

The Lenoir Topic

VOLUME X.

LENOIR, N. C., WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 1885.

NUMBER 43.

OUR NEW YORK LETTER.

The Glorious Fourth—A Brilliant Celebration—The Trade in Fire Works—German Singing Societies—Hot Weather and Politics.

NEW YORK, July 6.

To the Editor of The Lenoir Topic:

On the night of the glorious fourth there was a fine sight here. I got on a boat just after dark, sailed down North River, then around the city, up to the East River bridge, then down the bay. Music, a jolly crowd and sky-rockets on board would have made it a good holiday evening in itself. But that was as nothing. On both banks of both rivers there were long rows of colored lights, and from all three cities, Jersey City, New York and Brooklyn, as well as from Governor's Island, and Staten Island, thousands and thousands of brilliant rockets went up for two hours. Some were of the most gorgeous variety of colors. They were of all shapes. All of a sudden you could see the American eagle burst in the sky with red wings and a blue body. Then a perfect shower of yellow and green from another point would claim your attention for a moment. High above the long row of splendid electric lights on the great bridge three or four huge balloons of fire floated. In every direction the heavens were ablaze with patriotism.

This was not an unusual Fourth of July at all, but the usual Fourth here is a splendid thing. Then we steamed down past Coney Island to Manhattan Beach. There in fire works the destruction of Pompeii was going on. The spectacle is perfect. The city lies peacefully in the plain. Hundreds of people are in the streets. They are enjoying a holiday. The mountain in the distance begins to smoke. An earthquake rends the city, buildings all, a flame of fire comes out of the earth and flares up through the water in the lake. The volcano begins, a fierce eruption. Its sides split wide open and from its crater all colors of flames issue. The destruction is perfect, and the noise is as the noise of a battle. When the buildings have fallen and the city has been destroyed and darkness covers it, the flames still shoot up from the depths of the earth through the water. When all this has been represented by the art of actor and painter and fire work, suddenly a portrait appears in fire, and you recognize Lord Lytton, the author of the thrilling romance about the destruction of the ancient city.

The art of fire works has never before been carried so far as to present these perfect and awful pictures. When the volcano burst open and great sheets of flame came forth with reports as of a cannonade, a lady in the audience paid the representation the compliment to scream. While this was going on, from all the neighboring hotels along the shore—and there are dozens and dozens of them—brilliant rockets were making the heavens luminous with patriotic fire of all colors. It is a splendid sight on any night to look at the long rows of lights in the three cities and on innumerable boats in the bay; but to add to these hundreds and thousands of many colored rockets is to make the night memorable from one year to another. Added to all these, too, was the sight of the great fire on lower Broadway which threw flames that were not holiday flames high up by old Trinity steeple and lighted up the city to the foot of the island. It was the burning of the great building in which the Baltimore and Ohio Telegraph Company had its offices. And the damage done was not less than \$100,000.

There was no speech making here—except a few private societies, whose members dined together and made short after-dinner speeches. The fourth of July oratory is left to be done in smaller towns and in the country. Tammany had a public celebration by oratory; but it did not amount to much. All day long, however, the business parts of all these cities were deserted. It was a perfect holiday. There was no trading or business done. But throughout the residence part of the cities fire-crackers and cannon-crackers made a noise from midnight to midnight that was simply awful and deafening. All the public buildings and thousands of private houses were decorated with flags. All this made the day exceedingly impressive. No one could see it without feeling that the day had a meaning. And its meaning was expressed with the usual big emphasis with which New York expresses any emotion that seizes it.

The trade in fireworks is something that is simply enormous. Just before the Fourth the great manufacturing firms do a trade that throws other kinds of dealers in despair. —On the evening of the third and all day on the fourth, there are peddlers of all sorts of crackers in the markets and on the street corners. The men who usually sell peanuts and oranges then sell fire works. They have even applied fire works to water in some mysterious way. At one place down on the beach they have a fountain which shoots high up and falls in sprays over

maids (girls) frogs (men) and old Neptune himself, who are in the water dressed to represent the characters they take; at first the water is light. Suddenly it becomes green; then blue; then red; then yellow; and so on and so on and on, changing from one brilliant hue to another. You smell gun-powder while all of this is going on, but there is no other hint that it is a kind of submarine fire works.

Infact, it is a great town—this New York is; and at one time of the year if not at another you are likely to see all the wonderful sights of the world here. The big thing this week is the meeting in Brooklyn of German singing societies from every part of the country. They will have a chorus in which there will be 2000 voices, all perfectly trained. They all drink beer and turn it into song, you see.

