

In reply to Messrs. Barringer, Jones and others, upon the bill for the more speedy administration of Justice.

MR. SPEAKER.—When this Bill came up, on its second reading, I presented myself with giving a few reasons, why, I thought, it ought not to pass. Since then my remarks have been frequently alluded to, but not, I think—fairly met and answered. Gentlemen in favor of the passage of this Bill, called a Bill for the more speedy administration of Justice, but which I hope to prove is a misnomer, rise successively, in quick succession, and with varied and various specimens of Oratory, from grave to gay, from lively to severe, &c.—as they tell us, and it is necessary to be told, arguments, which they say, address themselves to the reason and judgment; and, therefore, to the favorable consideration and sanction of this House.

Sir, with having heard but little said against this bill, and a great deal in its favor, by gentlemen of talent and ingenuity; and with a mind open to conviction,—in consideration of the little time and attention I had been able to bestow on it,—and ready to retract if in error;—I must confess, that all I have heard has, not only confirmed me in my first opinion, but has suggested to my mind, additional reasons for opposing it.

But it is kindly suggested, that I ought to withdraw my opposition to this bill—and capitulate—I suppose;—for, that I probably stand in a large minority. Gentlemen need not lay that flattering unction to their souls,—they deceive themselves, and are in my opinion wildly mistaken. Sir, I believe I stand on this question, with the great mass of the people of North Carolina, including my own highly respectable and intelligent constituency. I believe this bill will not pass, notwithstanding all its tender mercies, and all the appliances brought to bear upon it. I feel sure it could not, if gentlemen who have not looked at it in all its bearings and consequences, would only push their investigations farther. But, Sir, however this may be, I cannot support the bill,—believing as I firmly do, that a great and sudden change, like this, in our Judicial system, would affect injuriously the people of North Carolina, and their rights and best interests. Entertaining these opinions I would vote against the bill were the majority for it never so overwhelming, even Sir, if I stood alone.

Sir, I was sorry to hear gentlemen of so much character and talent, attempt to carry this bill through by sneers and ridicule, directed so mercifully, at the County Courts, and the Magistracy, of North Carolina. If I may be permitted to question the taste of such a course on such a subject, I certainly may remark,—that it is neither new nor uncommon for men to seek to bring about, by bold assertion, and by wit, ridicule and irony, that which they cannot hope to effect by reason and argument. I am happy however to believe that gentlemen will fall in their very insidious exertions, to pass the bill;—and that the good sense, and sound judgment of members, will not be influenced or shaken by the use of these keen weapons,—even were they skillfully handled, and directly aimed. Sir, the author of *Don Quixotte*, knew well the potency of wit and ridicule—burlesque and irony, upon the human mind. So did *Swift*. So did the author of *Hudibras*, and of the *Junius letters*—but then, Sir, the subjects they handled, were fit subjects, for wit, ridicule, and sarcasm;—they were matters of their profession, and consequently weighed those sharp weapons, with power, with dexterity—with unerring certainty, and with most astonishing success and effect. There is an old law, which teaches, that awkward persons should not handle edged tools; for the very natural and obvious reason, that in the first place, they might not know for what purpose they were made, and in the second place, they might, possibly cut themselves!

Mr. Speaker, I submit, that we should approach this question as we should all others of such vital importance, and general interest, with a caution, a calmness and a dignity becoming Statesmen, and North Carolinians! We should consider it attentively, and weigh it well, in all its aspects and bearings, on the Community at large.

Sir,—Gentlemen get up here, and attempt to scold and lecture me, because I expressed the opinion that this question had not been generally discussed before the people, that it never was in my County,—and that I believed my Constituents were opposed to the change;—and that I respected their opinions, and if there were to other serious objections, I would pause and hesitate, before casting my vote for the bill. Sir, I confess to the charge;—that in a matter of such vast importance—in which all are interested, and where so radical a change, so great an innovation upon our time-honored system of Jurisprudence is contemplated; that I am greatly influenced by what I believe to be the feelings and opinions of a large majority of the Freemen of North Carolina; and of nine-tenths of the intelligent and patriotic Constituency, I have the honor of representing on this floor. Sir, the voice of the people of North Carolina, ought to be heard and respected, on this important question; and so far as I am concerned, that voice shall be heard, and respected! I claim to be a Republican, and I stand here as the authorized Agent and Delegate of those whose generous confidence entrusted their rights to me, to represent and promote, to the best of my ability, their rights and interests; and on this question I feel pride and pleasure in believing, my opinion coincides with theirs; and I envy not those who are disposed to disregard either the interests, or the deliberately formed opinions of their Constituents.

