

# Sylvan Valley News

Our County—Its Progress and Prosperity the First Duty of a Local Paper.

MINER & BREESE.

BREVARD, TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY, N. C., FRIDAY, MAY 29, 1903.

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## That "Iridescent Dream."

Are Political Methods, as they Now exist, Beyond the Reach of Reform.

It may be true, as Senator Ingalls said, that "the purification of politics is an iridescent dream," but whether true or false the "boodle" methods of the last two elections should not be longer tolerated without a heroic effort for reform. The pace set by the republican managers in their efforts to carry the last two national elections, have been followed by all parties in every election since, until now it is absolutely impossible to have even a mayoralty election in as small a town as Brevard, without the use of "boodle." There are some voters who have learned to rely on a candidate who wants their suffrage, to pay their poll-tax for them. This is cowardly on the part of the voter, and criminal for the candidate or party which does it, but this is one of the "methods" introduced by the party in power and if one party will not, the other will, and win—and here is where the "iridescent dream" comes in.

In several of the southern states the Australian ballot system is being agitated as a means of preventing the purchase of voters, but the states which already have it are not exempt from the contaminating influence of boodle. The political methods of Pennsylvania, a democratic state when the voters express their sentiments which gives just as large a republican majority as the millionaires and trusts are willing to pay for, are ten times as disgusting as Texas, which gives an overwhelming democratic majority. Pennsylvania has the Australian ballot, while Texas has not.

The objection to the Australian ballot in the south, and especially in the mountain sections, is that if faithfully and honestly used it would disfranchise many patriotic and intelligent voters who have the misfortune of being illiterate. This country has always been sparsely settled and schools for the previous generation were unknown.

The dangers to free institutions in a prostrated ballot are too evident to need enumeration. The concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, and that few buying the elections, would soon put an end to free speech and a free press, and even personal liberty would cease to exist. Many of our deepest thinkers are noting the influence of concentrated wealth with alarm. They already foresee in the United States a repetition of the rise and fall of the Roman empire—the fall resulting from the same cause—concentrated wealth and slavery.

As we see it the only hope for better methods or a true expression of the will of the people at the polls is in publicity. There is no hope for criticism of any methods from the subsidized press of the cities. The country papers are nearer the people and know their wishes and it is their

duty to publish the means by which success is achieved and the will of the people thwarted. The treatment would be heroic, but something of the kind is needed if we hope to transfer to our children the liberties inherited from our patriotic ancestors. Something must be done to counteract the pernicious influence of money in the hands of a few in our elections.

### Taxable Valuations.

A Golden Opportunity for the Assessors to Improve Conditions in Brevard and Transylvania County.

The new Board of Tax Assessors will soon begin their duty of assessing property in this and other townships of the county. There is a condition existing in Brevard that needs the careful consideration of the assessors and to it we call their attention. Brevard is as progressive and prosperous as could be wished, with one or two exceptions, and until those few defects are remedied some parts of the town will remain stationary. The large amount of unimproved property is a serious drawback to the growth of a town when in the hand of those who are unwilling or unable to sell or improve. Special attention should be paid to the valuation of these lots and that they be assessed at their true value. There is in Brevard property recently sold which had a taxable valuation something under one hundred dollars and sold for over one thousand.

A property owner who has valuable property in a growing section of a town and has not the means of improving the same should sell or make some arrangements to improve the property and not prove a hindrance to the growth of the town and the prosperity of his neighbors. It is not right nor just that one citizen should quietly wait until his neighbor had improved a certain section, refuse to contribute anything towards municipal improvement, put his property on the tax list at a very small valuation, refuse to sell at any price, and then sell at a high price in the future. Every man should bear his part of the burden and if one is not financially able to improve his property he should sell to some one who could and would, and not wait for the town to grow and enhance the value of his holdings.

Let's all work for the building up of Brevard. If you are not able to improve your property and yet it is located in a section that keeps others from improving theirs, sell it so that it will be improved. Do not be the proverbial "Dog in the Manger" or yet a sponge, who relies on the efforts of others for your own benefit. But for fear some may not have either personal or civic pride enough, we suggest to the

assessors that they give a gentle help to these who are hindering the growth of Brevard and the county and put as high a valuation on unimproved property as the law allows.

When taxes are being paid with no returns you will see one of two events occur, either improvements will be made or the property sold. All vacant property will be improved, and that speedily, and the taxable value of the town will be so greatly increased that the taxes of those who have improved will be greatly decreased. The expenses of government will not increase in proportion to the increased amounts received from the added improvements. In the name of the well-wishers of Brevard we therefore ask the Board of assessors to give careful thought to the assessment of unimproved town property.

And then there is a word or two to say to the property owners as well as the assessors. We must remember when giving in our property that we are under oath and that we should be as careful of making a false statement as we would be on the witness stand. The law is so plain and clear that no one can misunderstand it, you are plainly told that you must list your property at its true value, not what you may think it would bring under forced sale or under any other circumstances that would tend to lower its selling price. The law says in plain words that you must list it for what it would bring in the open market and if it would be sold under the conditions that such property is usually sold. No mental reservation nor moral evasion will exempt us from being guilty of violating our most sacred oaths if our property is listed for one cent less than it could be bought for in the market.

That it has become a custom to undervalue property does not make it right or relieve the fact that an oath has been violated. If all would give in their property at the true value none would suffer as there is only a certain amount to collect. The greater the valuation the smaller the rate. All over the state this question of assessment is being agitated and let not Transylvania or Brevard be lagging.

In the seven colonies of Australasia the 16,144 miles of state owned railroads have paid during the past year profits varying from 2.95 to 3.37 per cent. In some instances these percentages have been less than the interest on the loans from which money was raised to build the roads. On the other hand, a considerable percentage of the gross earnings has been invested in improvements.

### Quick Arrest.

J. A. Gullidge, of Verbena, Ala. was twice in the hospital from a severe case of piles causing 24 tumors. After doctors and all remedies failed, Bucklen's Arnica Salve quickly arrested further inflammation and cured him. It conquers aches and kills pain. 25c at Z. W. Nichols, druggist.

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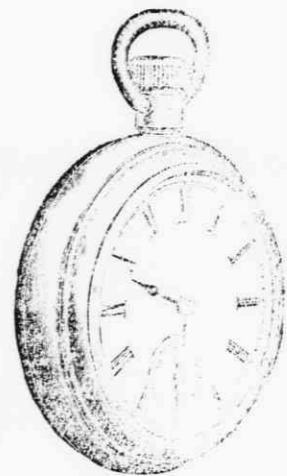
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