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\$1.00 a Year in Advance

TAR HEEL TOPICS

Items Gathered From All Sections of the State

Moore Fruit Escapes.
Southern Pines, Special.—The fruit men of Moore county have been witnessing a strenuous period. Friday night one of the most tempestuous storms in a long time wound up with a blizzard of snow and ice, and on Saturday morning the thermometer registered 24, with the fruit blossoms encased in globes of ice. The fright was big enough to cut with a knife, as everybody threw up both hands and conceded the complete destruction of all fruit. Orchards had been out in the fullest blossom for several days, and everywhere hopes had been entertained of a bumper crop. Following the snow and ice of Friday night came another freeze Saturday night, to finish what the first night had done, the victims asserted. Many of the orchard men say the frost has done no more than to thin out the blossoms, leaving prospects of a reasonably fair, if not a good crop.

Tax Levy Is Unconstitutional.
Asheville, Special.—Judge Fred Moore, of the State Superior Court bench, rendered his decision in the matter of the Southern Railway Company against the commissioners and tax collector of Buncombe county, holding that the special tax of 10 cents on the \$100 worth of property for roads and bridges, and 18 1/3 cents for interest on bonds and sinking fund was unconstitutional and invalid, and continued the injunction restraining the tax collector from collecting from the Southern this tax, amounting to \$4,800. Practically the same point was raised by complainant's counsel relative to Mecklenburg county on account of the county levying a 10 cent road tax, 15 cent bond tax, and 25 cent convict tax and no poll tax to correspond.

A Davidson Home Burned.
Lexington, Special.—News reached town of the destruction by fire of the residence of Dr. J. E. Cathell, of Tyro, this county, in which about \$4,000 worth of property was consumed and not a thing saved except a canary bird. The insurance carried amounts to \$2,250. The origin of the fire is unknown. The popular physician was out on a professional call and his family and servants were away, it being about midnight when the fire occurred. Together with the 8-room house, all the doctor's instruments, accounts, medicines, his diploma, license, etc., were destroyed, as were 1,100 pounds of pork and lard from six hogs. The loss is exceedingly heavy on the doctor. At present he is making his home with a neighbor, Mr. Baxter Leonard.

Coffin On the Doorstep.
Charlotte, Special.—Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Russell, residents of Hickory Grove township, this county, found a crude miniature coffin on their front porch when they awoke, and in it a letter demanding money. The letter was adorned with a skull, crossbones and a blackhand. The county authorities have two neighboring youths under suspicion, and will arrest them. They refuse to divulge the names of the suspects, but they believe the affair to have been the prank of irresponsible youths, and that is the view held by the community.

Mills May Shut Down.
Dallas, Special.—The stockholders of the Monarch held a meeting Tuesday at which the capital stock of the mill was increased \$13,000. It is rumored that the three cotton mills now in operation in this town will soon shut down for two months.

New Charters.
Raleigh, Special.—New charters as follows were issued Friday:
Wadesboro Pepsi-Cola Company, with capital of \$5,000; W. B. Blalock, George Britts and George Stanback, incorporators.
Scott Library Company, Asheville, capital \$25,000; C. H. Bobbs, J. F. Young and Henry B. Stevens, incorporators.

Salisbury Gets a Good Price For Its \$100,000 Bond Issue.

Salisbury, Special.—At a special meeting of the board of aldermen bids were opened for the \$100,000 bond issue passed at a public election last fall. Several bids were tendered and after due consideration that of N. W. Harris & Co., of New York, was accepted. The agreement under which the sale is made provides that the purchaser shall pay all legal expenses, printing, lithographing, transfer charges and delivers to the City of Salisbury without any exchange charges the sum of \$101,600.

Benton's Slayer to Hang.
Fayetteville, Special.—Sam Murchison, alias Melvin, will pay with his life for the murder of James H. Benton, which crime he committed on Sunday afternoon, February 23d, last. In Superior Court he was found guilty of murder in the first degree after a trial extending over two days. The jury rendered its verdict in thirty-five minutes after retiring to the jury room. The accused showed considerable nervousness when brought back into the court room to receive the verdict, but after it was rendered he sank back into his seat without evidence of emotion.

