

THOSE ILLICIT LIKKER STILLERS.

Just now we are getting much information concerning the thousands of illicit likker stills in North Carolina and but little of the product of them. It appears from some of the papers that illicit stills are run and the neighborhood seems to endorse such proceedings. This is the way Judge Clark, of the Statesville Landmark, hands it down:

In some localities where the illicit liquor traffic flourishes the influence of the blockader is so strong that the law-abiding are afraid to report him. Their persons and property, even their lives, would not be safe. On the Irredell-Wilkes line two years ago blockaders whose still was destroyed, suspecting that one of their neighbors had reported them, fired into his house in open day and wounded some members of the family, including the mother. And yet when these men were brought into court they were allowed to go under suspended judgment. The Landmark denounced the disposition of the case as "infamous"—that's the word used—while the court was sitting, and it has never had any reason to modify the word or apologize.

These things do not exist generally. They are in localities, but the localities are sufficiently numerous and the territory covered sufficiently large to make the matter one of serious concern to those who are concerned about law and order in North Carolina. If the evil is not eradicated it will grow and spread, and in some cases it is actually fostered and protected by political influence.

Naturally Judge Clark has liberties that we could not enjoy. He is privileged. Being a Judge himself he can, with impunity, call another Judge to law. But the chances are that the ruling of the court was infamous, as the Judge remarked at the time, and therefore there was no contempt proceedings. Or it may have been that the sitting Judge didn't see the article referred to. In any event it is too often the case that moonshiners are let off with slight sentences or no sentences at all. We are not objecting to the court showing mercy to the moonshiner, but some punishment should be given.

However, if, as Judge Clark says, the territory occupied is large, it does look as though the neighbors should join with the moral forces and assist in suppressing lawlessness. And, above all, the courts should hold a strong hand and see to it that all evil doers were punished. The corn likker business may be large, but again, as we look out into space and now and then see where a deluded negro was induced to sell it at a deluded five cents a quart, we wonder what becomes of the output and why the supply doesn't come nearer equaling the demand. As it is now, according to policemen, but little illicit whiskey is sold to the consumer; so what becomes of this wonderful output—~~1 million and forty million gallons a year~~, we believe Bob Gray says?

The Northern soldiers who thought they were going to enjoy something fine in the way of weather at the Southern cantonments are wondering now why they didn't bring some extra blankets down this way.

THE NEW ORDER OF THINGS.

Down in this country in reconstruction days the negro was exalted, but he didn't stay exalted long. But up in Boston, the Hub of the Universe, the negro has long been regarded as a man of importance, and it was no uncommon thing to see Sambo in the city council. But it appears that in New York state the negro hasn't been given many official honors, as this special telegram from Albany to the Herald would suggest:

Edward A. Johnson, republican assemblyman from the nineteenth district, New York city, was seated in the 1918 legislature today, the first negro to ever sit in any law making body in the state.

Assemblyman Johnson, delighted at the equality of other law makers extended to him, declared a belief after the assembly adjourned he was going to meet with success as a member of the lower house.

"Why, Speaker Sweet even paid me the honor of asking me to be seated with him," Johnson said. He was introduced to Mayor James R. Watt of Albany, and J. Sheldon Frost, commissioner of public safety, at the Albany Club.

Government ownership of public utilities will give the negro a better show than he ever had, and it appears that in New York state he is coming into his own. When the telephone lines and telegraph lines are operated by the government—owned, as they will be, it now unfortunately appears—it will be no uncommon thing to see negro women seated in the telegraph offices and around telephone switchboards with the whites. Either this or the whites won't play, and the darks will have it all their own sweet way. Civil service doesn't regard sex, color or previous condition of servitude, and when the government owns all these great works look out for the disappearance of the color line, or look out for something doing.

Out in the wild and woolly west we never thought much of it to see colored boys and girls mingle with the white boys and girls at school; we never thought much of it to see white people mix with the colored man, because he was in the minority. But since we have been in this country we have had opportunity to understand some things we didn't understand before, and we are wondering what will happen when civil service takes over the big concerns.

Inasmuch as Russia is something like Mexico in her political muddle we can't exactly tell what will happen tomorrow, but the last news from that direction looked pretty good to the allies.

