

The Lenoir Topic.

VOLUME X.

LENOIR, N. C., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 1885.

NUMBER 28.

A NORTH CAROLINIAN ABROAD.

The Strange Adventures of Burgevine, an Alleged North Carolina Soldier of Fortune, Who, for Ways that are Dark and Tricks that are Vain, far Surpasses the Wealthy Chinese.

We have had the pleasure of looking over "Chinese Gordon," a book in the Pioneer Library, written by Archibald Forbes, which makes mention of the strange adventures of a native of North Carolina as a soldier of fortune.

In 1859 and 1860 the Chinese had some hard knocks with the European powers but were forced to succumb. A Chinese rebel party, called Tai-pings, not content with the terms to which the Imperial government had to submit, openly revolted. A couple of Americans, whose names were Ward and Burgevine, were engaged by a number of wealthy merchants of Shanghai to recruit and organize a foreign force to keep back these rebel marauders.

Ward had command, had useful military instincts and great personal bravery. He filled his ranks chiefly with Chinese and kept them well disciplined, but his officers were mostly foreigners. They did a great deal of hard fighting from 1860 to 1862 and won for themselves the name of the "Ever Victorious Army."

Ward died and Burgevine succeeded him in the command. Burgevine is described as a more unscrupulous soldier of fortune than Ward. He soon came to loggerheads with Li-Hung-Chang, the Imperialist Governor-General of the Kiang provinces, the quarrel was intensified by a variety of circumstances and in January 1863, Burgevine was dismissed.

Then it was that application was made to the British government to allow Capt. Charles George Gordon, of the British Army, to take charge of the "Ever Victorious Army." Gordon was just turned 30 when he went to China. His troop consisted of 5,000 men and 150 officers, the latter of whom were all foreigners, most of them being Americans, though there were some English, Germans, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Italians, Poles and Greeks among them. It was a motley crew. In one month eleven officers died of delirium tremens! This body of men he disciplined and with it he pacified the rebellious district.

In the meantime Burgevine was not idle. A noteworthy man in his way, this Burgevine, in sketching whose strange life a page may not be wasted. A native of North Carolina, his father had been one of Napoleon's officers. He was a scholar and had been a gentleman, who made shipwreck of his life, because of ambition unsupported by steadfast purpose, of restlessness, and finally drink. Dr. Wilson says of him, "A much wandering man, he seems to have turned up in California, Australia, the Sandwich Islands, India—where he studied Hindustanee—Jeddah, London, and other places, being in fact one of these nautical gentlemen who combine a taste for literature with the power of navigating coasting vessels, and would faze allow, of founding great empires." He tired equally of a postoffice clerkship and of editing an American newspaper, and so naturally gravitated to China, which was at that time to the adventurers of the world what Central America had been in Walker's day.

He never ceased to resent his dismissal from the command of the "Ever Victorious Army," but continued to nourish his revenge against the Imperialists and his dream of carving out an empire in China. Overtures were made to him by the Tai-ping rebels and he took a detachment of miscellaneous foreigners to Soochow and identified himself with the Tai-ping cause. The Tai-pings wished to have him for the double reason that he and the Europeans would be formidable in the field, and in the belief, too, that he had sufficient influence with the officers of Gordon's force to bring them over and perhaps the force with it.

He soon became dissatisfied with his position at Soochow and entered into a personal communication with Gordon. Gordon guaranteed Burgevine and his troops immunity for their acts in the Tai-ping service, offering further to take some into his own force and to assist the rest out of the country.

At a second interview Burgevine

made Gordon the proposal that they two should unite and seize Soochow, hold it equally against Rebels and Imperialists, organize an army of 20,000 men and march on Peking. Gordon declined with quiet scorn.

When the time came for the desertion of Burgevine and his officers to Gordon's camp, all of them succeeded in escaping the watchfulness of the rebels but Burgevine and his personal staff. He was in a ticklish position and the Tai-pings were about to cut his head off, but Gordon wrote to them and his intercession was of account, for the miserable turncoat was safely delivered over to the American consul.

Subsequent investigation proved that while Gordon was interceding for Burgevine's life, the latter made propositions to Jones, his lieutenant, to entrap Gordon and make him a prisoner. Jones revolted at such base treachery and a "difficulty" ensued. Jones told the story thus: "Burgevine drew his revolver and discharged it at my head at a distance of nine inches. The bullet entered my cheek and ranged upward. I exclaimed, 'You have shot your best friend!' His answer was, 'I know I have, and I wish to God I had killed you!' There is a cynical frankness in the comment on this statement which Burgevine sent to a Shanghai paper—'Capt. Jones' account of the affair is substantially correct; and I feel great pleasure in bearing testimony to his veracity and candor, whenever any affair with which he is personally acquainted is concerned."

