

LITERARY ADDRESS.

BY HON. D. H. McLEAN
At the Progressive Institute Commencement.

The early history of every nation has always been a matter of the deepest concern to her people. The Israelites, the earliest nation which history presents to us, dwell with the greatest satisfaction upon the fact that their people were the chosen of God. Their historians and poets revelled in the fact that they were the descendants of Abraham and of Jacob and of Isaac. That he delivered them from captivity and oppression. That he guided them by a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night.

The ancient Greeks insisted that their founders were of divine origin, and the Roman historians record the fact that Romulus the builder of imperial Rome, the proud Mistress of the world was a descendant of the gods.

Happily for us we are not compelled as were the Greeks and Romans to believe in any such fabled traditions. No fabled fugitive from the flames of Troy, No Norman tyrant first landed on our shores.

It is true that a great deal of the early history of North Carolina is still shrouded in mystery and uncertainty. Still there is enough of authentic history written of our early ancestors, to satisfy us that they were all that we could desire them to have been—brave, true and honest—the only alter they built were those dedicated to God, the only temples they built were those consecrated to liberty and humanity. The student of early history of North Carolina will find its pages filled with events of the most thrilling incidents and full of romantic beauty.

It is undisputed history that Captain Phillip Armidas and Captain Arthur Barlow on the 4th day of July 1584 cast their anchors into the silent waters of Roanoke Island in North Carolina, and took possession of the same in the name of Elizabeth the Virgin Queen of England. What a scene! there upon the shining sands of our eastern shore, that little band of men and women knelt down and offered a prayer of thanksgiving to that God whose name was never broken the air of this mighty continent.

What wonderous events happened upon that scene—they little dreamed that they were founding the mightiest empire beneath the sun of heaven—they little thought as they stood there with the mighty Atlantic rolling behind them, and the untrodden and mysterious wilderness before them, that they were laying the corner stone of a temple to religion and liberty, whose shadows should reach over a territory so great that the sun never sets over it, a temple at whose shrine nearly 100,000,000 people now worship. It was the mysterious workings of that God who guided their little ship over the trackless waves of the ocean, as he did the ancient Israelites as he led them through the unknown wilderness to the bright and verdant shores of Canaan, the fair land which he had given them as an inheritance forever.

Here then in North Carolina, was the birth place of this mighty empire. Here upon North Carolina was born the first white child who saw the light on this mighty continent. This was before the settlement of James Town in Virginia, or the landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock in Massachusetts. It was this little colony of Sir Walter Raleigh then that first upon the American Continent first unfurled to the breeze the banner of civilization, and planted upon the shining shores of North Carolina the emblem of christian religion.

From that day to this, more than 300 years, the history of North Carolina has been one continuing record of heroic achievements of our ancestors, the contemplation of which should brighten every face, thrill every heart, and quicken every pulse in this assembly to night. Whether our forefathers were widening the waves of civilization, driving back the savage of the forest, who with Tomahawk or scalping-knife sought to arrest the course of the Anglo Saxon Empire, or whether in the midst of war against the tyranny of a foreign despot, or whether maintaining on the field of battle the right of self government against domestic and sectional fanaticism,

under any and all circumstances the courage and fidelity of our people has been the wonder and admiration

of the world. There was one man prominently connected with the early history of our State whose memory we should always reverence, that man was Sir Walter Raleigh who spent an immense fortune in trying to establish Colonies on the Coast of North Carolina. He lived at a period of England's history that was prolific of great men, but he was the greatest of them all. Of all that circle of genius who made the reign of Elizabeth so illustrious, Raleigh was the shining star. There was in that reign Shakespeare on the stage, Powells in the studio, Coke on the bench, but Raleigh was everywhere. We have no record of his ever having visited his Colonies here in person, we do know that as long as fortune and liberty were spared him he never deserted those heroic men and women who braved the perils of the sea to start a new Empire.

