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THE TAR HEEL.

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION.

Vol. 9.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, CHAPEL HILL, N. C., March 11, 1901.

NO. 19

Fort Fisher and the Southern Blockade.

Professor Noble's Fine Lecture.

Among the very highest in the list of the Faculty lectures that have so pleasantly entertained the University, will, there can be no doubt, be placed that delivered under the above title last Thursday evening in Gerrard Hall. Seldom does it fall to our lot to hear one so thoroughly master of so interesting a subject, and, too, so happy in the selection of the matter presented. The lecture was full of interesting anecdotes and of humorous turns wherever humor was consistent. It was of a nature exactly suited to his audience.

Professor Noble began with a modesty entirely out of keeping with the circumstances under which he spoke. "I had thought," he said, "that I had made a mistake in accepting the invitation to address you, young gentlemen, especially when I thought of the others who having preceded me, on subjects broader and more able to please the general audience. Yet, when I remember that a greater part of you are, like me, native after the manner born, I feel that I need make no apology for talking of the deeds of the brave sons of North Carolina. For I hold firm to a theory that patriotism will never die out." Heartily applause assured the speaker that he had not mistaken his audience. "I have another theory," he continued, "and that is, that certain localities were from the beginning of the world more fitted for noble deeds than others—Waterloo, Gettysburg, Manassas. In the same way, I think that this Cape-Fear region was selected as the place where events should be enacted that will always arrest the eye of the historian." With a few quick lines Professor Noble drew a map of the State, showing the river of which the Cape Fear is the only one entirely a North Carolina river. "It is very fitting," he continued, that the only distinctly North Carolina valley should be chosen. He told briefly of the many points of historical note along the river, as Moore's Creek, Alamance, and Guilford, of Revolutionary fame. "I could show you here, too, battle fields of the Civil War, but will take up only one."

Fort Fisher was here. In the very early political life of North Carolina before there was a state, an enterprising man from the north came here, and undertook to civilize the gentle natives, and at the same time to raise cattle. How a smart yankee made such a mistake as to try to raise cattle in that country I cannot understand. It did not pay, and he went back where he came from, leaving a sign of warning posted there, advising no one, on pain of death, to land at such a God-forsaken place, that no one could stay there. Over a hun-

dred years afterwards a northern general came to the same conclusion. A court of inquiry agreed that he could not have stayed there any longer than he did.

At the mouth of the river is Smith Island, which got its name as did Smith Hall, our Library, from Governor Smith of this State. It was originally part of the mainland that stretches down in a long tongue between the river and the ocean, but a great storm in 1761 cut a channel through here, New Inlet separating off this island.

When the civil war came on, it was necessary for us to send to foreign countries our wealth of cotton and tobacco, to get in exchange, arms, ammunition, blankets and shoes, and all the things that our soldiers needed. Blockades were established by the federal government at all our ports to prevent these from getting out. Now of the four Southern ports, the most desirable was Wilmington. The Bermudas were no further away than is Asheville, and the trip was easily made in two days. These blockade-runners ran through New Inlet instead of by the larger route and Fort Fisher was built to protect them as they ran in from the pursuit by the blockading-fleet. When Col. Wm. Lambé now living in Norfolk, Va. took charge it was weak and powerless. He worked for months with over a thousand slaves, with other workman, in making Fort Fisher the powerful place that it was. Among the slaves who worked there was one of our great colored citizens, Mr. Benjamin Booth."

A description of the fort was then given. The shape was that of the letter L, the long branch extending along the beach, the short one running from the northern end almost across the peninsula. To the south, along the Inlet, were built several powerful batteries, one by Lieutenant Pitman a University man from Edgecombe County.

"On Monday, Oct 24, 1864, there was great excitement in the fort. It was heard that Porter and Butler were about to attack the post. There were only nine hundred men and the hundred and sixty boys, Junior Reserves, in the fort. There was a saying that 'the Confederacy had to rob the cradle and the grave to keep her armies in the field'. But there was no robbery here. All looked forward gladly, eagerly for the fight. For several days a great storm raged, and the fleet had to keep out at sea. But on the twenty third day of December every thing was gotten ready for the fight which was sure to come the next day. During the afternoon a powder ship was sent in at the fort, and two hundred and fifty tons of powder exploded. Some time after that a long, lank specimen of North Carolina humanity was captured and sharply questioned by Butler as to the of

the explosion. After much treating with tobacco, and many questions, he finally admitted that the explosion 'waked up *purty nigh* every man in the fort'. Butler was fond of saying that though it was said that he 'borrowed silver spoons and the like' no one ever called him a fool' Right here is where it exploded' said Prof. Noble, pointing to the map.

