

WHAT HAS THE LEGISLATURE DONE?

This question is daily asked by thousands of persons all over the State, who are anxiously looking to our Legislators for some relief from the burdens now oppressing them. More than two-thirds of the session has passed, this being the forty-fourth day, and only sixteen days remain, as by the Constitution the length of the session is limited to sixty days. So that, if the Legislature intends doing anything, it is high time they were about it. We know that much time is necessary, and the earlier days of every session are devoted to work in the Committee rooms preparing and shaping proper legislation, but the people are now expecting to see something done, and some measures of relief passed. We think that they have a right to expect this, and we betide aspiring Legislators if something is not done! The people are in no mood to be trifled with, and let not blatant demagogues think they can be satisfied with windy speeches and buncombe resolutions. No sirs, the honest yeomanry of the land demand something tangible, something substantial, and they will not be easily deceived or duped.

Among the measures which should be acted upon are the following:

1. The no-fence law. A bill should be passed allowing the citizens of any township or county to hold an election to determine their wishes upon this question. We have no doubt, but that in many counties the people would by a large majority adopt the "no-fence" law, and it is certainly fair and just to let them do it, if they wish. In other counties they would not, but even then they might be allowed to vote on it, if they so wish.

2. The protection of sheep husbandry. There is no better country in the world than North Carolina for the growth of sheep and the production of wool, and nothing would be more profitable. And to encourage this, an amendment to our Constitution has been adopted, expressly saying that the "General Assembly shall enact laws for the adequate protection and encouragement of sheep husbandry." Will our Legislators obey the Constitution, which they have sworn to support? Or will the fear of losing some votes force them to violate their oaths? Let us watch and wait.

3. The public highways. Gov. Vance thought this a matter of so great importance that he especially called attention to it in his recent message. A special committee has been appointed on this subject, and we do hope that something will be done by which the people of Chatham can travel over their public roads without danger to life and limb. We are sure that if our Legislators were compelled to make one day's journey on any road in Chatham, they would unanimously vote for some amendment to our present road-law.

4. The Public Schools. No country can be prosperous unless its people have some education, and we are ashamed to know that so little is being done towards educating the children of North Carolina. Our school-law needs a thorough revision, and fresh life should be infused into the whole system of public schools in this State.

These are some of the most important measures demanding the attention of our Legislators, though there are many others, and the people expect and demand that some action be taken upon them. With the demagogue's cry of "retrenchment" some of our Legislators are idling away their time and spending the people's money in nosing around among the clerks and officials in the various departments of the State Government, instead of offering some substantial relief to our people. They are "penny-wise and pound-foolish," and seem not to appreciate the importance of the measures that should engage their attention. We are pleased to know, however, that there are other

gentlemen in the Legislature, men of enlarged views and liberal patriotism, who have the true interests of their country at heart, and who will do all within their power to improve the condition of all classes of our people. We hope that their influence will be such and their efforts so successful, that after the adjournment they can point with pride to "What the Legislature has done!"

PRESIDENT TILDEN.

Not satisfied with defrauding Mr. Tilden of the Presidency, to which he was elected by the votes of more than four millions of American freemen, the Republican Politicians and Newspapers have added insult to injury by endeavoring to blacken his character. They have repeatedly and persistently charged him with attempting to buy the Returning Boards of certain States, and thus secure the Presidency by bribery. A committee was appointed some time ago by Congress to investigate the Electoral frauds, and a few days ago Mr. Tilden appeared before this committee, and was examined. We give herewith an extract from his testimony:

"I never entered into any arrangements to purchase the votes of South Carolina or Florida. I had no information nor suspicion that any such communications were being carried on, until I saw despatches published in the New York Tribune. I had no knowledge of any negotiations; I never authorized any such in any form whatever. Under no circumstances did I enter into any competition for the seeking of certificates by venal inducements. There never was an hour or a minute that I entertained such a thought. I was resolved that if there was to be an auction of the Chief Magistracy of my country I would not be among the bidders. (Applause.) I was determined in such an event, or apprehension of such an event, that I would meet such a degraded condition of public affairs, not by sharing in it in any degree, not by acquiescence, not by toleration, but by an unqualified, perpetual protest, appealing to the people to re-assert, re-establish their great rights, the greatest of their rights, the right without which all others were worthless—their right to elective self-government."