This eminent tar heel subsequently joined both sides in this war several times and in 1865, while a prisoner in the hands of the Imperialists, the quaint conceit took possession of the Chinese commander of drowning him, so Burgevine was thrown overboard.

MOTHER MADE IT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TOPIC.—A few months since, while in one of the beautiful towns of North Carolina, an incident occurred which awakened in my mind a train of recollections, which may be written and read with advantage.

I was hurrying along the street, when my attention was arrested by the appearance of a little boy on the side of the pavement, selling candy. He was not really beautiful, nor was he decidedly the reverse. His age was about nine years, his clothes were old and faded, but well patched. His candy was spread upon a coarse, cotton cloth, neatly stretched over what had been a japanned server. He was surrounded by a group of small boys, evidently belonging to different grades of society.

As I came nearly opposite him, the oft-repeated interlude, "Candy, sir," fell upon my ears, and, although opposed to the excessive use of candy, I stepped aside to patronize the light-haired, pale, freckled, homespun little representative of trade. I purchased of him, partly for his encouragement, but with particular reference to the friendship of the little folks of the family with which I was a temporary guest. The candy was as white as the cloth beneath it, being free from the poisonous coloring ingredients so extensively used in the confectionary art. I tasted it and found it delicately flavored and very nice.

"My boy," said I, "your candy is very good. Let me have a little more." I immediately saw that my remark had awakened in his young heart emotions which, in themselves, were quite abstract from the candy trade. His countenance beamed with joy, as he raised his large blue eyes, sparkling with delight, and observed in reply, "It is good, isn't it. Mother made it."

In these few words was embodied an unconscious expression of character. Here was an outburst of filial affection.

Now, the incident of itself, was trifling, but the spirit of the language carried my mind back through life more than fifty years, and at intervals bade me pause and apply the sentiment to some item connected with my own history. Before making the application, however, I wish to disabuse myself of the charge which such application may incur, of appropriating to myself the nobility of character which I have above attributed to the candy boy. Holding myself exempt from this arrogance, I would simply say, I am

not ashamed of the profession of affection for my parents, though they are both in heaven now, and I hope I may not outlive that profession.

When I was a little boy I attended school very little, for my parents were very poor. I carried my dinner in a satchel made of calico. Some of my schoolmates carried theirs in fashionable willow basket, and sometimes they teased me because I carried mine in a "poke." I felt vexed, but reconciled myself with the recollection that, if I did carry a calico poke, "mother made it." In less than twenty-five years after that time, one of these schoolmates was happy to avail himself of the privilege of sending his children to my school to receive gratuitous instruction, proffered in view of his extreme poverty. His children came to school without any dinner. They had no nice willow basket, they needed no calico "poke."

I was in school but a very short time when I was a boy, my parents being too poor to send me, yet I made rapid progress and soon gained a good knowledge of the sciences, because mother desired it. Henry R— ruled his copy book with a pencil set in a fine silver case. He said he would not carry such a great ugly club of a pencil as mine. I compared the pencils. I had a good lead pencil hammered out of a piece of lead. Mother made it, and I was satisfied with it. After we grew up to be men, Henry R— came to me one day to calculate interest upon a note in partial payments. He then carried a pencil worth only four cents. While at school I had no gum elastic ball, but I had one made of woolen ravelings and covered with leather. "Mother made it."

When, in my twenty-second year, I attended for a while the Classical School in Lenoir county. There were in that school many fine young men, sons of wealthy parents. There were others whose good sense was not annihilated by pecuniary advantages. Of the former class was David F—, who wore fine broad-cloth. My best coat was not so fine; the cloth cost one dollar a yard; my mother traded some of her own manufacturing for it, while I was working to assist my father in supporting the family; she paid fifty cents for getting it cut, and made it herself. David F— came one day to my desk, held out his arm, compared his coat sleeve with mine and inquired, ironically, where I had got such a fine coat. I proudly told him "mother made it." He frowned great surprise and sarcastically observed, he had mistaken it for imported goods; he wished he could get such fine cloth, and wondered if mother would not get him up a fine coat.

A short time afterwards, while in a tailor shop one morning with a fellow student, David F's fine coat was brought in by a lad with instructions to scour and press it. He was not in his class that day; he had been seen the previous night rolling in the mud, drunk as Bacchus. He left the school in disgrace. He now sleeps in a drunkard's grave.