It has at last got warm. There is some fear of the cholera; and every body who can go has gone out of town. Yet there are millions of us left; and if you should wake up down town some morning expecting to see no body, you would find yourself in the biggest crowd you ever saw.

The politicians think that in the recent Federal appointments made in this State, the President has done most excellently to unite all factions and to give the Democrats a first rate chance to hold the State for 3 more years. CALDWELL.

The University.

Nashville American.

The alumni of the University of North Carolina will rejoice to know that this old institution, so closely identified with the intellectual progress of the South, is, under the judicious and able management of its learned and enthusiastic president, Dr. K. P. Battle, rivaling the fame which it attained before the civil war. During that trying period it lost the whole of its endowment, and started upon its career after the cessation of hostilities without one cent. Dr. Battle was elected president, and with the aid and advice of a most efficient board of trustees, composed of men remarkable for their breadth of understanding, of whom the venerable Paul C. Cameron is a fitting type, this old institution began to climb upward, and today it has not a superior, if it has an equal, in the South.

Gen. Logan's Story about St. John.

Baltimore Sun.

Mr. Murat Halstead who was, so it is reported, paid \$15,000 by the republican national committee for editing the New York Extra, a campaign publication of the last presidential canvass, has just made rather a remarkable admission. He says that he once asked Senator Logan, the republican candidate for Vice-President, why the New York republicans did not buy St. John, the prohibition candidate for President. General Logan replied that they were willing to pay him several thousand dollars, when it was discovered that while he might sell, he could not deliver. This is a startling revelation, and puts Senator Logan in the awkward position of conniving at bargains and corruption. It will be interesting to hear what Gen. Logan has to say about this statement.

All the Rascals to Go.

Baltimore Sun.

It is related on the authority of a democratic State Senator of Ohio, who called upon the President a day or two since, that Mr. Cleveland asked him about democratic prospects in Ohio for the coming election. He replied that things were looking fairly well, but that the democrats could not hope to succeed unless they had the small postoffices. To this, according to the State Senator, the President, looking at Postmaster-General Vilas, who was in the room at the time, replied, "Oh, you shall have them; every republican must go."

Sam Houston's Inaugural.

The Texas Congress once took exceptions to President Sam Houston's habit of giving them his message orally, and insisted that he should write them out; that the habit of delivering them orally was highly dictatorial, and lacking in respect for Congress. Houston agreed to conform to their wishes, and, as the next day was the one set apart for the delivery of his inaugural, he made his appearance in the halls of Congress with a roll of paper in his hand tied with red tape and marked in large letters, "Inaugural." He addressed them with the roll in his hand, waving it gracefully that all might see it, and, on concluding, handed it with a low bow to the clerk, and strode out of the chamber. On being opened it was found to be a roll of blank paper.

"This world is all a fleeting show, For man's illusion given." The ladies walk the streets below, But their hats ascend to heaven.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT HENRY CLAY.

What the Great Historian, George Bancroft, has to say About the Great Statesman in the July Century.

Henry Clay was of the sanguineous temperament. "His nature," as he said of himself, "was warm, his temper ardent, his disposition enthusiastic." He was of a light complexion with light hair. His eyes were blue, and when he was excited were singularly brilliant and attractive. His forehead was high and of promise of intelligence. In stature he was over six feet. Spare and long-limbed, he stood erect as if full of vigor and vitality, and ever ready to command. His countenance expressed perpetual wakefulness and activity. His voice was music itself, and yet penetrating and far-reaching, enchanting the listener; his words flowed rapidly, without sing-song or mannerism, in a clear and steady stream. Neither in public nor in private did he know how to be dull. His nature was quickly sensitive; his emotions, like his thoughts, moved swiftly, and were not always under his control. He was sometimes like a sportsman who takes pleasure in pursuing his game; and sometimes could chide with petulance. I was present once when in the Senate he was provoked by what he thought the tedious opposition of a Senator of advanced old age, and in his anger he applied to him the two lines of Pope:

"Old politicians chew on wisdom past,
And fatter on its business to the last."

But if he was not master of the art of self-restraint and self-government, he never took home with him a feeling of resentment; never stored up in memory grievances or enmities; never harbored an approach to malice or a hidden discontent or dislike.

As a party leader he was impatient of reserve or resistance, and ever ready to crack the whip over any one that should show a disposition to hang back, sparing not even men of as much ability as himself.