It was the voice, Mr. Speaker, of the people—first heard in North Carolina—in tones of thunder against a trans-Atlantic Tyrant,—the voice of our heroic and glorious Revolutionary forefathers;—(and not the delegates in the Philadelphia Convention, good and great as they were,)—that threw off the yoke of British misrule and oppression; and it was their united wisdom and energy that laid, deeply, the foundations of our free and glorious institutions, and it is the voice of the people, that make this great Republic, the admiration and the hope of the civilized world. Sir, to that voice I hope ever to turn a listening ear, and there great each day, I hope, never, to forget. It might be

well, although some times, inconvenient,—for gentlemen to remember that it is the constant tendency of those entrusted with power, to imagine they enjoy it in their own right, and by their own merits, and for their own benefit, and not by delegation and for the benefit and interest of others.

But, Mr. Speaker, to proceed more directly to the subject. In the first place, a good deal of time is taken to demonstrate the expense of the County Courts, as at present constituted; and much stress is placed on this argument. And gentlemen go into an estimate—a more hypothetical calculation, (to my mind)—to prove that, by abolishing trials by jury in the County Courts, and to adopt, instead, the provisions of the present bill, there would be an annual saving of no inconsiderable amount to the several Counties of the State: And, because the passage of this bill would render justice cheaper—such being the only rational inference that can be drawn from the premises,—that, therefore, it ought to pass. Sir, the mere statement of such a position carries with it its own refutation. Am I to be told that, in the administration of justice, that plan which is the cheapest is therefore the best? Is there any moral principle involved in such an argument as this? Or, if it must be called argument, is it not making the mere item of expense—which I have never heard complained of as onerous—as of paramount consideration to that of dispensing equal and exalted justice, in our Judicial system?

It would save expense to pass a law to the effect that all Judges hereafter elected to the Superior Court bench, should receive an annual salary of Five Hundred Dollars. But would the enactment of such a law be wise or politic? or is it probable that gentlemen hereafter raised to the Bench would be as able jurists or as upright men as those who now adorn it?

But, Sir, I maintain that the abolition of all jurisdiction over Pleas in the County Courts, would not, as a general rule, save expense, either to the Counties, or to the parties litigant—because, I believe, in a large majority of the Counties,—and I know it to be so in those with which I am acquainted—the entire work is generally consumed in the trials of causes, in both the County and Superior Courts; and that as many cases—and often more—are disposed of in the County as in the Superior Courts, during the week—and that, as this bill provides for transferring all the cases from the County to the Superior Court Docket, I ask gentlemen how is it possible that the Superior Court Docket can ever be cleared of cases by holding but three Courts annually?

It could not be done. There would be great delay—comes would have to lie over for years, notwithstanding the modest pretence of this bill to prevent delay, as its name imports, and as gentlemen argue. And, Sir, this delay of justice would be—without solicitude—unjust; and would tend to increase greatly the cost of the party finally cast in the suit. Or, if extra terms were had, the argument fails—for then the expenses would be proportionally increased; besides the money being carried out of the County, without remaining, as it does under the present law; and returning, from time to time, to the pockets of those whence it is taken.

Another argument—and a favorite one with the gentlemen from Beaufort—is the lamentable deficiency of the Magistrates of the State, either in talent, integrity, or the steadiness of habit necessary to a proper discharge of duty. 'Tis true, Sir, there are unworthy and ignorant men, in North Carolina, belonging to this class of our citizens; but there is scarcely a profession or avocation to which the same objection would not apply; and in many instances with more truth and effect. Man is not perfect. Infallibility is claimed, alone, by his Holiness, the Pope—and the justice of even this claim is questioned by a very respectable number of mankind!