The twenty fourth was a beautiful, mild day. At sunrise the great fleet got under way, making for the fort in a great crescent. In the center were the great frigates Colorado, Minnesota and Susquehanna, each carrying more ammunition than all the land batteries. When all was ready, there was a flash, a puff of smoke, and a boom, from one of the frigates, and the shot splashed into the river beyond the fort. A gun on the ramparts replied, and the shot carried daylight with it through the funnel of the Susquehanna. Thus began one of the greatest bombardments in the history of warfare.

In vivid language Prof. Noble told the story of the fight—how, when the flag was shot away it was sent to one of the batteries to be raised, but the halyards were tangled, and it was necessary to climb the flag pole to straighten them out, how a brave fellow from Sampson county climbed up, fixed it, as he thought, only to find that there was still a hitch; and how, with every gun in the fleet directed on that flag-staff, he again climbed up and shook out the Bonnie Blue-Flag to the breeze. He told how a landing party came ashore to the north of the fort, was repulsed at the stockade built there, and the first attack was over.

"The second attack was on Christmas day. A storm of shot and shell, 120 to the minute, was hurled against the angle of the fort, battering it down. The landing party again came ashore, without the least opposition from General Bragg, stationed there to keep them off. There were 1900 boys in the fort. A detachment of 2000 marines came along the beach toward the broken down angle. They were forced to retreat with great loss by the gallant little band of Junior Reserves, under a sixteen-year-old Lieutenant. The main body of the attacking army came down along the river. Col. Lamb telegraphed Bragg: "Attack! attack! attack!" Bragg did not attack, why, only one man now alive knows, and he cannot be made to speak of the war. Before the great attacking force the men in the fort gave away, mound after mound, until they at last had to take ship and leave. The fort was lost."

The speaker told most interestingly of the blockade-runners, and their fearless captains and pilots, who knew all the crooked channels as well as the farmer knows the paths on his farms, took the Marie Celeste out for Nassau one dark August

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Track Team.

Systematic Practice to Begin on the Fifteenth.

Now that winter is past and the warm spring days are come the candidates for the Track Team will be put into regular and systematic training. The system of training to be employed this year requires that six weeks be given to put the men in the best condition for the coming meets on Southern tracks. This is the time deemed necessary by the leading track men of this country for successful training of track men. Our small experience here with men who have had to leave the track on account of indiscreet practice confirms us in the opinion that the best results may be had by careful and gradual development.

The training is so fine and the liability to overtraining delicate muscles so imminent that great care must be taken to see that no one is overworked at the first. With this point in mind we have decided to use the scheme employed at Yale. This scheme marks out definitely the work for each day during the period of six weeks. The candidates will be divided into squads and trained according to the character of the event which the candidates propose to enter.

All candidates for the track team are expected to meet in the Gymnasium on Friday, March 15th, at five o'clock. It is imperative that the training begin on that day unless the condition of the weather renders it unwise to come out of doors in a thin running suit. In case of cold weather the training will begin indoors and move to the track when the days are warmer.

Besides the thirty or more students who have given in their names as candidates for the team others will be allowed the practice provided that they are out on the first day and are regular in their practice. Irregular workers amount to nothing and are only in the way of others.

Each candidate must be provided with a running suit and a pair of spiked running shoes by March the 15th and present himself for practice with this equipment.

F. M. OSBORNE, Captain.

Soph Class Team.

The plan of the classes getting out a baseball nine appears to be a very excellent one. Most of the classes have organized and elected their managers and captains. Several interesting Scrub games have been played between the classes. The Soph team is a very good one. They have furnished the Varsity practice several afternoons lately. The following is a line-up given us by Captain Ramsey, who says that all positions are yet open and if any others want to play for them to come out and they will be given a chance.

Harvard's best debater, in her late debate with Yale, was a negro, R. C. Bruce, of Mississippi.