When he first became distinguished before the nation, he astonished by his seemingly inexhaustible physical strength; and the public mind made up its opinion, half fabulous, and yet in substance true, that he knew nothing of fatigue; that after a long day's service as Speaker of the House of Representatives, or as the leading debater when the House was in committee and the session continued into the night, he would at the adjournment come forth, as if watching and long and close attention to business had refreshed him and left him only more eager for the gay society of his friends. But years flew over him, and this man of an heroic mold of mental activity that could not be worn out, of physical forces that defied fatigue, in his seventy-fifth year could not hide from himself the symptoms of decline.

Philadelphia, seemingly by some divine right of succession, has always a constellation of men, adepts in the science of life, and alike skillful and successful in practice. At that time Samuel Jackson, one of the great physicians of his day, was in the zenith of his fame, and was well known for his genial kindness of nature as well as for consummate skill in his profession.

When Henry Clay was debating in his mind the nature of his disease, and as yet had not quite renounced the hope of a renewal of his days of action, he sought counsel of Samuel Jackson. He was greatly in earnest and wanted to know the truth, the exact and whole truth. His question was, if the evident decline in his strength was, so far beyond relief that he must surely die soon. He required an explicit answer, without color or reserve, however unpleasant it might be for the physician to announce an unfavorable result. Dr. Jackson made a careful examination of his condition, found the case to be a clear one, and had the courage to make to the hero of a hundred parliamentary battles a faithful report. The great statesman received the communication that for him life was near its close, not without concern, but yet with the fortitude of resignation. He declared that he had no dread of death, but he was still troubled by one fear, which was probably suggested to him by the recollection of the magnificent constitution with which he had started in life. That fear was not of death, but of the mode of dying; he had a terrible apprehension that his last hours would be hours of anguish in a long agonizing struggle between life and death; and this only, he said, was the thought that lay heavily on his mind. Dr. Jackson explained to him the nature of his malady and the smooth and tranquil channel in which it was to run, and assured him with a sagacity which did not admit of question, that in his last hour he would die as quietly as an infant falls asleep in its cradle. "You give me infinite relief," answered Clay. The chief terror which death had for him vanished.

Clay left not an enemy behind him. John Caldwell Calhoun behind his national career as a member of the wealth House of Representatives. He took his seat in Congress in November, 1811, just two days

too late to give his vote for Henry Clay as Speaker.

Calhoun was immediately drawn into the closest relations with Clay, alike from admiration of his talents and agreement with his mode of treating the great questions of that day.

He always remembered this earliest part of his public service with perfect satisfaction. It was from him I learned that he and Clay were of one mind on our foreign relations, and that for their zeal in support of the honor of the country against the long-continued aggressions of Britain, they two and others of the House, of whom he named only Bibb, were known at the time by the name of "the war mess."

Twelve years later, the two became estranged from each other, and the parts which they severally took corresponded to the differences in their character. Clay was a man by the character of his mind inclined to compromises; Calhoun was in his logic unyielding, and ever ready to push the principle which he supported to its extreme results. In 1825 each of them was put forward as a candidate for the Presidency at the ensuing election. In vain did the friends of Calhoun strive to restrain his ambition. Seaton, of the "National Intelligencer," taking a morning walk with him near the banks of the Potomac, struggled to induce him to abide his time, saying: "If you succeed now, you will be through with your terms while you are still too young for retirement; and what occupation will you find when the eight years are over?" He answered: "I will retire and write my memoirs." Yet Calhoun, moved by very different notions from those which dictated the restraining advice of Seaton, assented to being the candidate for the second place; and Andrew Jackson and many competitors being candidates for the first. It seemed that all parties were courting Calhoun, that he was the favorite of the nation; while Andrew Jackson for the moment signally failed, Calhoun was borne into the chair of the Vice-President by the vote of more than two thirds of the electors.

The political antagonism between Clay and Calhoun never ceased; their relations of personal amity were broken off, and remained so for about a quarter of a century. But not long before the death of Calhoun, Clay took pains to let his own strong desire for an interview of reconciliation be made known to his old friend and hearty associate in the time of our second war for independence. The invitation was readily accepted. In the interview between the two statesmen, at which Andrew Pickens Butler, senator from South Carolina, was present, Clay showed genial self-possession and charm of manner that was remarked upon at the time and remembered; while the manner of Calhoun bore something of embarrassment and constraint.

Party records, biographies, and histories might lead to a supposition that the suspension of personal relations between Clay and Andrew Jackson raged more fiercely than in truth was the case. Jackson did find justice to Clay as a man of warm affections, which extended not to his family and friends only, but to his country.

Of our great statesmen, Madison is the one who held Henry Clay in the highest esteem; and in conversation freely applauded him, because on all occasions he manifested a fixed purpose to prevent a conflict between the States.