Noble words are these, and expressive of sentiments worthy of the man whom the white people of America elected as their President! And yet he it is, who has been so defamed and traduced by the very men who actually did, what they charged him with only attempting to do. And men in his own party, rivals jealous of him, have been joining in this abuse of Mr. Tilden, but a day of reckoning will surely come! We predict that Mr. Tilden will have a firmer hold upon the affections of the American people, and be more admired and honored in 1880 than even in 1876. Wherever the anglo-saxon race prevails, there is such a detestation of fraud, and so universal a desire for fair play, that the masses of America will next year demand that Samuel J. Tilden be again elected to the high office, of which he has been so infamously defrauded!

The No-Fence Law.

The following communication, signed by a large number of the best citizens of Chatham, has been received.

WILLIAMS'S TOWNSHIP. EDITOR RECORD:—We hereby tender you our grateful thanks for the position you have taken in favor of the "no-fence law" and ask you to continue to wield your pen in that direction until the Legislature shall be forced to come to the relief of the poor people of Chatham county in repealing the greatest and most unnecessary of all taxes, to-wit, the present unrighteous fence-law.

We thank our friends for this expression of their appreciation of our efforts. It will ever be the desire of the Record to do all within its power towards relieving our people from any of the burdens, under which they labor, and believing that the "no fence" law is the heaviest of them all we deem it our duty to demand this relief. The Legislature will doubtless allow the question to be submitted to the voters, so that we will not discuss the question any longer just now, but wait until the election is ordered, and then we will go for it with all our might. Our columns will be open for a full discussion, so that both sides shall have a fair showing.

Work is going on vigorously on the narrow gauge railroad from Mooresville, Iredell county, to Winston.

Correspondence.

WE WILL BE PLEASED TO RECEIVE COMMUNICATIONS ON ANY SUBJECT THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST, BUT WE MUST INSIST ON A RESPONSIBLE NAME ACCOMPANYING EVERY ARTICLE, AND ALSO THAT IT BE WRITTEN PLAINLY AND ONLY ON ONE SIDE OF THE PAPER. THE EDITOR IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS OF CORRESPONDENTS.

FOR THE RECORD.

HURDSKRABBLE, N. C., Feb. 11th, 1879.

Mr. Editor:—Please do not confound this place with one mentioned in an anecdote I once read, where the grass grew so short that the farmers had to lather it with soap and brush before they could mow it and then rake it up with a fine tooth comb in order to save it. It is a place, however, where German millet grows so short that a similar operation would have to be performed before it could be saved; at least, this was my experience with it last year, hence the name of the place from which I write. But I did not start out to give you a glowing description of Hurdscrabble, and I do not tell you of its beautiful hills and dales, mountains and valleys, loaded with the richest and rarest of flowers, the fragrance of which would rival that of Hely's or Gogate's best perfume; or of the beautiful brooks that softly and gently flow along their pebbly bottom, murmuring the sweet and solemn music to nature and to nature's God. But to talk with you about King-homestead. My gracious! What a nomenclature; yet this is the sobriquet by which your learned and eloquent correspondent in your issue of Jan. 30th was pleased to call the present Homestead law, which has brought peace, plenty, prosperity, and happiness to many poor families in the good old North State. Your esteemed correspondent proceeds to tell us, that this Homestead will rob a man of his property and enslave his children.

Mirabile dictu; there is not a man in North Carolina with a thimbleful of brains or who has that infinitesimally small grain of sand situated in the Pinea gland of the brain, and which Galen, and after him, Des Cartes imagined the seat of the human soul, that does not know that a fee simple title to one thousand dollars worth of land is five hundred dollars worth of personal property cannot by any possible chance rob a man or enslave his children. The premises are false, and so are the conclusions.

Your valued correspondent further enlightens the public mind by saying, "That under the homestead if a man wishes to buy a few bushels of corn, and he will have to make a mortgage and pay one dollar per bushel for corn when if the homestead was abolished, he could buy it for 50 cents per bushel." Any one of common sense knows that there is not a man in your village who runs a store, that would not sell your correspondent a bushel of corn, or a pound of meat, cheaper under a first class mortgage, than they would upon his simple "ipse dixit" of

FOR THE RECORD.

CORNWELL'S T. O. S. C., Feb. 8th, 1879.

Money will always buy goods, or provisions, from 10 to 20 per cent. cheaper than promises to pay. Again, we are told, that the homestead will necessitate the hiring out of our children; and that those who live there will get tight on them, not drunk, and that the children will run away and go home.

