

The Lenoir Topic.

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Wallace Bros.,
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August 27th, 1884.

J. M. SPAINHOUR,

Dentist.

Lenoir, N. C.

F. LEE CLINE,

Attorney-at-Law,

Hickory, N. C.

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Attorney-at-Law,

Lenoir, N. C.

Wonderful News! Highly Important Political and Military Intelligence! A Foreign Invention Fatally Assails the American Protective System! The Early Collapse of the Protective Tariff Inevitable! A Total and Terrible Revolution in the Art and Operations of War!

Mr. Editor: For several weeks the newspapers have been quietly publishing, as though it were but an ordinary item of passing news, that two young French engineers have learned at last to navigate the air with cigar-shaped balloons, which they can steer and wheel and propel in any direction they choose; and are thus carrying themselves through the air, forth and back at will, between places many miles apart, going with ease as fast as a mile a minute.

A mile a minute! Think of that speed, Mr. Editor. It almost rivals the record of Ben Davis's fast saddle horse, on which he could mount at home after breakfast, ride twenty miles to Asheville, stay there all day, and be back at home again before night.

The truth of this invention, which the newspapers so modestly announce, is beyond question. When the variety and magnitude of its consequences are thoughtfully considered, imagination is dazed and reason staggers in contemplation of their grandeur, their suddenness and their incalculable importance to the people of the United States; to the people of all lands and nations. Volumes might be written in anticipation, as countless volumes will be written in history of the mighty changes and revolutions in peace and in war which it will soon inaugurate.

Selecting but two subjects out of the multitude that might be cited in illustration of the truth of this broad statement, I propose, Mr. Editor, in this ephemeral contribution to your columns, to try to direct the attention of your readers to the effect which this wonder-working invention must have upon the tariff and upon war; hoping thus to aid in turning to its study and full development, the thoughts and labors of men of more capacity and learning and leisure than have fallen to my humble lot.

The Tariff is the tax on imported goods. It is, in our country, more easily and cheaply collected than any other tax; because it is collected at but a few places, nearly all of it at the seaports, in which alone importing vessels can come to land and discharge their cargoes; and because it can only be evaded by smuggling, which is the most difficult, dangerous and easily detected mode of evading a tax.

But aided by this wonderful invention of two bright young Frenchmen, a vessel laden with foreign goods, instead of coming into port, may hover along any portion of our coast, however unfrequented, inflate an aerial fleet of cigar-shaped balloons, or signal its confederates on land to do so, and in a few hours of day light or star light or utter darkness, deliver safely, tariff free, to willing purchasers on land, many miles from the coast, its cargo of wool and woolen goods, raw and manufactured silk, cotton goods, hides and leather and boots, shoes, and other goods made of leather, rice and sugar and tea and coffee, nay, coal and iron and steel and hardware and cutlery, even Bessemer steel rails.

The collection of a highly protective tariff can thus be successfully evaded, and when this invention comes fully into use, as it must soon do, the tariff can no longer be successfully collected unless it is made so low that it will not pay to evade it by the use of these balloons, or of such still better flying machines as inventive genius will probably devise to supersede them. It is easy to comprehend that such a tariff would be but a small fraction of our present highly protective one.

These two bright little French engineers, (I suppose their little because they are so easily) here thus given protection its death blow. It is no longer a life-giving, and will soon be a corpse.

Such is the very grave fact that so suddenly stands in the face. Now what are our protective duties, our manufacturers, who say that they are the only ones who can stand the competition, going to do about it? Have

these two little Frenchmen ruined them? Humbly I trust that they have not, and that instead, they are helping to teach them better things, and to cling to a better and surer hope.

Our protectionists seek to build up and maintain a great manufacturing interest in the United States by the plausible, but narrow, cramped and short-sighted policy of diminishing the supply of manufactured products, by preventing to a great extent the supply of foreign manufactures to our consumers, through the high tariff imposed upon their importation. This enables our manufacturers, thus relieved of foreign competition, to sell their products at a higher price in our home markets, and thus, seemingly at least, tends to enrich them.

