The Warrenton Gazette,
AN INDEPENDENT
WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER

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The Warrenton Gazette.

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JOHN C. MCRAW, Local Ag't.
Nov. 2-tf.

PROFESSIONAL.

DR. THOMAS E. WILSON,
Having returned to this place, offers his professional services to the citizens of this town and vicinity.
Office one door below Jno. R. Johnson's Boot and Shoe Factory. Ju-13-tf

DR. J. H. COOK,
Having retired from the DRUG BUSINESS, will devote his entire time to his PROFESSION.
OFFICE—Over the Drug Store of Messrs. Thomas & Bobbit. Ju-13-1y

DR. J. G. KING,
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OFFICE.—Next door to Residence, on North Side Court House Square. Ju-13-1y.

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Amount of property insured $7,499,859.74.
Amount of Deposit Notes Deposited with the Company, $420,067.26.
Amount of cash premiums and fees received $233,514.82.
Amount paid for losses, expenses, &c.
$170,765.39.
Issues Term and participating policies—
DR. H. G. DAVIDSON, President.
JORDAN H. MARTIN, Vice President.
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REFERENCES.
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Successors to WILLIAMS & SELDEN,
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COMMISSION MERCHANTS,
Nos. 92 and 94 WATER STREET,
NORFOLK, VA.
Nov-2-1y

Guild's Signal.

Two low whistles, quaint and clear,
That was the signal the engineer—
That was the signal that Guild, 'tis said—
Gave to his wife at Providence,
As through the sleeping town, and thence,
Out in the night,
On to the light,
Down past the farms, lying white, he sped!

As a husband's greeting, scant, no doubt,
Yet to the woman looking out,
Watching and waiting, no serenade,
Love song or midnight roundelay—
Said what that whistle seemed to say:
"To my trust true
So love to you!
Working or waiting, Good night!" it said.

Brisk young bagmen, tourists fine,
Old commuters along the line,
Brakemen and porters glanced ahead,
Smiled as the signal, sharp, intense,
Pierced through the shadows of Providence:
"Nothing amiss,
Nothing; it is
Only Guild calling his wife," they said.

Summer and winter, the old refrain
Rang o'er the billows of ripening grain.
Pierced through the budding boughs o'erhead
Flew down the track when the red leaves burned
Like living coals from the engine spurned:
Sang as it flew:
"To our trust true,
First of all Duty—Good night," it said.

And then, one night, it was heard no more,
From Stonington over Rhode Island shore,—
And the folk in Providence smiled and said,
As they turned in their beds, "The engineer
Has once forgotten his midnight cheer."
One only knew
To his trust true,
Guild lay under his engine, dead.

BRET HARTE.

THE BILL COLLECTOR.

A Most Mysterious Acquaintance.

He was a peculiar-looking person, not more than thirty, I should say, with a face full of points; rather tall, with an easy, shambling gait; scarcely well dressed; hardly a gentleman, and if not a gentleman—what? When I say "a face full of points," I do not mean intellectual points, reflective points, vicious points, in fact, any ordinary or extraordinary points, but rather a face full of possibilities. Was he an actor, an artist, an eccentric man of letters? After considerable scrutiny, I decided "No." Was he a professional of any kind? Since nowadays the professions are so varied, I said, after much hesitation, "Yes, a professional." The decision availed little. Meanwhile the man's presence had a fascination for me. As I occasionally met his small blue-gray eye, suspicions of his being a detective were indulged in; but he lacked the hard expression and the secretive air acquired by that odious yet necessary member of society.

This was a few years ago, on the long colonnade of Congress Hall, in Saratoga. My man would take a position favorable for seeing the world which surged to and fro, and there he would sit nearly all the morning, nearly all the afternoon, not talking with anybody, doing literally nothing, except in the way of observation. I did not once see him speaking with a human being. It was all the same to him, I am sure, for he wore perpetually that easy, vagabondish look. I resolved to scrape acquaintance with him.

Taking advantage of a vacant seat next him, I sat down.

"A fine day?"

It was with this original observation I commenced the attack.

