THREE OF A KIND.

DILLSBORO, WEBSTER AND SYLVA, IN JACKSON.

A Trio of Western North Carolina Towns that are Coming to the Front — Something About Their Growth and Resources, Institutions, Industries, Etc.

Leaving Bryson City and coming this way the railway passenger rushes by many smaller stations on the Murphy division of the Western North Carolina road, none of which, however, are more interesting or important than Webster, Dillsboro and Sylva, in the county of Jackson. These three towns are only three miles distant from each other, and yet each is as separate and distinct in its own individuality, municipal management, etc., as if a hundred miles intervened between the boundary lines. At Webster, the county-seat of Jackson, we find a live and growing town of nearly 400 inhabitants, with good schools and churches, a weekly newspaper, extensive business houses in all branches of trade, comfortable and inviting homes, and a people as hospitable and kind as one would wish to meet. Webster lies on the east side of the Tuckaseegee river in the midst of a fine agricultural section. The products of the farms are corn, wheat, oats, rye, small grain, grasses, etc. Stock raising is also carried on to a considerable extent, and the lumber industry is assuming vast proportions. A telephone line connects Webster with Sylva, Dillsboro and Franklin, in Macon, and saw mills, grist mills and other local industries are numerous.

This side of Webster and just above Sylva is Dillsboro (or Webster Station), as some of the natives term it, a sprightly village of about two hundred people. Dillsboro is 49 miles west of Asheville, and like Webster is surrounded by fine farming lands. The roller mills of Dills & Snyder, kaolin works of the Carolina Clay Co., and the general merchandise firms of Enloe & Early, Cunningham & Trotter, Wm. McCoy and J. C. Watkins, are the leading institutions of the place. The Alleghany House, kept by Mr. J. H. Bryson, is a first-class hotel, and is headquarters for all travelers to Dillsboro. The steam saw-mills of F. Merrick manufacture large quantities of lumber, and many carloads of rough logs—walnut, poplar, ash, oak, etc.—are shipped to Northern markets every week. Dillsboro has a superior Academy building, in which a mixed school is taught by Mrs. Wm. McCoy. A hack line is operated daily from Dillsboro to Franklin by Mr. D. C. Cunningham, of the latter place. Dillsboro has street lamps, good streets and walks, and a literary society, of which the citizens are very proud. There is no church edifice in the town but rellgious services are held in the academy building twice a month by Rev. J. O. Shelly, of the Methodist Church, South, and by Rev. O. B. Thomas, of the Baptist denomination. Wheelwright and blacksmith shops, etc., also abound in Dillsboro, and the only drug store in the place is presided over by Dr. J. M. Candler. The products of the farming lands are corn, wheat, oats, small grains, fruits, potatoes and vegetables of almost every variety.

Sylva, the last of the trio, is not unlike its sisters in arrangement and its possessions. The kaolin works, in charge of Mr. J. S. Jarrett, is a big industry recently developed, and one that has been a source of great revenue to the owners of the property. A steam saw mill run by Mr. Thos. Hastings, the merchant mills of Gen. E. R. Hampton, the general stores of Enloe & Allison and L. C. Hall, a weekly newspaper, a good hotel kept by Mr. J. W. Divelbiss, sum up the business institutions of Sylva. The lumber trade is the leading industry at this place and thousands of rough logs are shipped abroad annually. A Farmers Alliance, with a large membership, has been organized at Sylva, and much good has resulted to the farmers of that section therefrom. Religious services are held at Sylva twice a month by the Rev. Messrs. Shelley and Thomas. Sylva has many handsome and elegant private residences within its confines, and the people are progressive and enterprising to a degree.

An Old Song.

"Some ideas are by frequency and strength of association so closely combined that they cannot be separated; if one exists the other exists along with it in spite of whatever effort we make to disjoin them." (Analysis of the Human Mind.) And there is nothing that possesses this subtle power of binding together fact and fancy like music. There is an old church tune, whose notes possess this power in a peculiar strength from its association with my home life. I cannot recall the first time I heard it, but it was at home, for I have only heard it a few times away from there. My mother and father would sing it together; a clear sweet soprano, and a full, round baritone. The last time I heard it at home was just before I left for an absence of several years. It possessed a peculiar pathos for me then, and its echoes sounded in my ear for many days after.

It was five or six years before I heard it again. Every circumstance surrounding it is recalled vividly as I looked back, for the force of its impression on me was intense at the time. I was visiting an old plantation, the home of a friend. It was an evening in August, just at sunset, and the streaming banners of the departing hosts of the king of day were flaunting their brilliant colors in the western sky. The murmuring hum of insect life was rising as the day died. That gray monotone of color brought by the closing day to mourn the departing sun, filled the air; all the sharpness of detail was gone from familiar objects, dim suggestiveness alone remained: a fitting time for reverie. Then smoothly gliding into harmony with the song of nature, the notes of an organ fell on my ear crooning that old hymn. How instantly I was at home. Carried on wings that disdained time and distance, I was among my own people, sitting by my own fireside, and gazing on faces dear and familiar to me. Every note of that music was a heart-throb to me, and every chord a loving benediction. Home voices sang, home echoes repeated, and home scenes presented themselves. I remember how distinctly clear it all seemed to me, the great mastiff lay before the fire place, my brother at the organ, the family seated around the room, all as it was in the days gone by. When the organ closed, the scene disappeared, only to return to me with the return of the same music.

