

BENNETT SCORES CHIEF JOE DEPEW IN PUBLIC LETTER

"Drop Position, Bring Your Gun, I'll Meet You Half- way," He Says.

A scathing letter that might be construed as a challenge to a duel, was addressed yesterday by Leo E. Bennett, former mayor of Muskogee, to Joseph Depew, chief of police. Copies of the letter were sent by Mr. Bennett to the mayor and every member of the city council.

The arrest of an auctioneer upon the streets and subsequent developments at police headquarters led Mr. Bennett to write the letter. He says he was greeted with a smile on the part of the chief of police.

subordinates caused the letter to be written.

Mr. Bennett last night did not care to discuss the incident. It was learned, however, that he, upon seeing the man thrown into the patrol wagon, asked the cause of the arrest. Upon learning that the auctioneer, Joe Mason, had been taken to headquarters on the charge of blockading the streets, although he possessed a city license giving him permission to sell his goods upon the highways, Mr. Bennett interested himself in the man's behalf and hastened to headquarters.

It is understood that there he was told the matter was "none of his business," and that if he wanted to make trouble to "just start something." Mr. Bennett, it is said, told Chief Depew that he respected the law, that Depew was an officer and that he would withdraw. He would, however, he is said to have told Depew, express to him later what he thought of his treatment. The letter, which is as follows, was written immediately afterwards:

"Muskogee, Okla., April 18, 1914.
"Mr. Jos. DePew,
"Chief of Police,
"Muskogee, Okla.

"Dear Sir:—When I visited your office (a public place of business) to make bond, if needed, for a citizen of Muskogee who had been arrested by your personal orders, and against whom no complaint in writing had been presented, you saw proper to make a grand stand play with a gun upon your person, surrounded by armed satellites, and with a semblance of law to back you to offer a gratuitous insult to those interested.

(Continued on Page Three.)

BENNETT SCORES CHIEF JOE DEPEW IN PUBLIC LETTER

(Continued from Page One.)

"Neither the 'gun' you carried on your person, nor the 'guns' of your hangers-on, but the majesty of law alone prevented the writer from then and there properly resenting your insolence which evidenced your utter unworthiness to be an officer of the law, as men understand such positions.

"So I want to say to you in language which is understandable that if this wholly uncalled for insult to a citizen was directed toward or intended for the writer, that it is fully resented, and that whether your wear your 'gun' or are surrounded by your emissaries similarly equipped, if you care to lay aside your official position you will be met half way anywhere and at any time you may designate, and in any way you may name.

"As one taxpaying citizen of Muskogee I desire to denounce your conduct today in the arrest and detention, but more than all in your subsequent uncalled for threats against an humble citizen of Muskogee, as most contemptible and cowardly, which conduct and language would take from you your official position before today's sun goes down if your conduct was not 'supported' by those whom you help to 'support'.

"I think enough has been said, that while I like you personally your official conduct was such today as to

inspire my utter contempt for you as an officer of the law.

"LEO E. BENNETT."

ANOTHER SHIP SALES
KEY WEST

TEMPLETON, AN ACTIVE FOR FORTY-THREE YEARS

Ex-Chief John L. Templeton of the Muskogee fire department was replaced yesterday by A. W. Smalley, sergeant of the police force. The change was ordered by Commissioner of Public Safety W. N. Patterson. Chief Templeton was immediately placed on the pension list.

With the characteristic smile that he has worn for the eight years that he has served the city of Muskogee as head of the department, the grayed old veteran of many fire battles accepted his dismissal.

Chief Templeton, 58 years old, has been a fireman for forty-three years, thirty-one years an active chief. He was chief of the Council Bluffs, Iowa, fire department for nineteen years.

The chief was born in Holt county, Mo., April 11, 1857. His father was a Virginian, his mother a Kentuckian, but he declares he will be an Oklahoman and will stay in Muskogee.