He actually turned and looked me full in the face, as much as to say, "Who the deuce are you, and what object can you have in speaking to me?" A pleasant look, nevertheless, though not unmixed with suspicion. After he had satisfied himself apparently, he replied, "Very." The answer certainly was not provocative of further conversation; still it was not spoken in a sharp, cut-off tone, but dropped from his lips in an acquiescing, amiable way, as if here was a congenial subject on which we could exchange confidences.

"Do you know," I said, "that, of all the people I have seen here, you appear to be most enjoying yourself."

"How is that?"

He uttered "How is that?" in the easiest, most companionable tone imaginable, as if we were old friends about to enjoy a snug, cozy chat.

"Why, you seem to take things philosophically, and to make of Saratoga, what in reality it should be, a place to rest and recreate in."

"Well, you *have* hit my case, that's a fact—it is *rest* that I am after! though I don't care much for the recreation."

"You don't look overworked."

"Don't I? That is strange. It is owing to my native vigor, I guess. Perhaps you won't believe me if I tell you I am the hardest-worked man in New York city—more than that the most imposed-on individual in that little village—the very most."

"I am sorry to hear it. I confess I can't find the least trace of what you complain of in your countenance. By-the-way," I continued, "your face is very familiar to me. Where have I seen you?"

My companion's manner suddenly changed. He looked at me in a curious and prying, not to say offensive, way.

"No, it isn't so," he presently ejaculated, by way of soliloquy. "We never got acquainted—am downright sure."

"I did not intimate that we had," I replied, tartly. "I said your face was familiar."

"Oh, that may be—that may be; easy enough, if you belong to New York. I am *around*, you may be certain of that."

"How as to your being so much imposed upon?"

"I could not explain unless I told you my business, and I sink the shop when I leave home. Don't I enjoy it here!"—he stretched his legs at full length, and they were very long. "Nothing to bother me; no care, no responsibility."

"And no one to impose on you," I put in.

He laughed. "You are curious to find out who I am. I saw that plain enough yesterday. You took my bearings all sorts of ways. You can't guess now."

"No, I give it up."

"Well, I may call myself a philosopher. My life is spent in studies of human nature—that makes a philosopher, doesn't it?"

I assented, and he went on.

"My father intended me for a lawyer, but it was too narrow business—too little scope for real genius—not excitement enough. In fact, I invented my present occupation—not to say 'invented,' exactly, but I struck out a new path, a new mode of treatment, based on truly humane principles. Not but what I *can* be severe if necessary, yet it seldom *is* necessary. New and varied acquaintances, the intimate ramifications of society, the mysteries of this mundane life, the weaknesses and foibles of humankind, all pass in review before me—philosophically interesting—in short, sir, interesting in every way!"

This was delivered in a highly rhetorical tone and manner, and with such a gleam of those blue-gray eyes, that for a moment I doubted my companion's sanity.

"But you have not told me what the occupation is," I interposed.

"It is difficult to comprehend and embrace it by any known appellation. To tell you in one word would be impossible; I should have to enter largely into the subject."

"Just what would most interest me."

"Do you understand," continued he, grandiloquently, "the antagonism between buyer and seller, employer and employed, first man, middle man, and public?"

"Something of this I have paid attention to."

"Well, you are also familiar with the credit system?"

He brought one of his little twinkling orbs to bear on me in a manner so delicately insinuating, that I could positively feel myself changing color. I nodded.

"The credit system, sir—the greatest blessing of civilization, and the most absurd of all our blessings. Have you ever considered, sir, of the millions on millions of individuals on this globe who are benefitted, I may say vivified, by it? Do you know to what it is constantly subject? Did it ever occur to you that to be in such case the medium between persons holding opposite relations is one of the noblest missions of humanity? And yet," he added, with an entire change of voice, and in a tone exceedingly pathetic, "how wearisome, how never-ending the toil."

"In other words," I said, beginning to be weary of his circumlocution, "you are——"

"A collector! There!" he exclaimed, "I see you are disappointed. I knew you would be so. (It was impossible for me not to show it at such an impotent conclusion.) But hold on. I told you no one word would define what I meant, and I have got to go into the subject with you."

I signified my wish for him to proceed.

