The Chatham Record

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H. A. LONDON, Editor.

AN EARTHQUAKE, on last Saturday night, almost entirely destroyed the town of Casamicciola, on the Island of Ischia, off the coast of Italy. It was one of the most appalling calamities of modern days, the number of persons killed and wounded being estimated at three thousand. Occurring, as it did, at night the horrors of the catastrophe were rendered still more appalling, and the mind cannot conceive the awfulness of the terrible scene. It is horrible to think of so large a number of human beings meeting so sudden and terrible a death!

This Island of Ischia has felt the shocks of earthquakes several times before this, the last having occurred in March, 1881, when about thirty hundred persons were injured. We are glad that we do not live in such a country.

THE STRIKE of the telegraph operators still continues. Although it began two weeks ago it shows no symptom of soon collapsing. The operators seem defiant and declare they will not yield, while the company decline all overtures of a compromise. Both sides seem to be equally resolute and determined, but in addition to this the company has the money, and in this world that power seems irresistible, and we may therefore expect the operators to yield at last. If they should, it ought to put an end to strikes in this country, for if these strikers cannot succeed no others can. They are much above the average striker in intelligence and education, and are in a better position to force their employers to accede to their demands than strikers usually are. Public sympathy is still with the operators, who have continued to observe the same orderly and peaceful policy that first characterized their move. Among their number are many ladies, who are even more determined than their male associates. It is a determined fight and while it goes on the business of the country suffers and the public greatly inconvenienced.

FRUIT CULTURE has not received the attention in North Carolina that its importance deserves. The greater portion of the State is well adapted to the cultivation and growth of a large variety of fruits, which would pay well. In this manufacturing section we know this to be true, and the apples of the mountain counties cannot be surpassed anywhere either in size or quality. Some citizens of this (Chatham) county have for years past been engaged in fruit culture, and there are probably as many fruit nurseymen here as in any other county of the State, but still we do not see a county given as much attention as ours might receive. The extension of the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley railroad will doubtless stimulate our nurserymen in the western part of the county, for they will then be in rapid communication with the Northern cities and be enabled to sell abroad all their fruit. For the past few years there have been efforts made by the more enterprising of the fruit growers of the State to encourage and stimulate the cultivation of fruit. They organized a "Fruit Growers' Association" and last year held a fair at Greensboro' which was quite a success. The next fair will be held at Wilmington on the 22nd and 23rd of August, which we hope will be well attended. The President of the Association has issued an address which we herewith copy:

"The Second Annual Fair of the Fruit Growers' Association will be held in the city of Wilmington on the 22nd and 23rd of August. The previous one held in Greensboro was highly satisfactory, and as a first effort was a great success. The attendance was large, the display very creditable, and we have reason to anticipate that good results will flow from it. We wish to make the next one a grand affair, far exceeding the previous one. The citizens of Wilmington are anxious to have it in their city, and have subscribed liberally of their means for premiums, and will use every exertion to make the visit of those who may attend pleasant and agreeable. Wilmington has many advantages to offer. In the first place, it is the largest city in the State, having at least 20,000 inhabitants, and is easy of access from all parts of the State. It is as healthy as any portion of North Carolina, and the seaside resorts are most delightful, and a cordial welcome awaits all who may come. Let us strive to cultivate a laudable State pride among all North Carolinians. The people of this section are anxious to stimulate a fruit trade with North Carolina fruit growers, and they prefer to spend their money among their own people, rather than to send it abroad, as they have been doing for years. The rates of transportation, both for passengers and freight on fruit, have been made lower than ever before in North Carolina; in fact, all freight for fruit will be prepaid free of cost by the Association. We want you all to come and help us show to the world what a magnificent fruit country our glorious old State is. We want the people of the West to come to Wilmington to know our people and to see for themselves our beautiful city by the sea. G. F. PERKINS,

Pres't N. C. Fruit Growers' Ass'n."

A Foolhardy Feat.

Capt. Matthew Webb, the famous English swimmer, was drowned last week in Niagara Falls while attempting a most foolhardy feat. A late despatch says:

"His plan was to swim through the entire chute of about two miles below the Falls, something that had never been done and was generally regarded impossible. A visitor at Niagara, who is familiar with the place, whispers that it is certainly less a natural wonder than the cataract. Its power is irresistible, and there is no instance on record of any living being going through it in safety. Webb plunged into the water at thirty two minutes past four. He came up immediately and swam with a bold stroke, one stroke, apparently with ease, till he struck the first rapids going under the old railway suspension bridge. Then he was carried along by the incredible velocity, but still seemed to fight his own.

The spectacle at this time was very thrilling. He shot along like an arrow, with the whirlpool straight before him. As he went through the rapids he lifted each time and reappeared his strong arm. His intention was to get through on the Canada side, but the current was too strong for him. In thirteen minutes he reached what is known as the Cauldron, or a place where the waters shoot right and left. To these on the bridge he was a mere speck. Still only the thick upthrust right arm and disappeared, and that was the last sight of the great Englishman. He was undoubtedly sucked down into the frightful vortex and met an instant death. It was thought that he was injured in some manner while diving, as he seemed exhausted and unable to make much progress. His manager and the reporters were hopeful that he would get through safely and then down the Canada side to the Whirlpool Rapids, but could find no trace of him. He was unexpected, and his body is probably still in the whirlpool, if not in pieces. It was recovered a few days after and dragged near to where the whirlpool is."

A Circus on Fire.

A despatch from Norwich, Vt., the 12th of July, says:

"A thrilling scene took place in the city of Portsmouth last night. Between two thousand and five thousand men, women and children assembled at the exhibition of Nathan's Last circus. After the performance had commenced the tent began to be quite heavily pressed against by the movement of the canvas. The crowd, however, remained quiet, believing it was only a high wind, and that the tent would be made secure. The pressure increased, however, and the tent was seen to be in imminent danger of falling