This incomparable literary production winds up by asking, "Who does the homestead benefit?" And answers the question by saying, "No one but rogues, thieves, rascals, and liars, who make promises and never pay. Now Mr. Editor, it will do very well for a man to rave, fret, fume and cry aloud "Down with the homestead," when he, safely entrenched behind the breast-works of an immense erudition, can protect his own property and sell the last foot of land his poor neighbor owns—his horse, his cow, his little all—skin the cat, bottle up the fleas and publish to the world, wonderful discovery! Universal panacea for all the ills of life where the diagnosis indicates a counter irritant. I enclose this communication by quoting a quaint negro song which, I shall paraphrase to suit my own convenience:

"If the Homestead was a thing that money could buy, The rich would live, and the poor would die. The Homestead is moving. I bless the Lord it is not so; The poor have a right to the Homestead also; The Homestead is moving. Oh go away Satan; I don't care for you, For you is a liar and conjurer too; The Homestead is moving. CYCLOPS.

FOR THE RECORD.

February 11th, 1879.

Mr. Editor:—We are obliged to admire the freedom with which every matter that concerns the people is discussed in your valuable paper. Even our plain unpretending farmers are expressing their views, with a force and ease, that would characterize those of higher rank in the literary world; and we are glad to see that you encourage this. Let this spirit be kept up, let this interchanging of views go on, then all are better satisfied at results.

We admire the frankness and honesty of Clegg, Cheek and others on the road question, although none of them have as yet presented a remedy. It is admitted that we must have better roads, and that the present system is entirely inefficient. We

all know there is not a lawful road in Chatham county, and cannot be under this system. We have heard our judges charge rigidly on this point, one judge went so far as to tell the grand jurors, that they certainly had perjured themselves, by not presenting every road, and that when "they went to return to their homes they were in danger of getting their necks broken;" that our roads were not only unlawful but really dangerous. A few hours in the presence of our County Commissioners will convince any man that every Overseer as he returns his order or "throws up his road" can prove his road in capital condition. If we have forgotten our count we, we are reminded at once by seeing a few pieces of brush thrown into the road, and a little dirt with a few not very small stones pulled in on it, and perhaps a diagonal pole on some hill, that will catch or balk your team or upset you and break your wagon. Five good hands employed by the day under an energetic man, would accomplish more in a given time on a road than twenty as it now is. To illustrate, on one of our roads not long since, the hands and overseers had met, say 9 o'clock in the morning, John a stout heavy fellow and I feeling his keeping said no two men could tie him, but that he could unloose himself in one hour; of course the overseer had the rope brought from the nearest neighbor. It is said this job lasted about four hours, and John got loose. And we know of another case, where the overseer and hands are not satisfied unless they catch half dozen rabbits by dinner. A complete barbecue, a shame on an industrious people. We deserve bad roads. Now Mr. Editor it is not time that sensible people should make a change for the better? Be sure the war the law stood as now, requiring white and black between the ages of 18 and 45, with some exceptions to work the road. Then it took the poor white man and it also took the slave owner with his able bodied negroes—which was all fair enough, slaves were property then. We don't like to use the term "poor man" as it is so often used by the demagogue, one of whom we are not. Now the law calls for the day laborer along with the man of large property, owning farms, lands, etc. This is not just, it is not fair. But to the point. Let the law require every able bodied man between the ages of 18 and 45, except pastors of churches only, to give at least six days work to the roads yearly, or instead thereof pay sixty or seventy cents in advance for each day he proposes not to work; in addition to this, levy a tax on property to go to the roads, let the Board of Magistrates and County Commissioners select a sufficient number of Supervisors who under good bond shall be paid for their services. With the tax levied, the Supervisors can supply themselves with road tools, lumber for cross ditches instead of polls, in fact everything they need for the business. Then we would see good roads and not until then. This is economy.

Tax Payer.

FOR THE RECORD.

CORNWELL'S T. O. S. C., Feb. 8th, 1879.

Mr. Editor:—The past few numbers of the Record have been teeming with letters, discussing, though in a very abstract manner, the "no-fence" law, rather the "no-fence" question as it is not yet a law, you. I am looking at this question with a little more coolness.

Two years since, this same question agitated the minds of the people in this county. There were very few whites who opposed the law. Of course the negroes voted against it, being their most inflexible rule to oppose every political movement the white men institute. The question was carried by a small majority. What are the results of it? Last Summer, one might, in going about, see splendid fields of cotton and corn, where he had before seen nothing but forlorn old fields grow up in bushes and briars. If this law had not been enacted, hundreds of acres that are now cultivated, and which yield abundant harvests, would be lying out. The tax would have to be paid on this land; therefore, as the law now is here, the land that was a positive expense to the owner, is now a source of income to him.