I boarded myself while attending school here. I walked nine miles home at the end of each week, and returned Monday morning with my loaf of bread under my arm. It would become stale before Friday evening, but I always relished it when I recollected "mother made it."

I am now so far advanced in life that my friends begin to call me old. But I have not lived long enough to learn how to forget the counsels and teachings of a sainted mother. I have for the last thirty odd years been a public man, devoting my whole time to letters and books. I have been able through perseverance and the blessings of a kind Providence, to master several languages, and am conversant in all the sciences of the day. I have gained some distinction amongst my fellows, but I owe it all to my mother. She never studied Grammar, Philosophy or Music, these things were seldom taught in her young days, but she knew how to value these things, and toiled hard many a day to purchase books for her children, and support them at school.

Had I curled the lip of scorn, or blushed in company to have heard her use a singular for a plural verb, or pronounced a word twenty years behind the Websterian era, the old

dilapidated grammar in my library would testify terribly against my ingratitude. I recollect one cold day when she rode seven miles to sell produce and buy that book for me. It required a sacrifice, but "mother made it." PHILLO.

CHARGED WITH BIGAMY.

A North Carolinian Deserts his White Wife and Elopes with a Married Colored Woman.

ABINGDON, VA., March 20, '85.—A white man named Joseph Palmer was arrested here-to-day for bigamy. He has been living here for several months with a negro woman who was nearly white and the couple were registered at the Arlington Hotel as man and wife. Palmer is originally from Caldwell county, N. C., where he has a wife, with five or six children. His first wife was the widow of a man named Levi Hartley, and she has money and property amounting in value to about \$6,000 when Palmer married her. This he got possession of and squandered and then deserted his wife. The negro woman with whom Palmer has since been living is also a bigamist. She has a husband of her own race, named Hugh Grimes, who lives also in North Carolina, and she eloped with Palmer several months ago. Grimes, however, made his appearance here a few days ago in quest of his unfaithful wife. He discovered the pair, but before he could secure the necessary legal documents the woman fled and eluded arrest. Palmer, not being so successful, was arrested, and upon examination was sent to the Grand Jury for bigamy.

GENERAL GRANT'S ILLNESS.

Brooklyn Eagle.

Gen. Grant has been reported not to appreciate the fact that he must soon die. This is misrepresentation. The grim old hero of Shiloh and the Wilderness fully understands that he has a few weeks only at most in which to live, and to his intimate friends he speaks of it with the same freedom and in the same matter of fact manner that he discusses his intentions with respect to his dinner or the condition of his digestion. It is indeed eminently characteristic of the man that he faces death in his stolid and unmoved manner. If left to himself he would not live four days. He is very weak and is indisposed to take any nourishment whatever, because of pain produced by swallowing and because he has no appetite. Despite all efforts by those who care for him he at times refuses to eat for two days together. Then the members of his family gather around him and beg of him for their sakes and for their happiness and peace of mind to take nourishment. He consents and endures the painful ordeal. For a time he is exhausted by the effort, but in an hour or two he begins to mend and then he improves very rapidly until his system begins to call out again for food, and he grows worse again rapidly, until the persuasion of his family again prevails and he takes more food. He knows perfectly well that he cannot survive four weeks more, and his distant friends have been summoned to take a final farewell of him. If Grant were a religious man he would be a Methodist or a Presbyterian, but he frankly says that he had no especial religious training in early youth and he has not studied the subject sufficiently in his latter life to form any opinion as to what he does believe. He believes that there is a God and a hereafter, but he is not prepared to say that he believes in the extreme position taken by most Protestants, that the unconvinced and the indifferent will be eternally tormented. If Grant's position, with reference to religion, could be defined it might be expressed as a condition of indifference. He doesn't apparently bother himself in the least about the life hereafter, seemingly being willing to take his chances with the millions who have gone before him. He has consequently not desired to talk upon the subject to clergymen, and as yet no clergyman has called upon him to offer or explain the consolations of belief in the Christian religion. The only clergyman with whom Grant was ever intimate was Rev. J. P. Newman, his old pastor in Washington, and late his pastor in New York City. All of General Grant's family are now with him, or within near call, except his daughter Nellie, who married the Englishman Sartoris. She has been summoned, and is now on her way with her children. She is the General's favorite child, and he has kept calling for her and insisting that she must come to him ever since the gravity of the situation became manifest.