There no State in all this wide union that has so many romantic and thrilling incidents in its history as these which cluster around the early history of North Carolina. The tragic death of Raleigh who was beheaded by the tyrant James, the hanging of her first governor, because he was a friend to liberty; and the last colony of Roanoke Island only added a melancholy charm to that history which is indeed stranger than fiction.

Let us now consider North Carolina of the present. North Carolina originally covered all the territory between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, this territory was embraced in a charter issued by Charles II in 1663 to the Duke of Albermarle, and was named in honor of the then reigning King of England. What an Empire would North Carolina be to-day if she still retained her original property. She would include all the States of Tennessee, Arkansas, a portion of Texas, New Mexico Arizona and Southern California. As it is bounded on the East by the Atlantic Ocean, and on the West by the Smoky Mountains, which with the Blue Ridge form a part of the Appalachian range, which extends almost from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico. In length the State is about five hundred miles, in breadth from one hundred to a hundred and fifty. This territory includes about 32,000,000 acres of land, about 6 1/2 million is under cultivation. By the last census its population was 1 1/2 million. The State differs in its soil, product and climate in its different sections. It may be physically divided into

I. The coast and swamp land section, extending from the sea shore to a line drawn to Edenton to Wilmington.

II. The middle section, consisting of the section from this belt to the foot of the mountains and

III. The mountain region, extending to the Tennessee line.

The first section abounds of valuable timber, such as cypress, juniper oak and maple of great value. A single cypress tree there has produced \$100 worth of shingles. The soil is of great and enduring fertility, producing from 30 to 50 bushels of corn per acre without fertilizers. There are fields in Hyde county which have been cultivated for 160 years without rest, without being fertilized which still produces 50 bushels of corn to the acre. The fisheries are the largest in the country; 175,000 have been taken there at one haul. The climate is healthy although the land is low.

The middle section in which we live, we all know will compare with any section of the United States in the production of the cereals, tobacco, cotton and corn.

The mountain section is the loveliest portion on the globe. This section has been aptly called by one of North Carolinas most gifted daughters "The land of the sky." So you see my young friends that your lot has been cast amidst every blessing which the hand of nature could lavish upon you, that your State, our State, God bless her, has a soil adapted to every crop you need, a salubrious climate, her surface beautified by towering mountains, winding rivers, and verdant hills, she is indeed a very Eden of beauty and glory. Who can look upon North Carolina from the blue waves of the Atlantic that love her eastern shores, to the summit of Mt. Mitchell the Chimbrazo of the Alleghannies and not realize that God has blessed her with an overflowing hand. The sun does not shine more brightly upon the plains of the classic Greece, nor upon the vine covered hills of sunny France than it does upon the hills and dells of our own beloved State.

O then my young friends should we not delight to dwell upon the history of the past, and regard with rapture her living present, Read then, I urge you, read

well and often the history of your State, the lives and character of her mighty dead, for from those pages gilded with the fadeless wreathes of glory, you will drink in an inspiration which will make you the worthy descendants of such ancestry, and worthy heirs of such priceless inheritance as they have transmitted to you.

Now my young friends we have considered briefly the past and present of our beloved State, the next question is, what of her future. What, wonderously fearful responsibility does this question import. Who is to answer this question! It must be answered by you, and you, and you, the youth of this country. Into your hands shortly her destiny must be consigned, and you must answer at the box of an exactly posterity how well your stewardship has been discharged.

North Carolina the Queen of States as she sits enthroned in all the proud recollections of the past, crowned with the stars of truth and liberty which out shine the diadem of the Caesars looks to you now young friends, and exclaims in the language of the mother of the Gracchi: "These are my jewels, into your hands my children, I gladly resign my future, take ark of the covenant of duty into your hands, and as you stand guard around it, let your eyes never sleep, nor your loins grow weak, but let your motto ever be—

"This Argus o'er the peoples rights
Doth an eternal vigil keep,
No soothing strains of Maia son
Can sooth its hundred eyes asleep."

OUR WASHINGTON LETTER.