MORE OF IT.

Colonel Bob Gray, editor of the Raleigh Times, has been doing some more figuring and basing his conclusion on the conservative estimate made by Collector Bailey that there now run red-handed and in reckless abandon three thousand five hundred illicit stills in North Carolina arrives at this result:

All of which we submit without prejudice to the curious among our readers, and also this additional fair deduction concerning the 3,500 for Colonel Al to chew upon: The average "still," we are informed, is of forty-gallon capacity. It has a "run" every three days, let us say 100 stilling days a year. We have, then, 3,500 stills producing 140,000 gallons each day. In one year the 3,500 would produce 14,000,000 gallons, which at \$10 a gallon would amount to \$140,000,000 a year, which is about seven gallons of corn per person, man, woman and child, or \$70 per capita corn liquor expense.

There may be 3,500 illicit distilleries in the state, but what we cannot understand is how it can be said that they are discouraged by the scarcity of liquor and its high price, and how there is any meal left for corn ones.

With one hundred and forty million gallons of likker, and this is an ultra conservative estimate, being made each year in North Carolina, we do not see why people should be sending to Baltimore and securing a doctor's certificate in one hand and a death certificate in the other in order to satisfy a taste that is cultivated. However, if the figures are again revised and it transpires that there are three hundred million gallons produced, which would not be a wild surmise, we shall undertake to ascertain who is drinking all that likker.

Indeed, doesn't it stand to reason that if we know where three thousand five hundred stills are located, at least that number are operating unknown as to location? Looks like a fifty-fifty shot on the unseen stills in these days of camouflage is about right.

HIGH PRICES PINCH.

It is generally understood that with increased prices of labor poor people have been faring really better than when prices were low and work hard to get. But now and then there is presented a picture which touches even the hardened man of the world. Touches him because he understands, even if he does not admit. Mother love is said to be one of the strongest loves in all the world, and it is manifested in all females. To defend her young Gordon Cuming has said that the tigress is the fiercest wild beast known, and we all have seen the mother hen fly into the face of death to defend the wee chick which was dependent on her. The mother bird will dart into the face of the offender who comes to rob the nest, and an angry sow knows no fear if one attempts to interfere with her litter of little pink-nosed pigs. And in the human race all history is full of the mother's devotion, the mother's love. The picture of the heart-broken mother following her wayward son to the gallows, kneeling with him in the felon's cell, starving for him, dying for him, is familiar to all who have traveled far the path of life.

In a recent number of the Danville Register we read this startling item—startling because it hardly seems possible that a mother would consent, because of poverty, to part with her flesh and blood. The Register says:

Who wants a seven-year-old boy or a four-year-old girl?

Mrs. Rose Shruggs, a widow living at 604 Floyd street, has such a boy and such a girl whom she is willing to have some one legally adopt who can better provide for their comfort than she has been able to do.

The mother is not an unnatural one, but is rather moved by considerations of the welfare of her children primarily and only incidentally of her own. She has found it a hard struggle under existing cost of living to provide shelter and sustenance for her two little ones, and has now reached a point where she considers that it would be best for them if she could insure the comfort, welfare and educational opportunities to which children are entitled.

Chief of Police Bell is responsible for the statement that this is the attitude of Mrs. Scruggs with respect to the two children. Any person desiring to adopt either of the children legally and open the door of opportunity to these young lives and rescue them from penury may communicate with the mother directly or through the police department.

Hard lines, these, to know that poverty bids a mother part with her very own. Perhaps she has not been properly advised; perhaps she is harboring a demon that does not exist.

TURKEY GOBBLES.

Turkey gobbles on its peace terms, and the peace propositions are so numerous that it verifies the old story of crying Peace, and there is no peace. It will not be until Kaiser Bill is absolutely put out of business that we can look for peace. No doubt Germany wants peace now at almost any price, but when it happens Kaiser Bill is not going to have any say in the matter. That is the only kind of peace that will mean peace, and America understands this.

They say if it hadn't been for the war we would have had a new city hall pretty soon. But it is for the war, and that just now is furnishing an excuse for most all things. For instance, if your friend calls and you haven't any coal and no fire, you can say that you are patriotically conserving coal, and it goes. In other days he would call you a Tight Wad. The Tight Wad is getting by with it now.