Fred Grant's wife, formerly Ida Honore, admired in Kentucky and in Washington, has been devotedly attentive to her father-in-law, by whom she was long ago nicknamed "Sunshine." He dislikes the attendance of a hired nurse, and thus far none have been employed. Upon Mrs. Grant and Ida have devolved such services as he will permit to be done for him.

Chinese Gordon "Kings."

Letter to Mr. Edmund Hale.

From 1865 to 1871 Gordon lived at Gravesend, improving the defenses of the Thames. He lived wholly for others. His house was school and hospital and almshouse in turn; was more like the abode of a missionary than of a commanding officer of engineers. The poor, the sick, the unfortunate, were ever welcome, and never did supplicant knock vainly at his door. He always took a great delight in children, but especially in boys employed on the river or the sea. Many he rescued from the gutter, cleaned them and clothed them, and kept them for weeks in his house. For their benefit he established reading classes, over which he himself presided, reading to and teaching the lads with as much ardor as if he were leading them to victory. He called them his "kings," and for many of them he got berths on board ships. One day a friend asked him why there were so many pins stuck into the map of the world over his mantelpiece; he was told that they marked and followed the course of the boys on their voyages, and that they were moved from point to point as his youngsters advanced and that he prayed for them as they went, night and day. The light in which he was held by these lads was shown by inscriptions in chalk on the fences. A favorite legend was "God bless the Kernel." So full did his classes at length become that the house would no longer hold them, and they had to be given up. Then it was that he attended and taught the ragged schools, and it was pleasant to watch the attention with which his wild scholars listened to his words.

THE NEW SCHOOL LAW.

Explained by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

News and Observer.

I trust that it will not be considered improper for me, through the newspaper press, one of the great educators of the people, to explain the modifications of public school law, enacted by the recent general assembly. I am moved to do so because of the numerous inquiries relative to the matter, knowing as I do that it will necessarily be some weeks before it will be possible for the law to be published and sent out as required by law.

The prominent changes from the old law are indicated by the following provisions: 1. On the first Monday in June next, and every two years thereafter, the justices of the peace and the county commissioners at their joint meeting are required to elect three residents of their county, who shall be a county board of education. Their duties shall be the general supervision of the school matters of their county, mainly such as are now performed by the county commissioners. They are to meet four times a year, with a compensation of two dollars a day and mileage.

2. The county superintendent is to be secretary of the board of education. His pay is two or three dollars a day, as the board may determine, for the days that he is actually engaged, and he is under the direction and supervision of the board. He will in addition to the ordinary duties of superintendent, perform the duties now required by the register of deeds in school matters. A good board will give him pay and work within the limits of the law, according to his efficiency.

3. The county board of education will hereafter not be required to make a per capita apportionment of the funds among the several school districts of the county as heretofore required. The law requires that two-thirds of the money be apportioned on a per capita basis, and the remainder one-third is to be apportioned "in such a manner as to equalize school facilities to all the districts of the county, as far as may be practicable and just to all concerned, without discrimination in favor of or to the prejudice of either side." If the board find it desirable so to do, they may control prices to be paid teachers, and they are prudently to require comfortable school houses to be provided.

These provisions indicate the principal changes in the law—all other are minor changes, made necessary to make the system conform to these provisions.

As I understand it, the assembly intended to separate school affairs from other county business, and put them in the hands of persons specially appointed with a view to their fitness to manage them judiciously and economically, giving them large discretion, and evidently taking into consideration the fact that the State is exceedingly diversified in its interests and population, and on this account demands larger local discretion than has heretofore obtained.

This local discretion extends also to the county superintendency. While it is almost axiomatic truth that there can be no good system of public education without the service of an active and competent superintendent, some of our counties are slow to realize the fact. Such counties are allowed, under the legisla-

tion, to elect an inferior man superintendent, restrict the scope of his labor and jog along, being continually distanced in the educational race by their more progressive neighbors. A successful business man never invests money in any enterprise without either superintending it himself, or employing a competent person to superintend it for him. This principle applies to school business with double force. A short term of good schooling is worth more than a longer one of inferiority; time is saved in proportion to the efficiency of the teacher in a marked degree.

The system is not more expensive than the old system. The special board of education will not cost much if any more, than was the cost of the county commissioners as boards of education, and the fees heretofore paid to registrars of deeds will be eliminated.

Seeing that the constitution of the State requires a system of public education, may I not ask the justices of the peace, the county commissioners and the people to assist me in executing the system given us by the assembly under their constitutional requirements, to the end that we may provide at least a rudimentary education for all the children of the State, and to the end that what money we have for education may be judiciously and effectively used. May I not hope that wise, benevolent and suitable men will be found in every county who will consent to act as members of the board of education, which is the foundation of the system?