"Yes, you may call me a collector. Understand, I treat the business on the highest grounds of psychology, humanity, and animal magnetism. I shall explain. I have for my constituents doctors and dentists, retail merchants of every sort, first-class mechanics, and so on, and so on. Lawyers and clergymen have little occasion for my services; but undertakers—fashionable undertakers—frequently call in my assistance. Imagine me with hundreds of these bills in hand, ranging from ten dollars to a thousand dollars. I don't refuse the very smallest. These bills are against persons of all grades of respectability. Often, when put in my hand, they are accompanied by a suggestion which the principal thinks he ought to make, but which he does not expect will influence me much—nor does it. For example, he will say, 'I want you to collect one hundred and three dollars from Jones. You must be sure to treat him with courtesy and not wound his feelings—he is a gentleman.' Now, if I find Jones to be really a gentleman, as is often the case, I have no difficulty. Perhaps he will tell me he can't pay at present, and will explain why. The explain part may all be manufactured out of whole cloth to save his pride; but I accept his statement of inability, and I sympathize with all my magnetism with his excuse, and ask him to fix his own time, when I shall call for the money. He dislikes to fix too distant a day, but he postpones, say, for three weeks. I accept the date with alacrity. I produce my memorandum-book. 'Let me see—that will bring it to Thursday, June 4th. Am very much obliged to you, Mr. Jones. I will call *on that day;*' and I look at him courteously, but with a full magnetic current, by which I am brought into a peculiar relation with that man, and he feels I mean business."

"Does he pay on the day?"

"Not always. Perhaps he will give me a part, and manufactures another excuse—poor fellows! why *will* they lie so?—or, he may really be obliged to put me off again for the whole—recollect, I am talking of a gentleman, and no mistake; then I bring a stronger current to bear, but always as the same polite 'your humble servant,' and the next fetches it. Why, such a man feels as much relieved when he pays one of *my* bills as a criminal does at a verdict of not guilty. Can't explain it myself—magnetism—all magnetism!"

"You have given me, I should judge, a very gentle example. You have much harder cases?"

"I should say so! I was about to tell you. After seeing my people once—I call them *my* people, for I take an affectionate interest in them all—after seeing them once, I classify right off—know just how to deal with each type, just exactly.

"You have many divisions?"

"A good many—reduce down to as few as possible. Besides the type I have just mentioned, is the good-natured, careless fellow, able to pay, not quite ready, because he won't take the trouble to raise the money. These are difficult cases—very hard to bring them into magnetic relations with me. I present the bill. 'Thunder!' isn't that paid? It ought to have been paid long ago! No money to-day—not a stiver; too bad, isn't it?' 'When shall I call again?' I ask. 'When call again?—bless me! whenever you like; always glad to see you. Take a cigar?' Of course, I never smoke. If I take a cigar or a drink, it is all up with the magnetism."

"How do you answer him?"

"I look serious, very serious indeed, but am *excessively* polite. I plead that I have infinite running about to do which precludes my calling for the pleasure of the thing. Still the bill was handed me to *collect*, and if he will name a day for payment I will certainly be on hand. If I can get his sober attention I am all right, but the chances are he will chaff me two or three times, and, as he is a good fellow, my perseverance is rewarded at last."

"Thus far I don't see the dark side of the picture."

"Will come to it presently. I must get on methodically. You must bear in mind, I have often a double trial. A physician sends for me—he is desperately hard up. 'Take these accounts,' he says—'recollect, money I *must* have.' I go ahead. The first person I call on flies in a passion. 'It is not possible! I can't believe it; I don't believe it! Why, I sent the doctor fifty dollars last week, with word he must wait another month for the balance; he sent answer it was all right, and now he has put it in the hands of a collector—perfectly shameful, considering the amount of money I have paid him.' I try to explain. I talk of a sudden loss, of I don't know what else, but the man has got me down on magnetism, and he keeps me down. He defies the doctor, and looks at me as if I were a swindler. He will pay it in a month, and no sooner, just as agreed on—wouldn't pay sooner if he had the cash in his pocket. I get out of the house the easiest way possible. I have made no mistake, but the doctor has. I report to him. He at once blows me up for being too pressing; too professional; for not managing better, anyhow. I accept the talk; it don't mean anything. I know that, but it isn't pleasant—no, it isn't pleasant. The chances are, the doctor will write to his patient, tell him a direct falsehood, how the account got by accident into my hands, that I acted without orders; hoping the matter will be overlooked. Poor man, to tell such a lie just for nothing—how humiliating."