But, surely, there can be selected, in most of the Counties, among a body of men so highly respectable and intelligent, in the main, and from such a great number, one Justice, of sufficient integrity, moral firmness, intelligence and hard sense,—and sufficiently acquainted with the ordinary forms of business, to sit as Chairman of the Court, and administer justice between his fellow-citizens, in all those cases of ordinary occurrence in those Courts, and for which they were first established, and on account of which they are so ably defended and advocated by that great English Jurist, whom gentlemen so much admire, but whose opinions they find it convenient just now to forget—Sir William Blackstone.

But, Mr. Speaker, if there are Counties where the Courts are a mere farce;—and I am not prepared to deny the gentleman's assertion,—and that, in those Counties, from ignorance or corruption, justice is not dispensed, because there cannot be found one man for Chairman, of sufficient talent and integrity—it does seem to me, that the desideratum can not be supplied by the mere passage of this bill. Sir, I would respectfully submit, that special legislation is necessary for such a County. They should have a large share in the distribution of the School fund; and it might be well to send Missionaries down into those "diggins;" for, to my mind, mental and moral culture are the important things to be looked to. I am proud to say that we of the West have no such Courts, and no such "Cases." In the several Counties of my acquaintance, including my own, gentlemen are carefully selected on account of their ability and fitness, to discharge the duties of Chairman, which is generally done to the satisfaction of the community at large.

Again: It is argued that the jurisdiction of Pleas in the County Courts has already been abolished in some of the Counties; and that there should be uniformity throughout the State. This argument would have some force, if there could be uniformity in litigation; if the same number of suits were brought in the different Counties, and of the same character;—but this being impossible, the argument falls to the ground; because, in many of the Counties, there are more than an hundred cases on Docket; in others not more than half a dozen; and there is a few of the Counties there might be no need of even three Jury Courts per year, as this bill provides for; in others three would not suffice, to do all the business, while again, in others, it would require, as we now have,—Six Jury Courts to clear the Dockets. And this disparity in the amount of litigation, in the several Counties which

the provisions of this bill does not provide for; is, in a good degree, obviated as the law now stands, for, in those Counties where the business does not require four Juries annually, the Magistrates have a right to dispense with two; and at their other Terms, as soon as the business is dispatched the Court adjourns, Jurors go home, and there is no more expense. Moreover, this bill, if passed, will hardly remain uniform throughout the State. At each successive Legislature your table will be loaded with bills, for the restoration of Jury trials in many of the Counties. Jury trials have been abolished in several Counties; the experiment has been tried, has been found to work badly, and, consequently, in several instances, have been restored. Why but the other day; eye, Sir, and this morning too, bills were introduced, to restore jury trials, in two Counties in which, the professors, of the gentlemen, now on this floor, succeeded in abolishing.

But gentlemen, tell us, it has been tried in other States, and has succeeded well. Sir, I will not say this is mere dogmatism, but I do not think the argument sound or at all conclusive. At any rate it invites me to a comparison of the administration of justice, in my own beloved State, and of other States. I dare hazard the assertion, and I invoke inquiry upon the subject, that there is not in this great Confederacy of States, one whose Jurisprudence, is superior, or even equal, to that of North Carolina, or whose people are generally, so much attached to the laws and government. Why, Sir, North Carolina is proverbial, all abroad, for the virtue and integrity—the morality and order of its citizens; and for their peace-loving and law-abiding spirit; and in my opinion, this is attributable in no small degree, to the certainty and promptness with which our laws, whether Civil, Equitable, or Criminal, are administered. And yet, Sir, with all this before gentlemen's eyes, and notwithstanding the Session is drawing to a close, with a great amount of unfinished business on your table; will gentlemen seem extremely solicitous, of doing for the good people, what they do not want done, thus killing them with kindness. How commendable this labor of love! This work of supererogation!

But it is said by my friend from Orange, and other gentlemen, that this is a popular measure, possessing intrinsic merits, which recommend it to the support of the House. Then how is it, and where is the necessity of sticking in a section to locate the Judges, to be hereafter elected? Is it not because the bill requires some extrinsic and adventitious aid, in order to pass it into a law? Have these two measures any connexion with each other? None whatever.

But my friend from Orange who has always been regarded as opposed to locating the Judges, thought the bill safe without that section, and therefore moved to strike it out; but no sooner is this motion made, than a debate springs up between the friends of the bill, and it is suddenly revealed, that there are members—especially from the extreme East and West, who will not support the measure, should the motion to strike out, prevail. Whereupon, it is withdrawn.

