

THE CONCERT OF Mrs. Stradley's school, under the direction and instruction of Miss Minnie Kittrell, will take place at the Orphan Asylum, on the evening of the 25th inst., at 7 1/2 o'clock.

MORE ABOUT THE TRIP.

Not the least pleasant feature of our recent trip, was the great kindness manifested towards the orphans by the children at the various places at which we stopped. The most difficult task we had to perform was to meet the requests of the kind little girls and boys for some of the orphans to stay with them. In this respect the demand was entirely beyond the supply, and we were often seriously puzzled in trying to comply with these urgent solicitations without appearing to be partial. The children, too, generally came to the Concerts prepared to take an active part in the contributions to the orphans, by bringing with them a part, and sometimes all, of their candy, top, and marble fund to go into the hat.

The ladies, too, were exceedingly kind and attentive to the children wherever we stopped, providing for their comfort in every possible way, and thus relieving the Steward of much anxiety and trouble. At Battleboro a number of ladies, among whom we remember the names of Mrs. Rosaline Stewart, Misses Etta and Bettie Mayner, Mrs. Fred. Taylor, Miss Kate Taylor, Mrs. Irene Herbert and Mrs. B. B. Guion, made up a number of garments of new material for the girls; a very timely and welcome present. At many other places the ladies were particularly thoughtful of the comfort and convenience of our little band, for which we were very grateful.

Indeed, every body, young and old, ladies and gentlemen, seemed anxious to manifest their good will wherever we went. Such an abundance of presents were bestowed upon the children that the purchase of two additional trunks was necessary to put them in, and we were often obliged to interfere to prevent the children making themselves sick by overcharging their stomachs with nick-nacks and confectioneries that were sometimes rather injudiciously bestowed upon them.

We should like to make special acknowledgment to every friend along the route for the care manifested to make our trip pleasant and successful, but it would make such a long list that we should not have room for it. To the officers of the two Railroads over which we traveled were we indebted for many courtesies, for which we desire to offer thanks.

Whenever we become weary of the labors and monotonous routine of home duties hereafter, we shall ask no more welcome relaxation than to make a similar excursion over the same line and meet with the same kind friends and warm reception that rendered our recent trip so pleasant.

CUMBERLAND AHEAD.

The citizens of Cumberland have from the first been liberal supporters of the orphan work. Several times the way has seemed very dark before us till day light broke in from Fayetteville. The Cumberland orphans are making good progress, and we hope to send back some useful citizens in grateful return for the constant kindness of those noble and generous people.



THE ORPHAN ASYLUM AT OXFORD, N. C.

The above is a very good miniature representation of the main building of the Oxford Orphan Asylum, formerly St. John's College, a building well adapted to the use for which it was originally intended and that to which it is now appropriated. It occupies a position near the northern limits of the town of Oxford, on a gentle eminence, surrounded by a splendid grove of white oaks, and is one of the most beautiful locations for an institution of the kind in the State.

This building was erected some twenty-five years ago by the Grand Lodge of Masons of North Carolina, and was intended for a College of high grade. Owing to the war, want of proper endowment and other untoward circumstances the intentions of the Fraternity were never realized, but schools of very high grade were kept up in it for a number of years. But it became apparent to the benevolent order under whose auspices it was organized, that the capital invested in it was not doing as much good as it might if otherwise employed, and hence, at the meeting of the Grand Lodge in December, 1872, the subject of making some disposition of the property was introduced in the shape of a resolution for its sale either to the State or to private individuals.

To this resolution the present Superintendent offered a substitute setting apart the building as "an Asylum for the protection, training and education of indigent orphan children." The proposition was adopted and the resolution, as amended, passed, the Grand Lodge appropriating five hundred dollars to aid in the enterprise, the balance of its support to be derived from charitable donations.

The present Superintendent, J. H. Mills, was elected to the position he now holds, at that session of the Grand Lodge, and has been reflected at each succeeding annual communication since.

Steps were immediately commenced to carry out the will and intention of the Grand Lodge, and on the 20th day of February 1873, the first three orphans were admitted into the institution. Since then two hundred and sixty seven of the indigent and helpless orphans of the State have been received, many of whom have been instructed in the rudiments of an English education and sent out to good homes with a fair prospect of success in life; many have been returned to their relations whose condition have so improved as to enable them to take care of them, and there are now one hundred and sixteen at the Oxford Asylum, and twenty-four at the branch at Mars Hill, under the

care of the institution.

Since its organization the Asylum has passed through some prosperous and some gloomy experiences, but the children have never been reduced to absolute suffering for food, although there have been times when such a condition might have been seriously apprehended by those not having a strong faith in the providence of God and a firm reliance upon the christian charity of the people, especially that charity which acts as a cement in binding together the members of the churches and the benevolent societies of the day. The past winter and present spring has been, perhaps, the hardest season through which the institution has passed since its organization, but its prospects are now becoming somewhat brighter. The Grand Master's circular to the Lodges and the kindly offices of the State press in bringing the condition of the Asylum before the public, are producing results which we hope will soon relieve its friends from the anxiety that has for some months weighed them down.