But this is obviously at the expense of their consumers, our agricultural producers, the great body of our people, who being thus so much impeded in the exchange of their agricultural products for foreign goods, are to a great extent cut off from foreign markets, and are forced to depend chiefly for the consumption of their immense surplus products upon the very limited home market needed to supply the wants of the small per cent of our population who are engaged in making and distributing our manufactured products, the wants of our manufacturers, carriers and merchants. They can only dispose of most of their immense surplus by exchanging it with the home manufacturer, or the merchant who has bought from him, in exchange for his home manufactured products.

Thus our manufacturer finds a wealth of agricultural products accumulating in his hands, which he in turn must dispose of in a restricted market. He is walled in from the sea by the iron wall of protection. Protection has come home to him to roost; or rather it has deserted to the enemy, and has flanked him, right and left, and stricken him in the rear. He feels the hurt, but in his blind devotion to protection he fails to see whence the blow has come, and in his agony he cries out: "Our factories and our fields are producing too much. Our markets are filled to overflowing. We are suffering from over-production."

Over-production, forsooth! As if the whole scope and aim of a sound political economy were not to add to the wealth of the nation by creating an overflowing abundance of everything that we can profitably produce.

The logic of practical facts and experience has thus been for years confirming the logic of abstract reasoning and philosophy. But our two bright little Frenchmen have fought the battles of free trade more effectually than all of our statesmen and philosophers. Protection will soon no longer, even in appearance, protect. Our manufacturers will soon be driven per force from the false policy of maintaining a market by diminishing the supply, and will pursue instead, the generous, broad, expanding, invigorating policy of increasing the demand by enlarging and stimulating the market.

Alike from our manufacturers, our carriers, our merchants, our tillers of the soil, from all classes and every region of our great country, the quick, strong, young giant of the nations, will soon be heard in loud chorus the grand refrain: Down with the walls which imprison our products! Out, over all the seas, in search of markets!

The necessity which these two Frenchmen have reduced us to, of making our tariff duties very low, will have other and far reaching consequences on the policy and conduct of our government. Our State, county, township, city, town and village governments must of necessity collect all their revenues by internal taxation in some of its various forms. It follows that any system of federal internal revenue always has been, and in the nature of things, always will be, very distasteful to our people; and that all the revenue necessary to carry on our federal government, and gradually reduce and pay off our federal debt, must, if possible, be collected through the tariff. But thanks to this French invention, our tariff will soon have to be so low, that to do all this with its proceeds will demand economy carried to the verge of parsimony in our federal

expenditures. The immense expenditures which are fast making our federal government a splendid, but recklessly extravagant one, will be cut down by an irresistible cry for retrenchment. And he will be the most popular, as well as the wisest, statesman who advocates it, and who opposes with all his zeal every unnecessary increase of the federal debt. For when the money to pay it must be collected by any mode whatever of federal internal taxation, the people will no longer be gulled by the sophism that a public debt is a public blessing. They will soon learn to their sorrow that a public debt is a public burden; that it is easier to pull an empty wagon up hill than one that has a heavy load on it.

These two bright young French engineers have thus, by a simple mechanical invention, done more than all the wisdom of our statesmen and all the loud eloquence of our stump orators and all the virtue and patriotism of our rural population have yet been able to do, to inaugurate a reform which will restore the administration of our federal government to the strict simplicity and rigid economy of the presidency of Jefferson.