Mr. Editors:—One of the greatest questions now confronting the Democratic party is the election of the Speaker for the next House of Representatives. The political cyclone of last year, gave the Democrats a too large majority in the House. There may be serious embarrassments resulting from it. From the Southern States there are 104 straight Democrats, and 14 Alliance Democrats, a total of 118, who will enter the Democratic caucus. From Iowa there are 6 Democrats, from Michigan 8, from Minnesota 3, from Nebraska 1, and from Wisconsin 3, who represent Congressional districts, now nominated by Alliancemen. The remaining northern States send 92 Democrats, making a total of 117 from the North, and a grand total of 235, who will compose the Democratic caucus. The Northern States also send eight Alliancemen, whose sympathies are with the Democratic party. More than a hundred of these Representatives have had no legislative experience. They are "new men", and such men are proverbially hard to handle. Most of these new men come from the Northwest, representing districts that have been heretofore Republican. They will claim, and possibly the claim is true, that with proper conceptions to them and the people they represent, these districts can be retained in the Democratic column, which would give the electoral votes of their several States to the Democrats.

The South has returned most of its old members, experienced legislators, who understands committee work and the methods of legislation, several of whom possess good qualifications for the position of Speaker, so that upon the grounds of experience and qualification the Speakership and the Chairmanships of most of the committees will go South. But the Presidential election comes in 1892, whilst this Congress is in session, and there is grave danger to the party that, should this course be followed, the Republicans will rally their forces once more under the old sectional cry of the "Rebel Brigadiers ruling the country."

Senator Gorman, the shrewdest Democratic leader since the days of Martin Van Buren, foresees this danger, and sounded a warning note in his speech at Baltimore, accepting the service of plate presented to him for his magnificent leadership in the defeat of the infamous Force Bill. He said, "I warn you that the issue made by the Force Bill has not ceased to exist. The President and a great majority of the Republican Senators and Representatives urge its adoption and still approve its principles. The judgment of the country upon the issue thus made will be again appealed to. But as the people of the several States are still free to elect their own representatives I have no doubt of the triumph of the principles of the Democratic party. The success of the Democratic party will make sectional contests hereafter impossible, a result overshadowing in importance all other political considerations, and without which it is idle to talk of the future prosperity and greatness of our common country."

To a careful reader between the lines of what this really able man says, there can be found a monition against any course which would create the opportunity, justly or not, for this outcry upon the part of the Republicans.

There is no lack of candidates for the high position, each of whom believes himself to be entitled by party service and personal fitness, to be speaker, but as a matter of fact men possessing peculiar qualifications required to fill the position of Speaker are scarcer than snow storms in August.

The Speaker must have a good knowledge of parliamentary law. He should possess an equal temperament that could not be disturbed by any outbreak on the floor. He should have a judicial mind, and above all he must be accurate in judgment and quick in decision. The list of candidates now comprises the names of Mills of Texas, Crisp and Blount of Georgia, Springer of Illinois, and Bynum of Indiana.

Mills is probably the best known of them because of his name being connected with the attempted Tariff legislation. He is not qualified either by temperament or knowledge for the position. Mr. Bynum has not a single qualification, neither has Mr. Blount. This narrows the list to Crisp, McMillan, Hatch and Springer, each of whom possesses some, if not all of the qualifications necessary to make a successful Speaker.

Springer has had sixteen years service, is a good parliamentarian, a hard worker, is quick in decision, but is somewhat excitable, a serious objection.

McMillan, though representing a Tennessee district, was born in Kentucky, and was too young to serve in the war of the rebellion. He has been twelve years in Congress. He is a good parliamentarian, has clear judgment, and is quick to decide any question submitted. He has an even temper.

Crisp is probably the best equipped of all the candidates, but is handicapped by the candidacy of Blount, and the fact that he was in the confederate army.

Hatch of Missouri is the favorite of the West and the farming element. He has had twelve years experience and has, without any transcendent abilities, displayed most of the qualifications required of the Speaker.

Wise and conservative action is required, upon the part of the Democrats in the selection of a Speaker. Much depends upon what they do.

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C. MCARTAN, H. T. SPEARS Admsrs. L. B. CHAPIN, Att'y. May 5th '91.

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