But, Mr. Speaker, suppose the bill becomes the law of the land, and all that part of our Statute Book pertaining to the jurisdiction of Pleas in the County Courts—which has cost so much time and labor, and legislation, be stricken out—what sort of Courts are to supply the place of the present ones; and how often are they to be held? On this question, gentlemen who agree in supporting this bill, entertain very different opinions. Some are for spring the legislation of other States by establishing monthly probate Courts; others are for four sessions per year. "When Doctors (of law) disagree, who shall decide?"

I admit, however, that there are distinguished gentlemen, both in and out of this House, and for whose opinions I entertain high respect, who are in favor of this bill, or one containing similar provisions—but I know, also, there are as many equally distinguished gentlemen, with some of whom I have recently conversed on this subject—who are utterly opposed to a bill of this character, or to any alteration in our County Courts.

I entertain, individually, no special hostility to this bill; but my opposition arises from the deliberate opinion, that practically, it would not apply the desideratum anticipated by its friends, or give general satisfaction; and that therefore, the people, through their representatives would regret it.

I believe the present system is not without objections—there are doubtless errors connected with it; but

"Tis better to bear the ills we have, Than fly to others that we know not of."

The gentleman from Orange uses another very specious and ingenious argument, that demands some notice. He insists that parties to suits are doubly taxed, as the law now stands. That they have to fee counsel first in the County Courts, and in appeals—in the Superior Court, also. But the same objection might be urged with equal force, even if this bill pass; because when parties cast were dissatisfied, upon advising with counsel, with the verdict in the Superior Court, they could, as they often do, appeal to the Supreme Court, and thus have two fees to pay. But I can put a case to the gentleman, and a great many such exist, of peculiar hardship. Suppose an honest farmer, or blacksmith or shoe-maker, has an account against his neighbor for fifteen dollars, for grain sold; or for his labor. Suppose the neighbor disputes the account, or refuses to pay the whole amount claimed, knowing at the same time, his creditor would have to pay a Lawyer ten dollars, to bring suit—this being the fee, which the gentleman says is charged, in ordinary cases, in the Superior Court. After some trouble and loss of time, the plaintiff recovers his claim, ten dollars of which has already been paid, or it is due to the counsel, leaving him but five for his hard labor and earnings. But in the County Courts, which were instituted in part for just such cases as the one cited, for four dollars—which the gentleman informs us is the common fee—the debt is collected.

And on the criminal side of the docket, the passage of the bill would operate with still greater hardship. Take the case of a poor man, whose family depend upon his labor, for the bread that sustains life. He is insulted by a rowdy whom he assaults, or perhaps, strikes—is taken before a magistrate, and being unable to give bail, is con-

mitted to Jail, where he lays four long months; your Superior Court comes on, when he is tried, and perhaps acquitted! And so of poor men in many other cases that occur, affording similar illustrations.

And again, if it be true, and who doubts it, that certainty of punishment is more effectual in preventing crime, than severity; would not delinquents and offenders be more certainly detected and brought to justice, by calling together, during the year, six Grand Juries instead of three, as this bill contemplates?

Mr. Speaker, I have detained this House too long already, for which I beg pardon. I felt it my duty to give a few reasons why I opposed the bill; and I thought I saw too great a disposition manifested by gentlemen for innovation; and for effecting too radical a change—the natural tendency of representative Democracies; and which tendency, I humbly submit, ought to be discouraged and checked; as I sincerely hope it will be in this instance, for if we possess any principles of conservatism, whatever, those principles should be especially exhibited in the maintenance of the stability and perpetuity of our laws.

FOREIGN.

ARRIVAL OF THE NIAGARA.

Two weeks later from Europe.

Boston, February 11. 4 P. M.

The steamer Niagara has arrived from Liverpool, whence she sailed on the 27th ult. She brings but little news of importance, as the subject summary will show:

FRANCE.—Every thing in France remains tranquil. The Government is in a state of transition. M. Boulay de Lamoignon has been elected Vice President. Naval preparations are going on extensively, supposed for an armed intervention in favor of the Pope.