In the character of Clay, that which will commend him most to posterity is his love of the Union; or, to take a more comprehensive form of expression, his patriotism, his love for his country, his love for his whole country. He repeatedly declared in his letters that on crossing the ocean to serve in a foreign land, every tie of party was forgotten, and that he knew himself only as an American. At home he could be impetuous, swift in decision, unflinching, of an imperative will; and yet in his action as a guiding statesman, whenever measures came up that threatened to rend the continent in twain, he was inflexible in his resolve to uphold the Constitution and the Union.

A Ravisher Lynched.

CHARLOTTE, July 3.—John Bogan, the negro who criminally assaulted Mrs. Bruner, a respectable widow, near Wadesboro, was discovered secreted in a cave yesterday by a party of 75 men, to whom he confessed the deed and gave a detailed account of his crime. His captors then took him to Wadesboro, and at 2 o'clock strung him up to a tree near the courthouse. His body was riddled with bullets, and a placard was placed on his breast, which read: "This man confesses the deed. Our women must be protected."

Senator Z. B. Vance, who for some time has been resting at his picturesque home, Grobmon, Buncombe county, N. C., has been suffering from an affection of the neck, which necessitates careful medical attention. An operation has been performed, since which his condition has greatly improved and speedy recovery is anticipated.

OH, INDEED.

Wilmington Star.

Mr. McMaster, the historian (?) does not admire the character of George Washington. This is very bad for McMaster and we are sorry for him, as he reveals rather too much of himself in his criticism to make a good impression on his contemporaries. As for posterity McMaster needn't bother himself, for in that direction the august Mister Washington will not be followed by the quereomous writer.—*Norfolk Landmark.*

We are reading the first volume of Professor McMaster's History of the People of the United States. We have not gone far enough yet to justify a final opinion of its merits. We may say this: that the book is modelled on John Richard Green's great "History of the English People," that it is interesting and valuable, because it fills a gap and on a new plan, the period covered being from the Revolution to the war between the States; that it is unnecessarily tedious in places; that its style is far below that of the splendid work it imitates although it is well written and readable; that it gives far more attention to the North than to the South; that its opening pages are a close imitation of Macaulay's grand beginning of his immortal historical sketch, and that it now and then makes a blunder that is curious for a Professor in a college of age and high rank. For instance he speaks of "these molasses," and writes "had loaned them."

We are not disposed to underrate the value or excellence of the work. It fills a vacuum, and fills it well. It is a work of importance, but after reading nearly two hundred pages we are constrained to say that it does not come up to the high praise bestowed upon it by Northern critics. While it is manifest he is Northern in sympathy, and is unable to appreciate the grandest character in history, he has produced a work that was much needed and has done it in the main in a masterly way.

We reproduce the disparaging description of our illustrious Washington. He says:

"General Washington is known to us, and President Washington. But George Washington is an unknown man. When at last he is set before us in his habit as he lived, we shall read less of the cherry tree and more of the man. Naught surely that is heroic will be omitted, but side by side with what is heroic will appear much that is commonplace. We shall behold the great commander repairing defeat with marvellous celerity, healing the dissensions of his officers, and calming the passions of his mutinous troops. But we shall also hear his oaths and see him in those terrible outbursts of passion to which Mr. Jefferson has alluded, and one of which Mr. Lear has described. We shall see him refusing to be paid for his services by Congress, yet exacting from the family of the poor mason the shilling that was his due. We shall know him as the cold and forbidding character with whom no fellow-man ever ventured to live on close and familiar terms. We shall respect and honor him for being, not the greatest of generals, not the wisest of statesmen, not the most saintly of his race; but a man with many human frailties and much common sense, who rose in the fullness of his time to be the political deliverer of our country."

No one who loves truth desires the deification of a hero or the painting of his portrait in false colors. The great Cromwell wanted himself painted as he was, *warts and all*. While it may be true that a glamour has been thrown around the character of Washington, and he had some of the faults and peccadilloes of humanity, it does not follow that a more familiar view of him would lessen our reverence for him or alter the estimate the greatest men of the world have placed upon him. Washington is confessedly the grandest figure in modern history. So thinks Boston's Robert C. Winthrop, and so thinks the South's John W. Daniel. So thought the eloquent and many-sided Lord Brougham. Read the estimate of the philosophical, thoughtful, painstaking, penetrating, judicial Luckey, and then read the detraction and belittling of John Bach McMaster.

If the Princeton Professor is color blind he ought not to be a railroad flagman. If he is character-blind he ought not to attempt to portray the lineaments of a man whose moral and mental qualities were so exquisitely balanced; who was according to the testimony of the greatest and purest of Americans without a peer; who was the wisest man in history; who was a hero, a sage, a statesman who has called forth some of the finest strains of poetry of the modern Muse, and who has excited some of the noblest eloquence that glorifies our language. Historians, philosophers, statesmen, poets, orators have all united in the opinion that the roundest, the completest, the noblest historic character is George Washington, a Southerner.

