

THE NEW BERN MIRROR

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NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

"So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." No newspaper editor wrote these lines. You'll find them in the Bible, and they still make a mighty good yardstick for those who annually formulate New Year resolutions.

Also in the Bible, if we remember rightly, you'll find this reminder for folks who spoil the present by regretting the past and dreading the future. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

With the two passages to serve as a guide, all New Bernians should be able to do better, and live happier. They may or may not reap more of things material, but blessings less tangible can bring inner satisfaction that should never be minimized.

No thinking New Bernian wants to live like the grasshopper. Strictly a playboy, he has no thought of the morrow and is an easy victim when Jack Frost arrives to lay him low. Yet, who wants to be like the pessimistic and woefully greedy squirrel, storing far more food than he'll ever have use for?

As best we can, in the New Year, we need to strike a happy medium. However, this much must be said for the grasshopper, he does his utmost to enjoy each day to the fullest. Very few humans live each golden moment as it comes. More often than not, we mark time in anticipation of what we want to happen in a brighter tomorrow.

Far be it from The Mirror to belittle hope for something better. Without hope the world would be a dreary place indeed. But squandering the present on wishful thinking merely deprives us of what we already have within our grasp.

Tomorrow, if we live to see it, will consist of 24 un-lived hours — just like today. Rich or poor, young or old, each of us will have those same 24 hours. Being creatures of habit, the odds are great that we will follow a worn pattern in utilizing the minutes that tick away during our wakefulness. Only a few of us will change from what we have been.

Resolutions made for the New Year will be broken, but that doesn't mean we have to wait until Next Year's to do something about it. What we ought to do, it seems to The Mirror, is pick up the pieces, put them back together, and have another go at it.

Each new day, if we see fit, can be a New Year in itself. As a matter of fact, if we tackle one resolution at a time instead of loading ourselves down with a bunglesome bundle of good intentions, we might get better results.

Meanwhile, we won't have to venture into outer space on the first available rocket to enjoy the adventure of mortal existence. All about us are wonders to behold, and new worlds to conquer. They may not make headlines, but that's because we editors are guilty too of taking the miracles right here on earth for granted.

Bounce out of bed early, for a change, and thrill to the splendor of a Carolina dawn as it breaks over the Neuse. Marvel at the magic of a sunset on the upper Trent, a tree etched against the gathering dusk, and the rhyming prayer of a little child.

Listen quietly to the music of the masters—lose yourself in the pages of a book. Smile, and say good morning to a stranger — visit someone who is sick of body or sick at heart.

Do a small favor for somebody who will never have occasion to do a favor for you in return. Spend a few moments in an empty church, eat an evening meal by candlelight — hear a bit of choice gossip without passing it along to add to the evil of what may or may not be.

Living each day as if it will be your last on earth is good. Better still, remember the old lady who said, "I treat others as if this will be THEIR last day on earth." She had the answer for us all.

Historical Gleanings

—By—
ELIZABETH MOORE

THE BRYAN HOME Chapter 4

The home of Judge Henry Ravenscroft Bryan at 407 East Front Street has been the home of five generations of Bryans.

Many distinguished New Bernians lived in the home in Colonial times and prior to the time Judge Bryan purchased it, including, Colonel Joseph Leech, Honorable Isaac Edwards, and Thomas Clifford Howe, Esquire, who was the second husband of Elizabeth Wilson Spaight, daughter of Madame Mary Vail Jones Wilson Moore. Thomas Clifford Howe served his community in many outstanding capacities and later the story of the Howe family will appear.

Judge Henry Ravenscroft Bryan was born March 8, 1836 in New Bern. He married in New Bern Miss Mary Biddle Norcott.

Judge Bryan was an honor graduate of the University of North Carolina in 1856. He opened his office in New Bern and began a career marked by success and devotion to the common good.

He was counsel for the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad Company, City attorney, and in 1890 a member of the Superior Court of North Carolina. This position he held until 1907 when he resigned because of advancing age.

He was one time mayor of New Bern, Director of the North Carolina penitentiary, and in 1880 a Democratic presidential elector. In 1860 he bought the old Spaight Plantation stretching from the Trent River to the Neuse River, bordering Brice's Creek.

For fifty years, Judge Bryan was a vestryman of Christ Episcopal Church in New Bern. He died in 1919. In recognition of his character and services the Legislature adopted a resolution of respect and tribute.

Mary Biddle Norcott was born March 11, 1841, in Greenville, N. C., the daughter of John and Sarah Frances (Biddle) Norcott. She was the author of ECHOES FROM THE PAST and A GRANDMOTHER'S RECOLLECTIONS OF DIXIE, both of which are delightful contributions not only to her family, but to the community and State as well.

There are many distinguished Bryan descendants, not only in the State of North Carolina, but in many other States abroad.

In a recent conversation with Mr. H. Bryan Duffy, a grandson of Judge Bryan, whose home is at 413 East Front Street, he stated that a portion of his home had been the old dining room to the large home for-

Village Verses

ON A COLD MORNING

Winter is a landlord grim—
Grasping and intent;
Painting icy signs in vain
On vacant nest for rent.
There are no housing problems now,
Deserted are the trees;
For birds are wise and journey south
Before the first big freeze.
They have no worry over fuel,
And how much they can get;
As basking under balmy skies,
They sing without regret.
And though they travel miles and miles,
A map is never needed;
Or if they fly a bit too fast,
No cop says that they speeded.
When winter comes with frigid hands,
And song birds southward wing;
I envy them, and shiver,
'Til they fly back home in spring.
—JGMCD.

merly occupied by the family of Judge Bryan; that it had been moved some years ago from that site to the present location, and additional rooms added for his dwelling.

Mrs. Isable Bryan Jordan, daughter of Judge Henry R. Bryan, said the dining room stood directly back of the large house, and behind that was a kitchen built partly of brick and partly of boards, making it a two story structure, with rooms above the large family kitchen, which had a fire place at each end.

One end was used for cooking and the other was used for ironing; there was a pump just out side the door and a duck pond. Also there was a dungeon where the large turkeys were kept locked up during the holiday seasons, to protect them from being carted away.

The yard was filled with tall shade trees and other attractions for children to play, and it was often filled with young visitors to the Bryan children.

Alas, if this elegant old home could speak, it could tell many fascinating stories, interesting to both young and old.

(Thanks to Mrs. Isabel Bryan Jordan, Mr. H. Bryan Duffy of New Bern, Miss Alice Noble of Chapel, N. C.; Mr. Bickham Christian of Shreveport, La.; and the records of the late Mrs. Frances Bryan Claypoole).

For picture, see The New

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