

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 1908.

DR. CAMPBELL ON CHILD LABOR.

The child labor literature of our country has been enriched by a paper read by Rev. Dr. R. F. Campbell, pastor of the First Presbyterian church of Asheville, before the Pen and Plate Club of the mountain capital.

Dr. Campbell begins by declaring that it is a remarkable fact that the two most serious social problems in America today, the negro problem and the child labor problem, are "by-products of the mechanical industrialism which has produced our material prosperity."

The number of bread-earning children under 15 years reported in the 1900 census was 1,759,178. Of these 1,961,971 were on farms, which is beautiful labor, leaving 68,207 children "employed in trade and transportation, in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits, in domestic and personal service."

Dr. Campbell devotes a good deal of space to the awful tax upon the vitality of children in the glass-blowing and coal mining industries. Of the boys who pick slate out of the coal running through the chutes in the coal-breakers, Mr. Francis H. Nichols says:

"The tissues of the boys' lungs gather the blue specks until the whole lung is discolored, and I have seen boys who have been away from the breakers and mines for eight and even ten years, cough up these particles whenever they were attacked by a slight cold."

Coming to the so-called cotton mills, the writer of the pamphlet takes the estimate of the child labor committee that there are 69,000 children, from 6 to 14 years old in cotton mills, which number will be doubled in five years.

"But after all, is work in the cotton mill seriously harmful to small children?" "Having a friend who owns a cotton mill, I wrote to him a few weeks ago to give me his views on this subject. He is intelligent; he is humane; he is more than humane—he is both benevolent and beneficent. He has expended a good deal of money in efforts to improve the conditions of the mill people as regards body, mind and soul.

of night is not one of health, but of morals? "As to the education question," says he, "I believe every child ought to be compelled to go to school for at least so many months in the year. I don't hesitate to say that I think children are better off at work than spending their time in idleness on the streets, unless they are at school."

In answer to a question as to the physical effect, he writes: "I have seen a great many children work in the mills from ten to twelve years of age, but I have never seen any bad results, as the work is not of such a nature as to hurt the child. This applies especially to the boys, who spend at least half the time out of doors playing ball. The work of the girls who do the spinning is very light. Of course, I admit it is best if they could go to school until they are at least fourteen to sixteen years of age; but there are a great many cases where the parents are not able to support their families without the children's work, and in this case I think there ought to be exceptions to allow the children to work as low as twelve years of age."

"This is a suggestive letter, which gives the point of view of the better class of mill men. If all were of this stripe, there would be little need of child labor reform. The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient; * * * for man-slayers and men-stealers." (1 Tim. 1:9-10.) It is only when commercialism steals and slays the children of the nation, that legislation, punitive and restrictive, is demanded. * * *

"On the whole, my friend's letter furnishes an excellent platform on which I believe most child labor reformers would be willing to stand. I think, however, the reformer would take exception to his statement in regard to the results of working young children in the mills. It is true that if the small boys spend at least half the time out of doors playing ball, they are not likely to be seriously injured by spending the other half in the mill.

"But, however it may be in my good friend's mill, is it the ordinary custom of the mills to grant the boys this liberty? And however light the work is it a good thing for girls, especially in the critical period of their physical development, to stand on their feet all day long, to breathe a close atmosphere laden with lint, to have the unceasing whirl and din of machinery in their ears, and the monotonous lines of yarn before their eyes from morn till eve, and thus to spend the long year linked with heavy day on day?"

Showing that England was deaf to the warnings of such men as Ruskin, Lord Ashley, Lord Macaulay and others, the writer pointed to the fact that England found from 40 to 60 per cent of her recruits unfit for service in the Boer war, and the royal commission, investigating the cause, said child labor had done much to produce the degeneracy. A word to wise nations ought to be sufficient.

Mr. F. C. Abbott Takes Issue With The News

To the Editor of The News: I for one was very much astonished to read your editorial last night opposing the plan to abolish the East avenue grade crossing.

For a paper which has stood so steadily for the best interests and development of Greater Charlotte to oppose this very much needed improvement, one which will benefit a very large part of the city, is beyond comprehension.