Others go further. I had a bill for nine hundred dollars against—well, a very pretty, fashionable woman. It was for all sorts of fancy goods. The merchant thought the people were getting shaky. "We must look very sharp," he said, "or we shall lose this." I had no idea of losing it. I called in the morning, about ten; my lady had not been to breakfast. I called at one, she was engaged; at six, she was at dinner; later in the evening, she was at the opera. By dint of extraordinary perseverance I succeeded, through the servant, in getting her to name an hour when she would be at home. She was at home, but dressed for a drive, and could not stop a minute to see me. She was impertinent, very. I always call that a good sign, just as getting angry is a good sign. "Who sent me?" she wanted to know that. "No one sends me, madame," I said; "it is my own business I am conducting, which is that of collecting bills which are considered a little doubtful or difficult," "Doubtful! do you call a bill against me doubtful?" "With entire respect, I must say I do." She rushed in the carriage in a rage, and was off. The next day she called at my client's store and paid up every cent! My man was so much influenced by her statement of my conduct, coupled with the possession of the money, that he took me to task for doing my duty, although those folks failed in thirty days from that time. My feelings were very much hurt, but I could afford to pity the man. I pity all who prevaricate and lie, and he did both.

The collector drew a long breath, and continued:

"Next come the unfortunates who are so hard-pressed they really can't pay, but they are ashamed to own it. Why, if folks would come right out, honor bright, and say, 'We can't do it, there's no use talking,' I would wait a whole year; but they say 'next week,' and 'next month,' and 'in a fortnight,' and 'very soon indeed, probably Thursday.' Now, I *always keep an appointment*, and if you could hear how, time after time, running through a year or two years, new excuses are fabricated for each occasion, you wouldn't wonder at my pity for these poor, wretched, degraded souls."

"But I should think, understanding their situation, you would let them know it kindly, and save yourself much running."

"That is not my occupation. My occupation is to *collect the money*, and I expect to run after it. Yes, nobody runs like me; morning, noon, and into the night. But I don't mind it."

"You have said nothing of those who impose on you."

"Ah, it is only when my people undertake to impose on me that my genius rises to the occasion. I once had a bill against a club-man—only fifteen dollars. You would know him if I mentioned his name. He never pays anything—belongs to two first-class clubs. I followed him from one to the other; he would make appointments as often as I liked, but never kept them—was of the pompous sort. One day he would be going to receive a check; another day he would show it to me; it was to be cashed in the morning, and I should be paid. Then he would go to Washington, and no one knows where. I lost his track once for three months. At last I caught him at the —— Club. He looked very lofty. 'Thomas,' said he to the waiter, 'change this bill for me.' The waiter took it, and presently returned. It was too large. 'You see how it is,' said the magnate; 'if the boy could change the note, I would give you your money. You will have to call again.' 'How large is it?' I asked. 'A hundred dollars,' said he. 'I can change it for you,' (you see, the big bill dodge is not uncommon, and I go provided); so I took the hundred dollars, counted him out eighty-five, handed him his receipt, and came away—a great triumph, a very great triumph. Poor man, I pity him very much; think how hard he must try to be a rogue poor fellow!"

"You fail sometimes, I suppose?"

"I can't say I fail. I never undertake a 'dead beat'—that is, if I know it—never. I don't claim to be able to magnetize a corpse. Sometimes I encounter one without knowing it. It don't take me long to find it out. Then I punish him, always with a view to his good."

"How?"

"Sometimes in one way, sometimes in another. A poor man gave me an account for twenty dollars to collect against a young fellow in a first-class jobbing house. I found he was a 'dead beat;' he would make appointments for every day in the year, and when you came, coolly tell you he had no money. It was in July; the weather awful hot. One day the fellow said, 'Call Friday, and I will make a payment.' On Friday I called; he was in the lower basement, packing goods. 'No money to-day;' that was all he said. Two or three of his fellow-clerks were helping him. I took off my coat and began to preach to him. I can preach when I try. I went into the detail of my client's situation, the nature of the debt, the conduct of the debtor, his manner of life, his probable end. I soon discovered I had the attention of my audience—the chap himself began to slacken in his work. At last he said: 'Mister, if you will stop where you are I will pay you five dollars down and give you my word of honor I will pay you five dollars a week till the whole is paid.' 'Done,' I said. He handed over the V, and I came away."