But you ask, "why could not this land have been cultivated before the existence of this law?" I answer in the popular voice, simply because the owners of it could not have fenced it. I passed across some plantations today, and truly I was astonished (and at the same time highly delighted) to see the unmistakable signs of the positive and apparent good that is accruing under the "no-fence" law, in the shape of little nooks and corners being added to the fields—to say nothing of the cedar thickets that are being cleared up for cultivation. Doubtless every farmer has some fertile corners somewhere on his farm, that he would like to add to his acres for a crop this year; but, to put a fence all around it, would more than exhaust the possible income from it. So he must let it lay, and pay tax on it year after year, without its bringing him one iota. Whereas, if he had the benefit (it may be he don't regard it as such) of the "no-fence" law, he could, with very little labor, prepare said corner for cultivation, and thus substitute an income for an outlay—a happy substitution!

Prejudice sometimes goes a long way against a thing. Some persons think that because a given movement has never existed among them, therefore, it should not exist. Shall men continue to do wrong because they have done wrong in the past? And shall they continue to lose money because they have lost in the past? The cost of fences on all farms is in excess of the value of the stock on them. Again: the annual cost of keeping the stock out of the fields is more than the income of the stock in any year. Let any man who doubts this make the calculation for himself, taking his own premises for example. What is true of the entire State, must be true of its citizens. Statistics show that the fences of North Carolina are valued at four million dollars and the stock at one million. Is it possible that a man will pay forty dollars to fence his crop from an old cow that is worth only ten dollars? The statistics show that not only a man is doing it, but that men, hundreds of them, are. Such a case as this "no-fence" is an excellent opportunity to develop philanthropy and patriotism. Men should try and look beyond the narrow bounds of self-interest, and act for the good of their fellow-men and for the advancement of the general welfare of their State. And certainly it would be advancing the interests of the State to save it four millions; more than forty thousand dollars for Chatham!

One unmistakable and practical evidence in favor of the "no fence" law is that wherever it has been tried, it still exists. The people who have experienced its benefits, will advise you, as with one voice, to cast your ballot in favor of "no fence," and thus appropriate to yourselves the familiar lines of Cooper: "I am the monarch of all I survey, My right there is none to dispute, From the center all round to the sea, I am Lord of the fowl and the brute." Very truly, AGRICULTURIST.

FOR THE RECORD.

WILLIAMS TOWNSHIP. Mr. Editor:—The Record is highly esteemed wherever read, and its exposition of the present fence law is spoken of in most grateful terms. It seems that all men everywhere are making the enquiry who does the law benefit? For an answer through the Record I would say the wealthy rich men and the loafers, while the burden, the whole burden, falls upon the honest laboring class. Why? Because the rich man will not design to build and repair his fences but forces his croppers and tenants to do the work without any remuneration and the loafers or gipsy who claims no dwelling place can let loose his pig in the broad world, and from it receive a hog. But the laboring man must build, build, and repair, and watch and guard the fence that is around his crop. This is not extravagance, but plain sober facts. The poor colored man is forced to keep a good fence sometimes of a thousand pounds around his crop to prevent the rich landlord's stock from destroying it. Is this justice? Let the world answer and answer not. Very often the working man does more work on the fence than on the crop, and timber that great gift of the Creator to man is rapidly giving way; game is being diminished, and birds the great destroyer of pestiferous insects can not find a shelter in our midst. Might not the Indian Phillip weep at such destruction?

Some of the non-land owners think that advantage would be taken by the land if we had a "no-fence" law but they are wrongly informed. Would it not be better for them to fence in a few stock than to fence out a whole neighborhood of mischievous stock? You let common sense answer yes. Then every commoner could fence his own lot then be many or few. Long may the Record live and grow. A Poor Man.

Good for Butler.

A few days ago while General B. F. Butler was making a speech in Congress, he made some very kind allusions to the courage and devotion of the Confederate soldiers, which so nettled some of his brother Republicans that one of them asked him, "if he was willing to pension the rebel soldiers." To this question, Butler made the following reply: "I see no more reason why a Confederate soldier maimed and crippled in the honest discharge of what he believed to be his duty should not be pensioned than why a Confederate General who honestly believed that he was doing his duty should be put into a Republican Cabinet."

For this, we say "bully for Butler!" Hit him again!

A Sheriff Gagged and Robbed.

It is stated, that Sheriff Jno. H. Cox, of Perquimans county, was met on the road two miles out of Hertford, the county seat, by two masked men, one armed with a double barrel-gun and the other with a pistol, who gagged and tied him to a tree and robbed him of \$1,612 in money. He was thus found two hours after by some one passing. No clue to the perpetrators.

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