Just at this time when every progressive city in the country is doing its best to abolish grade crossings and thereby protect the lives and add to the convenience of the citizens, Charlotte, one of the most progressive cities in other lines, has made a record for herself in this particular which is the wonder if not the admiration of all who behold.

For instance, in building the new car line to North Charlotte an overhead crossing was abolished and a most dangerous grade crossing established, and within a few weeks time a shocking accident at that very point emphasized the great mistake made.

Also on Mint street extension, near the Pipe & Foundry plant, another overhead crossing has been changed, and a grade crossing established just at the foot of a heavy grade on the main line of the Southern Railway, and several narrow escapes have already been recorded from the swift running expresses coming into the city.

And now, when there is a strong possibility of the removal of a grave danger to every man, woman and

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child who has occasion to travel to East avenue, and a large part of the population it is, a most comprehensible opposition is developed.

I believe, after ten years experience in real estate business in Charlotte, that the valuation of every property on East avenue is seriously affected by this grade crossing, and I know it to be a fact that certain citizens have sold their holdings on East avenue and removed to other sections of the city because of this one condition.

Is Charlotte content to remain a generation behind the rest of the country in this one matter, or is she to hold her reputation as the most up-to-date city in these parts by making use of every possible opportunity to remedy such civic defects, which are a danger to her citizens and a hindrance to her business.

One of your correspondents in opposing this matter refers to the proposed viaduct as "the great bridge mounting up above the tops of most of the stores on East avenue."

Why don't he say "mounting up over the moon, it would be almost as much in line with the facts. Atlanta, our wide awake neighbor to the south, has just completed a viaduct to relieve grade crossings and certainly considers it a blessing to the city and not a curse.

Springfield, Mass., and Hartford, Conn., two of the most beautiful cities in New England have removed just such crossings as this by elevating the railroad tracks, supported by handsome stone bridges, (suitably if you please) and the railroads proceed with uninterrupted business overhead, and the city with safety and uninterrupted business on the streets below, and I will be willing to guarantee that every piece of business property along the street has been enhanced in value because of the great improvement made.

If certain property owners on East avenue will stop drawing on their imaginations and study the facts, they will realize that they are opposing their own interests, as well as those of the city by opposing this much-needed improvement.

F. C. ABBOTT.

The Let Up on the Viaduct.

Editor News: We need better streets and sidewalks more than a viaduct at this time. Notice Eighth street from Church to Tryon streets and Sixth street from Poplar to Church streets in wet weather. They are as bad as the worst country roads, that are not macadamized. People are all taxed the same rate. Some enjoy good streets and all the comforts, while others, less favored, have to submit to anything they can get. Vance street from Tryon to the railroad in wet weather, you'll find the sidewalk so muddy that you have to take the middle of the road. Give us better streets and sidewalks and let up on the viaduct for a while. The \$50,000 for its construction would help wonderfully in the betterment of our streets.

PROPERTY OWNER.

Near East Avenue.

For 18.2 Billiard Title

New York, March 27.—Lovers of billiards are much interested in the match between George Sutton and Willie Hoppe for the 18.2 balkline billiard championship, which takes place in the concert hall of Madison Square Garden tonight.

Sutton is the holder of the title, having won it several years ago from George F. Slosson and successfully defended it since against Schaefer, Hoppe and Moringstar.

Pacific Coast Billposters.

San Francisco, Cal., March 27.—The Pacific Coast Billposters and Distributors' Association convened in annual session in this city today with representatives present from Oregon, Washington, California, Nevada, Idaho and Montana. President George W. Kleiser, of Portland, presided.

"Winter's Grip Is Gone" advertisement for Belk Bros. featuring clothing and shoes. Includes text: "Spring rules. Our Big Establishment is full of it. The brightness, freshness and beauty of the new season are reflected everywhere..."

THE SPRING OPENING advertisement for The Millinery Opening. Includes text: "A conservative estimate is, that more than Twice as many people visited the Store during this Opening as in any former Opening..."

JUDGE ITS MERITS, FOR YOURSELF. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters advertisement. Includes text: "The best way to test the curative powers of the Bitters is to give it a fair trial. We know from the past 54 years' experience that it positively cures ailments of the Stomach, Liver, Kidneys or Bowels..."