Saloon Keeper Makes Assignment.
Wilmington, Special.—J. B. J. Sandlin, the saloon keeper whose license was recently revoked by the board of aldermen effective April 1st because of irregularities in the manner of his conducting his place, made an assignment for the benefit of his creditors, Joseph J. Littig, Jr., local agent for the Home Brewing Company, being the assignee. The assets and liabilities are not large and the failure is of no commercial importance.

Charters Granted.
Raleigh, Special.—A charter is granted the Johnson-McCubbin Company at Salisbury, which will deal in real estate, build houses and factories, etc., capital stock \$130,000, the stockholders being Thomas P. Johnson, J. S. McCubbins and T. H. Vanderford. Another charter goes to the Carolina Paper Box Company, of Winston-Salem, \$25,000, the stockholders being W. B. Hemingway and others, all from Norfolk.

A commission is issued to Willey C. Rodman, of Washington, D. C. as major of the Second Regiment, vice Sellers, resigned.

Truck in the East Not Injured by Cold Weather.

Wilmington, Special.—The Truckers' Journal of this city, says that it has received telegraphic reports from all the leading trucking centres around Wilmington and eastern North Carolina and finds that little if any damage, was done by the recent snow-fall and consequent cold weather in this vicinity. On account of reduced acreage most growers have been able to straw their berry plants and they are well protected until gathering time comes.

State News in Brief.
The United States Department of Justice offers \$100 reward for the capture of Jim Staley, the negro moonshiner who shot Deputy Marshal Henry Reese. It ought to be easy to identify and capture Staley as he was shot twice. Several people saw him at Sanford the evening of the day on which the shooting occurred. United States Marshal Dockery says that moonshining is certainly increasing in this district and that the moonshiners are becoming bolder and more desperate. Not so much is going on now as in the winter, but more than at this time last year. Durham and Johnson are the worst counties in the district for moonshining, while Robeson leads in retailing.

At the office of the State Labor Commissioner it is learned that there is some increase of work in the State. It is said that the sawmill people make more complaints about the panic than perhaps any other class, saying it is the real thing and has hit them hard and caused a big drop in prices.

A charter is granted the Leaksville Light, Power and Milling Company, to furnish electric power, etc., the amount of the capital stock being \$40,000 and E. B. King the chief stockholder.

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction has issued a very well prepared and illustrated pamphlet with designs for public school houses this taking the place of one which was issued some years ago.

There is talk of a fine new hotel at Lakeview, with Western capital at the back of the scheme. The plans are not worked out yet, but a representative of the investors has been looking over the ground and appears impressed with Lakeview as a place for a good summer and winter resort.

The number of volumes in the Supreme Court library is now 17,136 this being a gain of almost 600 a year on an average for the past four years. The number of volumes in the State library is 41,000, and counting books which the United States sends the gain is something like 1,000 a year.

TRAINMEN ACQUITTED

Trial of Engineer Rippey and Conductor Oakley, Charged With Manslaughter in That They Were Responsible For Wreck on Southern, End With Not Guilty Verdict by Jury.

Raleigh, Special.—The jury in Superior Court late Saturday night acquitted Southern Railway Conductor Oakley and Engineer Rippey, charged with manslaughter because of the fatal collision at Auburn. Train Dispatcher Victor Parvin and his assistant are yet to be tried on the same charge.

In Superior Court there was a continuation of the hearing of the trial of Conductor Oakley and Engineer Rippey of the Southern Railway, on the charge of manslaughter in causing the fatal collision of freight and passenger trains last fall, a mile the other side of Auburn, in this county. A great many witnesses were put on among them being State Treasurer Lacy, who is a veteran locomotive engineer.

Many witnesses testified to the good character and ability of both men, Rippey having been fireman or engineer for 33 years on the Southern and never before charged with carelessness. He swore that he was sick the afternoon of the accident, forgot his orders to stop and ran by Auburn station. Oakley was taking up tickets when the train passed Auburn and when the collision occurred. Ex-Governor Ayeock led in the argument for the defense and was followed by Solicitor James for the State.

Corn Train at Washington.