Several years passed before I heard it again. I was lying in a hospital close to a church in a large city. I had been very sick with an attack of fever and was just convalescent. Every one is familiar with that keenness of faculty and preception incident to physical weakness. It seems that with the balance between the physical and mental being destroyed by bodily illness, the mental force gains in intensity at moments and gives its possessor almost clairvoyant powers. It was Sunday evening and the ward was unusually quiet. My thoughts were naturally with my absent friends. I was half asleep and half awake. Soon I heard indistinctly, the singing in the church, its murmerous monotone quickly sending me to dreamland. Then the music of that old song fell on my ears, but I was at home. Yes, there was my brother playing, father mother singing, but the voices seemed changed. It seemed as if a half-sob filled the place of a note now and then. An intense depression took hold of me. I could not define its nature. It seemed as if the sorrow of these at home, whom I could see and hear, though many miles away, permeated me. The music continued for a time, then suddenly ceased. The scene changed. I was still at home but how different things looked, so black and gloomy. The sound of weeping came from my sister's room, the door opened and I saw surrounding a bed my father, mother, brother and older sister. She, the dying one, was trying to speak between her gasping cough. Some one bent down to listen to her voice. "Sing," she said, "Savior, Breath an Evening Blessing." Then with an intense effort to suppress the sobs, my mother started the sweet old hymn, but before it ceased, the hands were limp, the face smiling and the spirit gone. It had found the repose and was at home.

When I woke, the last notes of the church organ near by could still be heard, and they were the notes of that same church tune.

I was weak and depressed for weeks after. The doctor said it was nervous depression. A month after I received a letter from home telling me of the extreme illness of my sister. I hurried home and witnessed there the same scene exactly as I looked on in my dream in the hospital. I offer no explanation, simply tell the facts in the case.

While sitting in lonely reverie a few nights ago, those same pleading notes floated in my window. It was the first time since my sister's death that I had heard it. Each note in my imagination seemed an individual personality, imbued with life, and as they vibrated in air they took the face and form of those dear to me. Small wonder that it calls me home to hear it. As I listened to its tremuloustone all tenderly subdued and softly mournful, it seemed attuned to my thoughts of home. It has been my companion through all my wanderings, following me like a harmonious spirit, singing the love and affection of a home to me when far from their restraining influences.

The Farming Interests.

In the last number of that excellent journal, the Southern Planter, there is published an interesting letter from Hon. J. Hoge Tyler, now Lieutenant-Governor of the State, in which he gives his views as to the needs of our farmers. He attributes the depressed condition of this important class to two causes: First, to the want of a currency circulation, and secondly, to too great taxation in proportion to the income derived from the business.

"In my judgment," he says, "the people ought not to be forced to get along with just enough for their bare crying needs, thus lowering the values of all properties, but should have it freely enough to stimulate a healthy and active business, even if not on a strict metalic basis. The government should, of course, put silver and gold on an equal footing."

With reference to taxation he declares that "our State and county taxation is more than one per cent on assessments, and take, as they please (those who are not identified with us) agriculture is not paying two per cent. How can we stand it? Impossible.

"My recent canvass through a greater part of this State enabled me to see even more clearly than before the distressed and distressing condition of our rural population; much of the land is virtually abandoned, and is becoming the abode of the wild deer and the fox, and this seems to be rapidly on the increase, except in a few and favored sections; and the disastrous seasons and low prices are demoralizing the most favored. We had better tell the truth and let wise legislation check this state of things if possible."

These are candid expressions of opinion which derive additional importance from the fact that the writer is a man of prominence and influence in the State.—Lynchburg Advance.

Our River Improvements.

Capt. Bixby, of the engineers, who has been in charge of the River and Harbor Improvement of this State for a number of years, is of the opinion that omitting the work on Beaufort Harbor and below Wilmington, work has been done costing about $575,000, which has reduced freight charges about 30 per cent, and has caused a development of annual commerce equal to about $30,000,000. Of Beaufort Harbor, he says that the bar was rapidly deteriorating, but now the erosion has been stopped and a fine harbor made permanent.

The benefits to Wilmington have been incalculable. In 1873 he says, there was on the bar about nine feet of water; now there are seventeen feet, and the commerce of Wilmington, already $20,000,000 a year, is rapidly increasing. Wherever inland streams have been made navigable, population has thickened along their route and the country has become prosperous. The saving in freight is very considerable. — News-Observer.

When the day comes that you sit down broken, without one human creature to whom you cling; with your loves, the dead and the living-dead; when the very thirst for knowledge, through long continued thwarting, has grown dull; when in the present there is no craving, and in the future no hope—then, oh with beneficent tenderness, nature enfolds you.— Olive Shreiner.