

Vote-buying was the norm

Looking back, from page C1

election day, was told that there was none for sale in town as all had been bought the day before to butter sandwiches for floaters — for it would seem that even the Hoosier floater cannot live by free whiskey alone.

“Yet the latter was liberally supplied, as Bloomingtonians know to their cost, since drunken floaters, penned up in a woodshed, caused a fire in the night which destroyed half a block of buildings and threatened with destruction a large part of the town.”

Did Professor Dabney get carried away and play fast and loose with the truth? Apparently he did not ex-

aggerate. On Nov. 12 the Republican **Progress** reported that the fire destroyed the Orchard House, a hotel, and several other businesses. Commented the newspaper, “It is stated that a stove had been temporarily placed in the wood shed (behind the Orchard House) to keep warm some creatures that were being detained there till morning, and that the fire was in some manner communicated from that. At all events, the stove and these “gentlemen” were there.”

Next week: Reform and the 1905 election