What will be the effect of this wonder-working invention upon the operations of war? Suppose that we without any preparation for using it in war, should become involved in war with a powerful nation which has fully equipped and trained its soldiers and sailors to its use as an engine of war, and that a hostile fleet of that nation should appear before the city and harbor of New York, and send forth from its decks an array of these swift-winged little ships of the air, laden with nitroglycerine bombs and Greek fire, to demand the surrender or destruction of the city with its shipping and defenses. What could we do but surrender them, or witness their hopeless destruction? Our armies, wherever encamped or fortified, would be equally defenseless. If they sought refuge through winding passages channeled in the solid rock to recesses hidden deep in the bowels of our towering hills and mountains, they would but doom themselves to hopeless imprisonment there, or to swift destruction by foes high in the air above them, if they sallied forth to fight or to forage. Our armories, our arsenals, our military and naval stores could nowhere on the surface of our land or water, be defended from capture or destruction by such a foe. No city, no town, no dwelling house in the country, no barn, no mill, no shop, no stack of hay, no man nor animal but would be liable to sudden destruction. We could make no fight upon the surface against our assailants in the air. Throughout all of our borders we would have no alternative but to submit or be destroyed.

The battles of the future, then, must be fought in the air. The brave soldiers who risk their lives in defending their country must learn to rise from the ground like feathered Mercuries, and fight in deadly conflict as heights where "The shrill-voiced lark so far cannot be seen or heard."

"The featherman that walk upon the oaks appear like mice." "The murmuring surge that on the unnumbered idle pebbles breaks cannot be heard so high." In those horrid battles in the air those who are overthrown will, alas! be "Hurled headlong, with hideous ruin down," men and the steel and fire with which they fight will fall from the air in meteoric showers with horrid noise. The earth will be strewn with dead men as with hail.

Our two bright young Frenchmen have opened for poetry a new field, its most sublime one, in which the poets will soon revel, and some of them, no doubt, go mad. But what are we, as a people whose wise policy it is to be at peace with all the world, and yet ever ready to defend ourselves against every foe, going to do about this invention, as a practical, and at the same time a stern and urgent matter of fact?

Against a foe who, aided by this invention, can take possession of and hold the air over us, our ships and forts, our arsenals and armories and munitions of war will be as useless as any other rubbish piled in our way. But if we can hold the air over our land and coast we have nothing to fear from the assaults of our enemies by land or water. By coming against us they but deliver themselves into captivity or death.

Such is the novel, startling and very grave situation to which our two bright young French fellow mortals have reduced themselves and us. How shall we meet it?

There is but one effectual way of doing so, and that is by hastening with all speed to be in the front rank of the nations who avail themselves of the mighty power which must be conferred by the use of this new engine of war. Let there be no delay about this. To our speed let us add wisdom. Let us seek out and employ at once our best inventive, mechanical, scientific and military talent, to keep us in advance, if possible, of every other nation, in this new art of war. Let us appropriate and judiciously expend all the millions of dollars necessary to create and constantly improve our aerial fleet, and to train and discipline men and officers to man and manœuvre it; instead of spending hundreds of millions on navy and coast defenses which are confessedly inefficient, and which must soon be superseded, as being for military purposes almost entirely useless. It will soon be no stale jest to say of a nation that it has secured a great fortune by the castles which it has built in the air.

Mr. Editor, to be serious is a slow thing, and makes heavy drafts upon one's time. For want of leisure to be more serious, I have skimmed lightly and somewhat jestingly over my subject. And yet I have made the little newspaper paragraph which I sat down to write, much too long, unless it were more substantial. My subject is a momentous as well as a novel and sensational one. It will soon attract general attention and will be viewed very differently by many different classes. Philosophers and students of science will pursue it with delight. Nihilists will scowl at midnight as they whisper of it. Czars will dream of it, and awake startled. And then, oh my! The poets and the stump orators and the newspaper men! I hope that some who may read in your columns what I have written of it may see in it more than the lightness and flippancy with which it is thus offered to their attention by

HOW CHRISTMAS WAS SPENT.

The Topic's Correspondents, in Various Neighborhoods and Counties, make their Annual Christmas Report of How the Festal Season was Spent.

Newton.

Merry Christmas and Santa Claus have come and gone, bringing joy and happy reunions to many homes. The day, without, was cold and dreary, but in-door were bright fires and sunny faces, mirth and rejoicing.