The latest dates from Paris state that public opinion had undergone a great change. The state of the funds opened the eyes of influential men, who are now opposed to France interfering with the affairs of Italy. The opinion in Paris is, that France should abstain from actual intervention, for or against the Pope, but at the same time, to throw no obstacles in the way of such powers as may offer men and money to the Pope. The Government has put forth a decree denouncing as traitors to their country all persons deterred from voting for the Constituent Assembly by the Pope's pretax.

ENGLAND.—The Government having resolved to meet the wishes of the people and reduce the expenditures of several Departments of State, a rise in funds and a general buoyant feeling has taken place, which may be attributed to the contemplated reform.

IRELAND.—The Judges of the Queen's Bench have overruled the errors assigned in the cases of Smith O'Brien and his fellow prisoners. The Court was unanimous, and now nothing is left but a hopeless appeal to the House of Lords. It is stated that application has been made for the requisite permission from the Lord Lieutenant in the case of O'Brien. Meagher declines proceeding further, and has resolved to submit to his fate.

CONTINENTAL.—The Frankfort Assembly has fairly cast the apple of discord amongst the Princes of Germany; and Austria, whilst recovering her rebellious Hungarian Provinces, has a new field of controversy opened in the threatened rivalry of Prussia for Germany to the throne of Naples.

The Frankfort Assembly on the 10th of January decreed that the dignity of the head of the Empire be given to one of the reigning German sovereigns. It is believed that the next vote will declare the title of the Emperor to be hereditary. Austria has virtually withdrawn from the circle of the central authority established at Frankfort. It has remained for the Assembly to take the only alternative left to pave the way for the Prince of the house of Hohenhelein.

Weinshengrath has been entirely successful.—Confiscation and examination are the order of the day.

Prussia remains tranquil. Sicily still remains unsettled.

Denmark has announced her intention to borrow seven millions of dollars, and also to issue four millions of Eschequer bills.

The Pope demands the intercession of Austria to reseat him in temporal power, and both Sardinia and France have strongly remonstrated against the determination, as the Roman people have lost all reverence for the Pope, as an ecclesiastic, no less than a Prince. The spiritual anathemas which he has hurled against them have been retracted, bringing him into complete contempt.

FRANCE.

A distinguished American in Paris, writes to a friend in this city, under date of the 7th ult. as follows:—

"The political horizon of France is scarcely lighter or purer than in February last. Bonapartism inspires no confidence; its permanence seems impossible. Republicanism in one sense, has fewer votaries than last year. Universal suffrage, however, cannot be withdrawn. What its evolution or revolutions may be here, or in Germany, or Italy, comes not within the divination of any soothsayer. Military force has the ascendancy in Germany; so will it have in Italy. At Paris we are socially secure, under the r of military power wielded by Changarnier and Bugeaud; yet the sovereignty of the people, so little fitted here to exercise sovereignty, must finally prevail."

GOLD.

The largest lumps of gold recorded in the histories of gold mines, are as follows: One found at the Wicklow mines in Ireland, weighing twenty-two ounces; one in Peru, weighing twenty-six pounds and a half; several in China, reported to have weighed about one hundred and six pounds each; one in Lebanon, North Carolina, found in 1810, which weighed twenty-eight pounds; and one in New Grenada, which weighed twenty-seven pounds and a half. These, we believe, are the largest lumps on record.



Raleigh, N. C.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1849.

Our acknowledgments are due to the Hon. D. M. Barringer, for a copy of the Speech of Mr. Thompson, of Indiana, upon the Slavery question.

Some of our Subscribers at Forestville complain that they do not receive the Times regularly, and one of them has not glimpsed a paper, he says, since the 12th of January. We can only say they are regularly mailed here, and we have every reason to believe they leave the Raleigh Post Office, properly, and at the right time. We hope to hear no more complaints at Forestville. A Postmaster is a public servant, and the public must be accommodated.

We refer our readers for News, &c. to the first and last pages of this paper. There are many interesting matters we would like to notice Editorially—we intended to say something about our Loco-foco President and the Mexican Protocol; and about Congress, and its proceedings as connected therewith—but have had little time to write this week. Subjects at home, too, lie nearer our heart. But we'll make the ink fly when the days grow longer, and talk freely about every thing. We will have our say.

We are pleased to learn that the operations on the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad are now carried on with great regularity and despatch. The mail arrives in good time; and the conveniences for the prompt transit of freight and passengers are deemed ample for the wants of the public. The appropriation made by the last Legislature, with the earnings of the Road, it is believed, will be sufficient to continue its operations, in the same satisfactory manner—though we hope, ere long, to see it renovated, and working like a perfect chariot.