Whether this property will eventually be taken hold of and made a State institution for the care of that helpless class, which should be as peculiarly the subjects of state charity as any other, remains to be seen. We believe it will, because religion, humanity and State interest all demand it. No appropriation could promise a better return to the State in good and useful citizens, on the one hand, or prove more effectual in dunning up the sources of vice and crime, on the other.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

From what we see in the papers throughout this and adjoining States, we are led to conclude that the centennial celebration of the "Mecklenburg Declaration," which comes off to-morrow in Charlotte, will be a grand affair. It is no infringement of the characteristic modesty of the good people of the State thus to claim and to celebrate what they are justly entitled to, that of being the descendants of patriots who were the first to declare their separation from a government that recognized only to oppress and tyrannize over them. We hope the weather and everything else may be favorable to the occasion to-morrow, and that the fire of patriotism may be so enkindled in the breasts of our people, especially of our young men, as to induce them to revere their mother State more, step at home, stand by her in her present struggles, and aid in placing her where she belongs—in the front rank of her sister commonwealths.

My father was the North Wind,
My mother's name was Water;
Parson Winter married them,
And I'm their pretty daughter.

KNITTING.

Perhaps the girls and, may-be, old ladies, too, who read the ORPHANS' FRIEND, would like to hear something about the beginning and progress of the art of knitting. We believe the ladies generally do not like knitting as well as they do some other kinds of household work, but many of them, who are industriously inclined, keep knitting on hand to fill up odd moments with employment, and to take along with them when they go a-visiting, because it is a convenient kind of work. This custom, however, is mostly observed in the country—seldom or never in towns or cities.

At what time the art of forming garments by the continued looping of a single thread, was first practiced on the continent of Europe, is not exactly known, but we learn from history that knitted stockings, or hose, as they were at first called, were first used by our English ancestors about the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Prior to this time the people of England, even the king and his nobility, wore hose of cloth cut to fit the foot and leg and sewed together. Howell, in his History of the World, says that King Henry the VIII continually wore this kind of hose, "except there came from Spain, by chance, a pair of silk stockings." We are told by the same historian that King Edward, son of Henry, was presented by his merchant with a pair of long silk stockings, and the present "was much taken notice of." Mrs. Montague made a present of a pair of black silk stockings to Queen Elizabeth, and she was so pleased with them that she would wear no cloth hose afterward.

The cloth hose which preceded knitted stockings, covered not only the feet and legs, but the whole of the lower part of the body. As intimated above, the art of knitting was known on the continent a long time before it was introduced into England. Buchanan, in his history of inventions, mentions an association or "guild" of knitters in France as early as the year 1527, which shows that the art had been in existence long before that period.

The first mention of stocking knitting in England dates about 1590. William Lee who was expelled from St. John's College, Cambridge, for getting married, found himself in such reduced circumstances as to be dependent upon the proceeds of his wife's stocking knitting, mainly, for subsistence. He set about the invention of a machine by which the work might be more expeditiously performed. He succeeded in inventing a machine, but met with little success or encouragement in his native country, and took his machine to France. What encouragement he met with we are not told. He died in 1610, and his workmen took the machine back to England, where, after a time it was noticed and introduced into use in London and vicinity, and soon after into Nottingham, which place, from then until the present time, has been noted for the vast amount of its manufactures in this line. Various improvements have since been made on these "stocking frames," as they were called, and last year there were over fifty thousand of them in operation in England, and in Nottingham alone forty thousand persons were employed in this branch of manufacture.

At first these machines only made the plain flat web, from which the stockings were cut in

the proper shape and sewed together. Improvements were afterward made by which a circular web was knitted, and the heel and foot were formed. These improved machines were introduced into the United States by a German who settled in Connecticut about 1835.

Many improvements have been made in this industry since the introduction of the old Lee machine. In 1831, Timothy Baily succeeded in applying power to the old machine of Lee, since which time the production of hosiery has been changed from a domestic to a factory industry, and numerous articles besides hosiery are produced by them. We have no doubt that knitting machines will soon become as common in private houses as sewing machines are now, which will give the ladies, especially mothers of large families of boys, another broad slice of an incoming domestic millenium.

NOT BY A LONG ODDS!

The Steward of the Orphan Asylum has never been ambitious of having "a handle to his name," he has sometimes been called "Captain" and even "Colonel," by casual acquaintances who seemed to think it the correct thing, fashionable and all that, for every man to be designated by some high sounding military prefix, but he never had the least just claim to such distinction and never desired to have. A great many years ago, the Legislature of North Carolina gave him a local right to put J. P. after his name when attached to certain ominous documents, but this was when he was young and unexperienced, and he looks back upon those days with no feeling of elation.

But the Toisnot Transcript of last week gives him another and a more honorable title, when it says "Rev. Mr. Moore, Assistant Superintendent of the Oxford Orphan Asylum," &c., to which prefix he has no claim at all. If his department at Toisnot was such as to make a favorable impression he is glad, but he is not a Reverend. The Superintendent is frequently addressed as "Rev.," though not in orders, and he has heretofore notified the public through the FRIEND to that effect, but if it be necessary that somebody here must have that distinction, the Steward turns it over to him, hoping, however, that none of our good natured institutions of learning may dub either of us with D.D. without further and more particular inquiry.

Two new parlor amusements are thus described: Two players are closely blinded with a bandage made of their pocket-handkerchiefs. Each one is provided with a saucer full of cake or cracker crumbs, which is held in the left hand, and a spoon which is held in the right hand. A sheet is spread upon the floor, upon which the players sit, and at a given signal they begin to feed each other. Their efforts to find each other's mouths with their spoons never fail to afford much sport. Another amusing experiment is to try to blow out a candle blindfolded. The candle is placed upon a table, up to which a player is led; he then walks back six steps, turns round three times, and walks forward as nearly in the direction of the candle as possible, and tries to blow it out. If he happens to wander to the wrong part of the room, the effect of the blowing is very funny.