Washington, N. C., Special.—The corn growers' special train of three cars sent out under the auspices of the State agricultural experiment station and the Norfolk & Southern Railway arrived in the city at 10 o'clock Saturday morning and was welcomed by a large crowd of citizens and farmers from all over the country. The special remained in this city two hours and during this time a number of interesting as well as instructive lectures were made by members of the party on scientific corn culture and how to produce more corn to the acre than heretofore, on seed selection, fertilizer plant diseases, etc. The lectures were carefully followed up by exhibits of corn specimens. In the party were C. B. Williams, director of the North Carolina experiment station; Tait Butler, State veterinarian; F. L. Stevens, biologist; R. I. Smith, entomologist; Dr. George T. Winston, of the A. & M. College; A. D. Samuels, specialist of the United States Department of Agriculture; T. J. Hudson, land and industrial agent of the Norfolk & Southern Railway.

Criminal Assault Attempted.

Belmont, Special.—An unsuccessful attempt at criminal assault was made on Miss Gladys Purnell, daughter of Rev. T. H. Purnell, about 7 o'clock Saturday evening by an unknown negro, who made good his escape. With the exception of Miss Gladys, the family was sitting on the front piazza, when they were aroused by her screams in the rear of the home. Just as she had stepped out of the house a negro grabbed her and bound a rag around her mouth. Her screams frightened the negro and he fled. Bloodhounds were brought at once from the convict camp near here but could not strike the trail, a crowd having gathered and obliterated the tracks.

Tar Heel Items.

Mr. J. N. McCausland, of the Retail Merchants' Association, of Charlotte, has asked Mr. Webb to investigate and endeavor to improve the mail service between Charlotte and Greensboro. Mr. Webb went to work on the matter at once and will thresh it out if possible. There is considerable complaint of mail service between Washington and Charlotte.

Thomas S. Rollins, of Asheville, is appointed a member of the central campaign committee of the State Anti-Saloon League.

The resignation of James S. Lewis, first lieutenant, Company E, Second Regiment, Goldsboro, is accepted, he having removed to Rocky Mount.

John W. Stewart was appointed United States Senator to succeed the late Redfield Proctor.

Chief of Police Shot.

Elizabeth City, Special.—Chief of Police A. G. Bell was shot through the left leg Saturday afternoon by James Burch, a negro, whom he was attempting to arrest. Bell shot twice at the negro, but neither shot took effect. Police Officers Thomas and Weeks and a number of citizens rushed to the rescue of Bell, overpowered and handcuffed the negro. He broke loose from the hand cuffs and struck Bell, but he was overpowered again and hurried to jail. Bell is not seriously hurt. The negro was wanted in Edenton for shooting the engineer of the steamer Plymouth.

THE WORK OF CONGRESS

Doings of Our National Law-Makers Day by Day.

Serious Charges Made.

Charges of a serious nature against Gifford Pinehot, chief of the Forestry bureau, were made in the House by Messrs. Smith, California, and Mondell, Wyoming, during the consideration of the Agricultural Appropriation bill. Mr. Smith accused him of entering into a secret understanding with the city of Los Angeles with the view of securing the city valuable water rights in the Owens River Valley, as against the interests of private parties having prior claims. Mr. Mondell denounced him for, as he charged, illegally paying the expenses of forest officials, in attending conventions in the West, in which the government had no part and also of spending government money to boost his bureau in the public newspapers. Mr. Pinehot was defended by Mr. Pollard, Nebraska, and Mr. Scott, Kansas. The bill was under discussion all day and every line relating to the forest service was fought over, with the result that many provisions were stricken out.

The Agricultural Appropriation Bill.

After having undergone many changes, the paragraph of the agricultural appropriation bill relating to the bureau of forestry, was finally passed by the House of Representatives. Messrs. Mondell, of Wyoming and Smith, of California, continued their attacks on the bureau and in this they were supported by Messrs. Bonyng, of Colorado and Cushman of Washington. These embraced charged that the bureau had created timber monopolies in favor of large corporations, illegally assumed jurisdiction over the water rights belonging to the Western States, and juggled with figures in order to obtain large appropriations from Congress. The work of the bureau was vigorously defended by Messrs. Hepburn, of Iowa, and Scott, of Kansas.

Considerable time was devoted to discussing a proposition by Mr. Humphreys, of Mississippi, to increase the appropriation for the investigation of soils, which was carried.

Correspondence Submitted.