The Lutheran Church had been decorated, and on Christmas eve, the children of the Methodist Sunday school entertained the audience with recitations and carols, and Santa Claus appeared, and distributed gifts with a lavish hand. By the way, a beautiful Chandelier has been put up in the new Methodist church, which is completed, but has not yet been used for public service.

Bright and early Christmas morning, the young folks were astir, and guns, fire-crackers, and toy-pistols could be heard in various directions, while the little ones danced around, laden with the treasures old Santa Claus had brought.

It was a holiday for all, and was spent by all in the pursuit of pleasure. The graver heads in social chat and roast turkey, little groups of loungers on the streets, cracking jokes and nuts, the juveniles throwing fire-crackers, at one time showing them upon a silly, drunken negro, whose monkey shines caused great merriment.

All who could start a dog or gun, were on the war path. At night there was a display of fireworks by Charlie Lowe, the most beautiful of which was a balloon, which rose majestically over town, and gradually growing less, disappeared below the horizon.

The colored people at Snow Hill gave an entertainment at their church, consisting of marching, singing, speaking, and a Christmas tree. Good order prevailed during the day, though there was some drinking, principally among the negroes. How sad that this day, which commemorates the sending of Peace

on earth, good will towards men should be so abused. May the glad New Year bring much of joy and prosperity to THE TOPIC, and all its readers.

A Happy New Year to you, may it bring you all fair things, With the sweetest, best remembrance, That about its coming clings, When its quiet, solemn glory On your heart and home shall shine, Think a loving thought of me, dear, For the sake of "Auld Lang Syne."

Married, in the Baptist church in Monroe, Union county, N. C., by Rev. D. M. Anstin, at 7.30 P. M., Dec. 23rd, 1884, Mr. Summey Ramseur, of Newton, N. C., to Miss Esther Foil, daughter of Mrs. E. F. Foil.

Hickory.

The holidays in Hickory, have been spent in such a way as to make all enjoy the great occasion which we celebrate and to realize the high aims for which it was instituted. Christmas eve our people were assembled in the Reformed Church to witness the first display of handsome presents and pleasant surprises collected for the members of the Sunday school, upon a holly-tree of great symmetry and beauty.

On Thursday the hearts of the little folks of the Lutheran Sunday school, were gladdened by a treat which was large in amount, choice in selection, and attended by appropriate exercises.

In the evening, despite the great inclemency of the weather, the city hall was filled by an expectant throng anxious to get sight of a splendid artificial tree, representing "Methodism in America 100 years ago." Before the distribution of its many presents, medals were awarded to three little girls, members of the infant class of that school, for regular attendance, well prepared lessons and good deportment.

Even here our pleasures did not cease, but returning upon the following night we witnessed the Episcopal celebration of this merry Christmas tide, including a letter from Santa Claus to the children and a large tree tastefully decorated and burdened with delightful gifts for all attendants of the Sunday school.

From time to time have the young people met together at some private residence and enjoyed the long evenings in a perfect round of pleasure, while many parting hope.

"The bud of love by summer's ripening breath, May prove a beautiful flower when next they meet."

And thus do we, during the national holidays, joyfully celebrate the closing year, which has been fraught with fullest increase and national recognition to our sunny southern land and hail with rapturous greeting the entrance of the next, which when its short period is over, we believe will remain the most enduring monument of this decade, deepest furrowed by prosperity's tracing fingers.

Middleboro.

The Christmas holidays in this locality proved somewhat sad, owing to the death of Mr. Isham Hendrix, a very respectable old gentleman of this vicinity.

We had no weddings during Christmas, but cards are out for one next week. We all anticipate a good time then, and like the old adage: "Lord send it was I."

Head of Cove Creek.

I never saw less drinking in this vicinity during Christmas than the present one. Three or four young men took on just a "leechie" too much juice but did no mischief.