If Mr. McMaster is unable to appreciate Washington he is the loser. He can never topple the most unselfish and grandest of heroes from the high pedestal upon which he stands, by a consensus of opinion—European and American.

Our Lovely Letter.

LOVELADY, N. C., July 4.

To the Editor of The Lenoir Topic:

As today is the "glorious old fourth," a day on which every one is expected to show his patriotism either by firing guns, burning fire crackers, making a speech or eating a dinner, I thought I'd show my patriotism by penning a few lines to THE TOPIC. In the first place I will state at the outset that I don't expect my article to be as favorably received or as extensively read as the one that was read and adopted 109 years ago today. "Gold and silver have I none but such as I have give I unto thee."

Mr. M. F. Jones, of Hickory, has moved here and is located at the Wiley house and is engaged in the mercantile business. Success to him.

Mrs. Rachel Hayes has been dangerously sick but we are glad to report her as improving.

Mr. Crouch of Granite has been quite sick but is better.

Mr. and Mrs. P. G. Moore, with Misses Annie and Johnnie, are visiting relatives and friends in Asheville and vicinity. May they have a pleasant trip is the wish of their many friends. They have both made themselves very popular in this community.

We are delighted (?) with the running of the mails, it was so troublesome to be wearied with mail every day. But there is one thing we can't exactly understand, and that is why our fast mail (?) stops so long (?) at these little flag stations, and can't stop any at the wood stations. Will some of the railroad officials please explain. It would be so nice if they would stop just a little and let the poor, tired, hungry passengers get a few "huckleberries" and the conductors and other hands might get some too. ORRN.

Our North Catawba Letter.

NORTH CATAWBA, July 3.

To the Editor of The Lenoir Topic:

Probably a few items from our part will be interesting to some. Our people are done harvesting wheat. We have been making some inquiry as to the crop, and from the most accurate report gotten, we think there is something like 45 per cent of a crop. Corn is reported as indicating better than for some years. Upland corn is especially nice, more promising than for four or five years.

The tobacco crop, which is being right extensively cultivated for a beginning, is fine. Among the crops deserving special notice, are those of Messrs. Jeff. W. Berry, L. C. and John Brooks. Mr. Berry has seven or eight acres on his farm, part of which is ready to top, and we are informed that Mr. Brooks is equally as good. The growth of cotton, which has been almost unparalleled has been somewhat retarded by the recent cool nights. Our cotton will be blooming in a few days. We expect that Mr. A. G. Corpening has bloom now. The last account was he was expecting one every minute.

Our neighborhood has been shocked during the past week by the death of two of Mr. James Hood's children. Mrs. Hood and two more of her children have been very sick, but are, we are glad to learn, getting better. The ages of the two that have died are one and a half and three years.

Mr. A. Kaylor's family have been quite ill too, but are improving. We have seldom known flu so fatal.

It becomes our painful duty to chronicle, in this letter, the death of Mrs. John Clarke, who lived on Michaux's Creek in Burke. Mrs. Clarke was a sister to our countyman, Mr. Colman Craig, of Lower Creek. She died June 14, leaving a husband and two children, one of which was four years old at her death. She was sensible of her death a number of days before she died, and often expressed a desire to remain with her children and friends but said she was prepared to leave this troublesome life. Her conversation just before she expired was truly affecting. She left a message for a brother, "let it be," that was full of christian admonition and sisterly love. As she entered the chilly Jordan of death she was heard to say, "Oh! how cold is the river of death, but 'tis clear as crystal. All is well, I shall soon be at rest over there." Though our words seem as mockery, we would offer to all those bereaved, our sincere sympathy. Let us not mourn for those who leave such testimony.

Oh how sweet it is to die
In our dear christian land,
Where grace can bid our spirits fly
To join above that Jove's happy band.

And how happy they must be,
Who have benefited old Jordan's side,
Who have left us to eternal glories rest,
Left us standing on this unlovely shore.

We still are bound to some changing earth,
While they're ascending the tyrant's rod;
We are exposed to hunger and to thirst;
They're at home, Oh! yes, at home with God.

JAS.

A Chicago man at Plainfield, Ind., desired to leave his travelling bag, and overcoat while he walked to place twenty miles distant. He put them into a field unprotected from thieves, except by the sign, "Small-pox beware!" and when he returned they were right there in the field, but they were twenty feet under ground, buried by health officers.

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