The long expected correspondence between America and Venezuela respecting pending American claims against the latter country was submitted to the Senate and is almost certain to create a profound impression. It will be difficult to digest the vast mass of material which Secretary Root has placed before Congress, but even a cursory inspection of the documents makes it evident that the negotiations have reached a critical phase. The President's realization of that fact is shown by his transmission of the matter to the Senate without any comment, regarding the correspondence and especially Secretary Root's strong presentation of the American case, as sufficient to instantly enlist the attention of Congress.

All the correspondence and documents were referred to the Senate committee on foreign relations.

Those members of the committee who have already familiarized themselves with the situation have arranged tentatively a programme which consists of three propositions as follows:

A Tentative Programme.

Place a prohibitive tariff on Venezuelan coffee, the exports of which constitute 45 per cent of the entire Venezuelan foreign trade and 90 per cent of the coffee is taken by the United States.

Exclude all importations of asphalt from Lake Bermudez, the product of which has been taken almost entirely by the United States.

Authorize the President to exercise the general power invested in him to take whatever steps he may consider necessary to treat with Venezuela in the future.

In a letter to Minister Russell on February 25th, 1907, Secretary Root reviewed the difficulties encountered by the various American claimants and instructed Mr. Russell to demand remedy and redress. The letter concluded with this statement:

Root's Letter Strong.

"You are instructed to bring these several causes of complaint to the immediate and serious attention of the Venezuelan government, and to insist that the government to which you are accredited shall give to each and every demand herein set forth immediate consideration."

In issuing general instructions to the American minister, Secretary Root said:

"You will call the attention of the government of Venezuela to the fact that notwithstanding the long and unbroken friendship manifested by the United States for Venezuela; notwithstanding the repeated occasions upon which the United States has intervened as a friend in need to relieve Venezuela from disagreeable and dangerous complications with other powers; notwithstanding the patience and consideration which has always characterized the treatment of this government towards Venezuela; the

government of Venezuela has within the past few years practically confiscated or destroyed all the substantial property interests of Americans in that country. This has been done sometimes in accordance with the forms of law and contrary to the spirit of the law; sometimes without even form of law; by one device or another, with the action of the government apparently always hostile to American interests, until of the many millions of dollars invested by American citizens in that country practically nothing remains."

Two Boys Killed By Falling Walls.

Provincetown, Mass., Special.—While inside the shaky walls of the half-burned Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church late Monday in search of firewood, two boys were killed by the collapse of a portion of the ruins and a man was seriously injured. The boys were Joseph Oliver and Joseph Holmes. It is believed that Prada will recover. No one else was hurt.

800 Men Cut Off From N. & W. Shops.

Roanoke, Va., Special.—Eight hundred men were discharged from the Roanoke shops of the Norfolk & Western Railway Tuesday. The shops under normal conditions employ 2,000 men. A notice was posted that in the future the shops will work full time with the reduced force. For the past three months only half time has been made. Every department in the shops is affected by the cut.

Louisiana Gives Felker 15 Years For Burglary.

New Orleans, Special.—It is not probable that Thomas C. Felker will be turned over to the officers of Norfolk, Va., who say that Felker knows something concerning the murder of a young man of Rome, Ga., at Norfolk last fall. Felker was sentenced to 15 years in the Louisiana penitentiary for burglary.

Alabama Town Damaged By Fire.

Abbeville, Ala., Special.—A fire which swept the business part of Abbeville at an early hour caused a loss estimated at \$100,000, partially insured. The dry goods establishment of Stokes Bros., the store of the Abbeville Trading Company and the Bank of Henry County were destroyed completely. Two other stores and several smaller buildings were burned before the fire was controlled.

Struck by Her Own Torpedo.

Pensacola, Fla., Special.—As the result of being struck by a Whitehead torpedo fired from one of her own tubes, the torpedo boat Blakeley which has been engaged in target practice off this port, has a large jagged hole just below her water line on her port side. The Blakeley has been put in drydock and a board of inquiry named to conduct an investigation into the accident. The commander of the Blakeley refused to discuss the occurrence.

Germany Accepts Hill.