SENATORS IN CONGRESS.

Ex-Governor SEWARD has been elected by the Legislature of New York Senator in Congress for six years from the 4th of March next, in place of Mr. Loco-foco Barnburner Dix.

MR. CLAY has been elected to the Senate by the Legislature of Kentucky, in the place of Senator Metcalf, whose term expires on the 4th of March. The Louisville Journal, in anticipation of this event, stated a few weeks since, that "Mr. Clay would go into the Senate, with the determination to yield Gen. Taylor's administration a firm and hearty support."

Who else should he support, we wonder! Mr. Polk, or Mr. Cass, or Mr. Van Buren, or Mr. Calhoun? We hardly think the question will ever trouble OLD ZACK much!

A writer in the last Standard, over the signature of Vindex, appears as an apologist and defender of Mr. Shepard, while he attacks Mr. Stanley and his Speech. We have no objection to one brother helping another, especially when they are "partners in distress;" nor have we any design of running a tilt against a windmill; in any event. The most of the charges and insinuations made in this article against Messrs. Badger and Stanley are unworthy of notice, venom and malignity pervading them too deeply. But the writer bewilders himself in vain;—he will never deceive others much.

Out of one fog, among many, in which he appears to be involved, however, we think we can help him. He says:

"He (Mr. Stanley) quotes passages verbatim from Mr. Shepard's speech. Now, as Mr. Stanley did not hear this speech, and as his own was delivered before this one was published, how could he have received such surprisingly accurate information as to its contents. A circumstance still more remarkable is, that his quotations from the speech allowed to follow each other regularly in the order in which they were delivered."

His surprise might have diminished considerably had he noticed the passage in Mr. Stanley's speech where he alludes to this very thing, and says: "My duty as a Whig compels me to reply to his remarks, with the substance of which I have been furnished." In explanation of which, we have to say, that the Editor of this paper reported Mr. Shepard's speech, to which reference is here made, and furnished Mr. Stanley with the substance. He had a perfect right so to do, regarding it as in the possession of the public the very moment it was delivered, and subject to the comments of all men. We also reported Mr. Stanley's, and would have furnished Mr. Shepard "the substance," had he desired it. Both speeches were re-written by the gentlemen, respectively, and published in the Times—though Mr. Stanley did not find time to prepare his until after the session. It did appear at length, however, in our last paper; and the *hoax* with which Vindex strikes at it in Wednesday's Standard, four days after he saw it, proves how closely and severely it cut. But the arrow will not be shaken out—"twill quiver in the wound, long time to come."

INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT MEETINGS.

We learn from a gentleman just from Pittsboro', that a large and enthusiastic meeting of the friends of Internal Improvement, of all parties, was held there on Tuesday last, at which Dr. McClanahan presided, to take action upon the improvement of Cape Fear and Deep Rivers, as authorized by the Act of last Session. The object of the meeting was explained by the Chairman, in an able and satisfactory manner; after which, the concourse was addressed by Messrs. Giles Melane and Hugh Waddell, of Orange, of whose speeches our informant speaks in the highest terms. At the conclusion of Mr. Waddell's speech, on motion of Mr. Haughton, Subscription Books were opened, and upwards of \$30,000 subscribed immediately. The best spirit pervaded, and an interest was manifested, which we can venture to say, renders the completion of this work certain. Indeed, our friend

learned, (and which we have also heard before,) that Mr. Thompson, the Engineer, has offered to take the entire work, in conjunction with Major Gwynn, and finish it for \$185,000; giving bonds for the faithful execution of the contract.

The Proceedings of this Meeting will no doubt be published at the proper time—but we seize the occasion to hold up the example of the people of Chatham to the imitation of all, in other sections, interested, as they are, in the great works for the improvement of our condition. Put your own shoulders to the wheel—that's the way!—show up Hercules as lustily as you please—and he will be sure to come!

Our readers will also find some account of the Meeting in Salisbury on our first page. Some of the worthiest and ablest men were there—among them several members of our late Legislature, who assisted in adopting our new system of State policy. We hope their constituents may support and defend them, for they richly deserve it. We shall gladly publish these Proceedings in full, when we receive them.