"Did he pay the rest?"

"Not he. The next week the bird had flown, and I never saw him again. But I administered punishment righteously. Poor wretch, my heart bleeds for him. What a life to lead!"

"And do you never resort to harsh measures?" I asked.

"Such as what?" demanded my companion.

"Legal prosecution, for instance," I said.

He laughed at what he seemed to think was a very verdant suggestion.

"You do not suppose," he continued, complacently, "that where my magnetism fails there is any chance for law?"

I did not know. "There are other means," I remarked, "which I have heard of. There are collectors, I am told, who make themselves personally offensive in dress and appearance, so as to be as annoying as possible."

"You are right; but that sort of thing is pretty much played out. These are low fellows, a disgrace to an artistic profession. Why, I knew one of these vagabonds, who had an old covered wagon plastered with common advertisements and bills, and a rawboned horse. He went around collecting. The establishment was so conspicuous that everybody knew what it was. This chap would drive before the door of the person who owed a bill, and there he would sit an hour or two, so everybody would say, 'Look there; he is after Thompson.' The fellow came to grief. He drew up to a house in Lexington Avenue; went in and asked payment of an account. The party hadn't the money. The other went out, took a seat in his covered cart, and there remained. The party in the house seeing this told him to drive on. He declined to do so. The party, who was a strong, stalwart man, dragged the fellow to the sidewalk and thrashed him soundly. It stopped his business, and it served him right, I say. He was a disgrace to the profession. No, sir; no. Nothing but magnetism and moral suasion. Appeal to the conscience which is alive in the bosom of every one of God's creation, except in that of the 'dead beat' who is a moral corpse. Appeal, I say, to the conscience, and bring your magnetism to bear. Very hard work, though—very hard work, indeed. It requires a deal of running; a wearisome work. I sometimes fear it will wear me out."

A Bold Stroke.

"Henri III." was written by Alexander Dumas and accepted by the theatrical manager, but Dumas had neglected his official duties in his application to the piece, and was threatened with the loss of his post. At this his poor mother broke down, and was seized with a fit, at the very moment when success was dawning upon him. "He spent his time rushing from the theatre to her bedside, and back again." On the day before the performance "he ventured on a bold *coup*, which he had reserved for the last. He asked for an audience with the Duke of Orleans, and was received with some graciousness. He submitted an humble request that his Royal Highness would honor the performance to-morrow night by attending it. The Duke was not a little astonished by this demand. But it was impossible for him to comply; he had a large party to dinner—some twenty or thirty persons of the highest rank, including princes. The young author was not discouraged by this difficulty. With surprising readiness and boldness he suggested that His Highness should bring the whole party on to the theatre! The Duke was not displeased, and merely suggested another difficulty. His dinner was to be at six, while the play began at seven. The petitioner had another suggestion ready; the play could be put an hour later and the dinner an hour earlier! Strange to say, the Duke inclined to the idea. But would the theatre agree; and where was such a party to be placed? The theatre *would* agree, and the author had already reserved the grand gallery, hoping that the Duke might consent. The latter smiled, and agreed, and from that day Dumas dates the commencement of his success in life.

WESTERN FRUIT.—J. E. Chamberlain, President of the St. Joseph Fruit Growers' Association of Michigan, announces the result of a tour of observation through the farms in that region. So many peach-buds are alive that sanguine fruit growers estimate the crop of peaches at one-third of a full crop. The peach trees killed by the severe cold were mostly old and sick trees. The apples never looked better. The pear trees are uninjured. The grapes promise an abundant crop. The strawberries are in splendid condition and will yield a full crop. The cherries and plums promise equally well.

Items of Interest.

Nevada has enacted compulsory education.

A married Indiana man has eloped with his step-mother.

The last Legislature of Kansas organized eleven new counties.

New York sawdust boxes continues to bring fabulous prices in the rural districts.

