the enforcement of our laws against offenders, whether powerful or weak, we must choose the latter alternative.

Mobs.

It is charged that the court and jury were terrorized by a mob and the jury was coerced into their verdict.

I expect to present the facts in this case with absolute fairness and to state conditions with regard only to the truth.

When Frank was indicted and the air was filled with rumors as to the murder and mutilation of the dead girl, there was intense feeling and to such an extent that my predecessor, Governor Brown, stated in argument before me that he had the military ready to protect the defendant in the event any attack was made. No such attack was made, and from the evidence that he obtained, none was contemplated.

Some weeks after this, the defendant was put on trial. Georgia probably has the broadest provisions for change of venue in criminal cases that exist in any State. Our law permits the judge to change the venue on his own motion, in the event he thinks a fair trial cannot be given in any county. The defendant can move for a change of venue on the same ground, and if it be refused, the refusal of the judge is subject to an immediate appeal to the Supreme Court, and in fact, the entire genius of our law demands a fair trial absolutely free from external influence.

Frank went to trial without asking for a change of venue and submitted his case to a jury that was acceptable to him. He was ably represented by counsel of conspicuous ability and experience.