PLANK ROADS.

Among the Improvements projected for the Old North State, besides Railroads, perhaps the subject of Plank Roads is next in importance. It is obvious to all who are alive to the interests of the State, that our resources for multiplying the products of the soil, the increasing importance of the rich mines of gold and other ore, and coal and other minerals, some of which are only partially known and undeveloped, demand an increase of the facilities of intercommunication between the business points, and producing districts interior. Our last Legislature, in the Great Plan of Improvements sanctioned and authorized, appeared to deem it proper that these facilities should be afforded by means of Railroads, Plank Roads, and the improvement of our Rivers. As a faithful friend of that Great Plan, as an ardent dealer for the Prosperity of the State, as connected therewith, as a faithful Public Journalist, anxious to contribute our aid, by all the means in our power in the dissemination of light, upon all these useful subjects, we shall discuss them all, with freedom, and our best ability, to the end that whatever is undertaken may be properly achieved, upon the best terms, and in the most convenient manner. The age of "progress" is here—the race of improvement is before us—and there ought to be speedy action.

The great Central line of Railroad alone, will not effect all we wish, and all we need. There ought to be Plank Roads diverging from each side of it, extending through our fertile valleys up to our mountain regions, to bring all the resources of our State into active play, employing every idle hand and every idle dollar. Tens of thousands of dollars are now locked up in our Agricultural and Mineral Districts—one hundred here, and five hundred there,—doing nothing for want of favorable investment. Plank Roads, connected with our Railroads and River Navigation, will call forth such means, and set it at work for the public good, and at the same time give a fair return in interest. All these subjects will employ, from time to time, much of our space—but we propose, in this article, to give some of the views we have gathered from study, reading and reflection, in relation to Plank Roads generally, and see how we can apply any of them to the Fayetteville and Salisbury Plank Road enterprise.

Roads have been, not inaptly, called the "veins and arteries of the body politic," through which may flow the Agricultural productions and the Commercial supplies which are the life-blood of the State. A Plank Road may be built on any ground, with less cost and more advantage than a Macadamized Road, even in regions where stone is plenty; and we observe that Plank is substituted for the cobble stone pavements of their streets, in several cities. It is said that horses will travel one-fifth faster, and draw at least one-fifth greater weight on a Plank, than on a broken stone Road—and that they are superior as market roads.—Our Farmers and Agriculturists, therefore, would partake more largely of the benefits flowing from the operation of these Roads than any other portion of our population. They will save them time and labor, which is the same as money. They will give them a choice of time in carrying their products to market, as they offer no chance to complain of bad roads; but present a smooth and fine surface over which to travel at all seasons; and enable them to accomplish twice the distance in the same time, and haul double the load with less effort. When advances in the products of his farm admonish the farmer of the appropriate time for carrying them to market, he may go at once, and speedily realize the best reward for his toil.

We are of the opinion that a single track Plank Road will not answer for a sandy country. Where single track Roads are laid down, the presumption is, that waggons will go down to market loaded, and return empty. An empty wagon turning off the road that a full one may pass, no difficulty would be experienced in again getting on to the Road. But we think it would be found, in practice, so far as our State is concerned, that waggons carrying produce to market seldom return empty, on the contrary, they usually take in a pretty heavy load, such as groceries, iron, salt, &c. Upon a deep and yielding sand, two tracks will be required, or a track sixteen feet wide, so that loaded teams may pass; but, in extending the Road farther up the country, where the soil is stiff and firm, if the superstructure be properly made, one track will be found entirely sufficient.

In our country, it is certain, the most convenient and the cheapest timber for the construction of Plank Roads, is Pine. At the North, they are sometimes laid down with Oak; but, taking the amount of travel into consideration, we are of the opinion that Pine will last longer, on our Roads than Oak on theirs.—Pine plank of four inches thickness will last eight or nine years, and it is estimated, with moderate tolls upon the Road, will pay for itself twice in that time. Be this as it may, the abundance of the material all along the route of the Fayetteville and Salisbury Plank Road, points it out as the only timber to be used. Besides, every farmer, living within a reasonable distance of a Plank Road, can take stock in it, because he can pay cheaply for his shares, by working them out upon the Road, and furnishing the timber, and that, too, without materially interest-