Our village was alive all the time for three days and nights with people. They came in from the surrounding neighborhoods and spent the time in various kinds of amusements, (all innocent). Two anvils were carried to the top of a high knob and planted exactly on the State line and shots were fired every minute. Loud roar after roar echoed from hill to hill and resounded from mountain to mountain. I thought of Byron when he said, "Far along from peak to peak, the rattling crags among, leaps the live thunder." This process of "cannonading" was kept up from time to time for two days and nights. In the mean time smaller arms, such as shot guns and pistols, were in full play and there was the small boy with his fire crackers. He made himself useful in many ways and was no "dead-head in the enterprise."

Meadow Hill.

During Christmas week every thing moved along smoothly and evenly, as far as I have heard. In

A small parlor Christmas tree at H. Grogan's. Santa Claus appeared in full rig and plucked the nice little presents from the tree and distributed them to the little folks who were eager to receive them from the hands of the ghostly looking Benefactor. Notwithstanding his frightful looks the little fellows would put their arms around his neck and kiss him. Their faith in him was so great that his frightful mien could excite no fear.

A social party and candy pulling at R. W. Sehorn's, Christmas night. Also a display of fireworks on horseback. Large balls made of rags and saturated with lamp oil and fastened to the tip end of long poles 30 feet in length by means of a small wire. A half dozen stalwart men, such as this section of country is capable of producing, were mounted on gay steeds and after a match was applied to these balls the poles were placed on the shoulders of the riders and, at the word "charge," all dashed through the town in full speed. Each fire ball looked like the headlight of a locomotive as it passed through the air far above the head of the rider. The scene was magnificent and very exciting.

After this exercise was over, all were invited to the parlor of the said, hospitable and polite R. W. Sehorn, and were treated to the profuse snowwhite candy just fresh from the skillful hands of the manufacturers, to wit: About a dozen rosy checked and sparkling eyed specimens of Watauga's beauty and loveliness. All passed off quietly. Everybody happy.

Old Santa Claus brought no worshippers to hymen's altar here this Christmas. Weather cold and disagreeable. Money very scarce. Corn, 60 cents per bushel. Health of the people good. A. M. D.

Collettsville.

The Christmas holidays were ushered in with rain and snow, which made them unusually dull. The continued rain and muddy roads prevented any uncommon demonstration, so much so that a passer by would not have observed that the merry days were here. However old Santa Claus made his usual rounds, making the hearts of the juveniles leap with joy as they sprang to see what the Old Man, who comes down the chimney, had brought.

Miss Ellen and Vesta Coffey are spending Christmas in Wilkes Co. Mr. Kelley Sudderth scores one over William Tell, having killed two squirrels at one shot, when the lock flew off and broke. He thereupon seized a rock with which he tapped the cap and fired, killing two more. Rah for Kell.

Quite a crowd came together on the night of the 30th, to join in a fox chase (at least 40). They traveled all night and made a "jump" just at day. The chase was a fine one and ended at the Devil's Hole in Burke county. The crowd returned at night with their trophy.

Mr. Wagner, of Watauga county, had the misfortune to lose a good horse on Franklin. He fell in a rut and broke his leg. Thereupon the owner killed him.

Married by J. N. Harshaw, Esq., on the 25th, Mr. Wm. Clarke to Miss Margaret Raider.

Esq. Harshaw has married one hundred and twenty couples, two hundred and forty people. What magistrate can surpass this?

Mr. Thomas Clarke and family have moved to Morganton. Miss Mary Clarke is quite sick.

Miss Melissa Laxton is teaching at J. H. Dickson's.

The fence question is being agitated. As is natural we differ. Messrs. Enoch and Brice Coffey, two old brothers, have killed one hundred bears, fifty each, having killed nine and seven respectively in a season.

THE TOPIC is much appreciated at Collettsville. We look anxious for it every Thursday, read it first and consider it the best local paper in the State. May it prosper and boom till some lady will have mercy on its editor and take him into a very sacred reariness.

CONTINUED ON FOURTH PAGE.