S. M. FINGER,
State Sup't Pub. Instruction.

Court Calendar—Tenth District.

SUMMER AND FALL TERM.

July 20. Henderson, 3 weeks.
Aug. 10. Burke, 2 weeks.
Aug. 24. Ashe, 1 week.
Aug. 31. Watauga, 1 week.
Sept. 7. Caldwell, 1 week.
Sept. 14. Mitchell, 2 weeks.
Sept. 28. Yancey, 2 weeks.
Oct. 12. McDowell, 2 weeks.

WINTER AND SPRING TERM.

Feb. 8, '86. Henderson, 3 weeks.
March 1, '86. Burke, 2 weeks.
March 15, '86. Caldwell, 1 week.
March 22, '86. Ashe, 1 week.
March 29, '86. Watauga, 1 week.
April 12, '86. Mitchell, 2 weeks.
April 26, '86. Yancey, 2 weeks.
May 10, '86. McDowell, 2 weeks.

INTERCALARY TERM.

May 24, '86. Ashe, 1 week.
May 31, '86. Watauga, 1 week.

8TH, 9TH AND 11TH DISTRICTS.

SUMMER AND FALL TERM.

July 27. Alexander, 1 week.
Aug. 3. Catawba, 1 week.
Aug. 10. Iredell, 2 weeks.
Sept. 14. Wilkes, 2 weeks.
Nov. 9. Iredell, 2 weeks.

WINTER AND SPRING TERM.

Jan. 18. Alexander, 1 week.
Jan. 25. Catawba, 1 week.
Feb. 1. Iredell, 2 weeks.
March 1. Wilkes, 2 weeks.
April 26. Wilkes, 1 week.
May 10. Alexander, 1 week.
May 17. Iredell, 2 weeks.
May 31. Catawba, 1 week.

NOTE.—In the Fall Alexander and Catawba conflict with Henderson; Iredell with Burke and Wilkes with Mitchell. In the Spring Iredell conflicts with Henderson; Wilkes with Burke; Wilkes with Yancey; McDowell with Alexander; Iredell with McDowell and Ashe, and Catawba with Watauga.

After the March term of Watauga court there is a recess of one week between that and Mitchell.

Watauga Sketches.

SUGAR GROVE, March 23.

Precious to 1829 there was no improvement in the county west of the Beach Mt. In that year John Holsclaw went from Watauga river and pitched his tent on Banner Elk, on the land now known as the Big Bottoms of Elk now in possession of John Smith and James Whitehead. His first house was built on the plan of a collier's shanty, open at one end with a log fire in front over which aunt Lyla cooked venison, bear meat and other game and baked hockies in perfect contentment till a log house could be raised. He soon cleared some land which produced a few bushels of buckwheat, rye and corn. In winter he jacked hay on horseback 10 miles across the frozen Beech, from Watauga river. Mr. Holsclaw died without realizing many of the fruits of his enterprise and labor but the partner of his pioneer hardship and adventures, now almost a centenarian, still lives surrounded by every desired comfort.

Fifty-six years ago Banner Elk was an unbroken forest, the undisputed home of the deer, bear and rattlesnake but now the eye of the summer visitor is regaled by many green pastures with their lazy flocks and glossy herds, by ample fields of waving grain and extensive meadows. The farmers of Watauga have ceased their indiscriminate slaughter of the forests and are turning them into a source of wealth. Steam mills are at work throughout the county and many thousand feet of valuable lumber have been shipped to good markets. RAILS.

Wallace
Bros.,

STATESVILLE, N. C.

Wholesale Dealers

General Merchandise.

Largest Warehouse

and best facilities for handling

Dried Fruit, Berries, etc. in

the State.

RESPECTFULLY

Wallace
Bros.

August 27th, 1884.

J. M. SPAINHOUR,

Graduate Baltimore Dental College,

Dentist.

Lenoir, N. C.

Uses no Impure Material for Filling Teeth.

Work as Low as Good Work can be Done.

Patients from a distance may avoid delay by informing him at what time they propose coming.

F. LEE CLINE,

ATTORNEY-AT-LAW,

RICKORY, N. C.

EDMUND JONES,

ATTORNEY-AT-LAW,

LENOIR, N. C.

CLINTON A. CILLEY,

Attorney-At-Law,

Lenoir, N. C.

Practice in All The Courts.