The Maine Republican State Convention is to be held in Bangor, Thursday, June 19.

A Newport cat washes her face in a basin as neatly and skillfully as its proud owner.

Fred. Douglass was refused the use of the Opera-house in Lexington, Ky., for a lecture.

The announcement that truth is stranger than fiction" is said to depend chiefly upon who tells it.

Nearly all the American girls are studying for the operatic stage. Milan lodge in the same house.

Proceedings have been instituted against two papers in Toronto, publishing a gift-enterprise advertisement.

With the spring weather suicides are taking place in vast numbers. The papers report a number of cases every day.

A Chicago druggist, whose clerk's "mistake" cost a woman her life, has been sued for $25,000 damages by her husband.

A Lynn man has invented a substitute for sole leather, which, he claims is cheaper in price and superior in durability to that article.

Two candidates for a local office in Illinois receiving an equal number of votes lately, "tossed up" to see who should have the office.

The Havana authorities have decreed to the English officers the Bank of England forgery, and they will be taken to England in a man-of-war.

Small contributions to the United States conscience fund are the order of the day. Sums ranging from $1 to $5 reach the Treasury every day.

Three boys in Evansville, Ind., tried to see which could hang longest by the neck. When their sport was interrupted one of them was almost dead.

In Chicago two pounds of canned green corn are worth as much as sixty pounds of shelled field corn, the former being most of it brought from Maine.

The two love-sick Wisconsin girls, who the other day unsuccessfully attempted to commit suicide together by poison, have since drowned themselves.

A little lady in Schenectady recently sent word to her aged P. in New York that she must be excused from writing a longer letter. She had spent a very restless night with a sick doll.

A Rhode Island enthusiast at an auction bought a lot of furniture and then asked the crowd to name "the poorest woman in town." The name was given, and the goods were sent to her.

A Massachusetts farmer recently advertised his farm for sale, and now he is asserting that he has fed out over a hundred barrels of oats to the horses of persons who have come to examine it.

Some practical jokers, in Worcester, Mass., a month ago put some tacks in a chair for their friend Thomas McGee to sit on, and they produced wounds on his thigh which led to dangerous abscesses.

Minister Washburne has sent $25 to a gentleman in Illinois, to be used in defending the suits instituted by the Chicago and Alton Railroad Company against the farmers who refused to pay more than the legal fare.

The order of Patrons of Husbandry has extended its operations into the far South. The farmers of Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia are organizing into granges, and evince a lively interest in the movement.

A telegram operator in Baltimore, recently sued a friend for twenty-five cents, the amount he paid for a telegram sent at his request. He obtained a verdict for the amount and costs, aggregating $1.95, but the defendant appealed, and has finally given bond in the sum of fifty cents.

The Attorney-General of the United States has given his opinion that indigent persons who volunteered in the Union army during the rebellion, and have since that time become insane, are entitled to admission to the Government Asylum for the Insane in the District of Columbia.

Corporal punishment is rarely inflicted in the schools of Russia and Germany. In France it is prohibited. In Switzerland school-whippings are left to the regulation of the separate cantons. In England there is constant and vigorous whipping, and in America the custom is dying out.

It is stated that Mr. Stockwell, who has been lately so badly bled in Wall street, tells this old joke as upon himself: "When I first came down in Wall street I was called Stockwell; then, when I began to make money, I was called Mr. Stockwell. Then it was Captain Stockwell; and subsequently I became known as Commodore Stockwell. Now it is that red-headed cuss from Cleveland."

The employer of a large number of Chinese laborers in North Adams, Mass., still expresses himself much pleased with their achievements, and says they live up to their contract. He regards many of the stories relating to Chinamen as exaggerations or misrepresentations by interested parties, and thinks, from his own experience, that when they are properly treated they become excellent laborers and mechanics.

The Wisconsin Assembly has a chaplain (the Rev. Mr. Richardson) who is determined to do his duty and to earn his salary. He admonishes the members in an indirect way through his prayers. The other morning he invoked the Almighty to put a stop to the practice of dancing in the Assembly chamber. He also represented that the honorable members were too much given to levity and foolishness, and he prayed that they might be brought to a "realizing sense" of their weakness and folly.