Berlin, By Cable.—Emperor William, having been fully advised as to the attitude of President Roosevelt and the feeling of the American public in regard to the alleged refusal of His Majesty to receive Dr. David Jayne Hill as American ambassador to Germany, in succession to Charlemagne Tower, has withdrawn all the expressions of disapproval he recently sent to President Roosevelt and would be pleased to receive Dr. Hill as American ambassador.

Murdered Woman Found in Bed.

Trenton, N. J., Special.—Mrs. Frances Kabe was found dead in bed at her home at Fallsington, Pa., Sunday morning with two stab wounds in the body and a fractured skull. The woman had been murdered and had been dead at least 24 hours when the body was discovered. A broken chair and other conditions in the room gave evidence of a struggle. There is no clue to the murderer.

Virginian Shot Five Times.

Roanoke, Va., Special.—A Times special from Wytheville, Va., says: W. W. Pendleton, a well-known citizen, fatally shot James Spoon Saturday afternoon. Pendleton went to Spoon's house, which is near his own home, called him out and shot him five times. He then went back to his home and notified a doctor and the officers, saying, "I have shot James Spoon." It has been thought for some time that Pendleton's mind was unbalanced.

Dresden has opened a bathing establishment for dogs. It is owned and governed by the municipality.

STRIKE OF MINERS

Many Thousands Quit Work Pending Settlement

LITTLE INVOLVED IN DISPUTE

Indications Do Not, However, Point to a Prolonged Strike, as the Differences Between the Miners and Operators Are Slight, But Some Political By-Play in the Miners' Organization and Other Local Differences Keep Contending Factions Apart.

Indianapolis, Ind., Special.—Two hundred and fifty thousand picks dropped from the hands of as many bituminous coal miners of the United States Tuesday evening, not to be used again until a wage settlement has been reached and a scale adopted between the members of the United Mine Workers of America and the coal operators of the various fields. Wednesday morning there were 250,000 men idle. The situation, however, does not indicate a prolonged strike. An open winter and industrial depression have left a large stock of coal on hand and the differences between miners and operators are very slight. It is practically agreed that the present wage scale will be continued, but some politics in connection with the change in the national officers of the miners' organization, and local differences between operators and miners have resulted in temporary suspension from work until a new wage scale is agreed to either by districts or individual mines.

The Unit System.

Until two years ago the bituminous coal mining wage of the country was based upon the agreement reached in the central competitive field consisting of Illinois, Ohio, Indiana and western Pennsylvania, and considered as a unit. This unit system was broken two years ago when President Mitchell signed a scale with Pittsburg operators, who agreed to pay the scale demanded after operators of the other three States had refused and the miners won their fight. Operators signed the scale individually throughout the country.

Since that time the miners have tried to get back the unit rule, or inter-State agreement, but operators of western Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois, after negotiations lasting all the past winter, have refused to meet in inter-State convention with the miners. As a last resort President Mitchell called the miners in national convention and district settlements were authorized with the present wage scale as a minimum. Failing to agree by district miners were authorized to sign the present scale with operators individually.

Vice President Lewis, who will succeed President Mitchell, is endeavoring to revive the inter-State unit rule. In the meantime district joint meetings are being held in the various States.

No Trouble in Tennessee.

Nashville, Tenn., Special.—The situation in the coal fields of Tennessee is quiet and relations between operators and miners are entirely harmonious. The miners are worked on the "open shop" plan and the wage scale is said to be satisfactory. John P. Williams, president of the Bon Air Coal and Iron Company, said that he anticipated no friction in the Tennessee district; that conditions were eminently satisfactory and that the men were entirely satisfied and cheerful.

All Iowa Mines to Close.

Des Moines, Iowa, Special.—Every coal mine in the State of Iowa will close. Not one of 30 or 35 mines in the State will be worked Wednesday. The shut-down pending the settlement between operators and miners will last at least 30 days. For the past month the mining companies and large consumers of the State have been storing up coal in preparation for the shut-down.

Sea Wall at Tybee Island May Be Destroyed.

Savannah, Ga., Special.—The sea wall recently completed at Tybee Island to protect the Fort Screven reservation from the encroachments of the water in is a fair way to be destroyed. Tuesday's high tide undermined and destroyed eleven of the sixteen-foot sections. It is said the plan of construction was faulty. The wall cost \$50,000 and is 4,000 feet long.