DR. C. W. BYRD.

The Asheville Times pays this handsome tribute to the late Dr. C. W. Byrd:

"Another of Asheville's noblemen has gone home.

"With a suddenness which brought a stunning shock to the people of the community the final summons came to Rev. Charles Wesley Byrd, D. D., the beloved pastor of the Central Methodist church of Asheville, Thursday, January 3.

"Death always brings pain. Not that there is always an uncertainty concerning the future, but because there is ever a dread of earthly separation. Broken ties, formed throughout years of intimate association, leave in their wake bleeding hearts. Asheville had no thought of the coming of a call home to Charles Wesley Byrd. The evening before he had been at his post of duty. Thursday afternoon he was to fulfill another engagement. He was busy about his Master's business and the summons came.

"Strong men trembled when the telephone told of the stroke which suddenly brought a shadow to the family of the Methodist pastor, and before even the first news had reached many homes the final moment came for the passing over the river of the soul of a man big in heart, strong in faith and great in love.

"Close association with Charles Wesley Byrd evidenced the genuine concentration of the man. His mind had been widened and deepened; his soul had grown sweet and tender; his character had developed and ripened. Men with whom this preacher had come in touch went on their way glad and stronger. There was no littleness in his disposition, no narrowness in his expression and no shallowness in his faith. True to the principles of his denomination, honored by his fellows in the church, and recognized as a leader in Southern Methodism, Charles Wesley Byrd was always the gentle, happy, courteous and helpful man of God. His devotion to the announced doctrines of his church did not separate Dr. Byrd from his fellows of the ministry who did not agree with him. His tolerance of the opinions of others, his sympathetic disposition toward those whose eyes had not seen the light from the same angle, and his willingness to co-operate with every movement calculated to better lives and encourage humanity drew men to Charles Wesley Byrd.

"The nation—how the man loved it. To him, and his frequent expression demonstrated it, the country called for the highest and best in every man. His soul was afire with desire for democracy's ultimate mastery of the entire world. He believed in America and Americans, and on several occasions he made it very clear that, if it were possible, his very life would gladly be given for the support of the national principle.

"The community is poorer. The going away of the friend, the counselor and the comforter of men; the man, known for his sane and established manhood, leaves a void in Asheville's life. His wife and son have the sympathy and love of the entire community. The church suffers, but with the knowledge that other churches of different faiths but of the same aims suffer with it.

"It is not 'good-bye,' Charles Wesley Byrd; it is not 'good-bye.' Your life lives on in Asheville. Men will remember and love. Your soul, immortal, lives on—yonder. Asheville men and women look forward to a meeting again with you in that life and land toward which you ever directed them, both by word and by example. Good night, friend of man! It has been a joy to have traveled a bit of road beside you."

FOR THE SENATE.

It is announced that Miss Rankin, the Congresswoman, will go back to Montana and run for the Senate, and the men folk up there will all be for her. One of these days there will be a struggle to see whether the women or the men have the majority in Congress, and when the women do get the majority, which will be sure to happen some time or other, the chances are that some legislation never dreamed of in this age will be put over. Woman has been thinking for hundreds of years what she would do if she were a man, and if she finally gets what has always been termed the man's job in the law-making business she will do a chore worth while.

And that day is not far distant. New York state is going to send down some representatives pretty soon. There are too many bright women there for all of them to vote for men. It is a New World—a transformation is on.

THRIFT STAMPS.

The campaign for the sale of Thrift stamps is on all over the country, and while the campaign hasn't yet reached a point of universal interest, it is said that thousands and tens of thousands of them are being sold. The citizen who saves a few dimes and with them buys a Thrift stamp is helping his country and at the same time helping himself. Clubs are being organized where men agree to buy one Thrift stamp a day, some one in two days, and in this way it is thought that universal interest will finally be aroused.

Uncle Sam needs many millions, aye, billions of dollars, and every time one cent is contributed it means that much, and if every citizen will buy a few Thrift stamps the grand total will be some very large figures. In a country where there are a hundred million people, if each one starts in to help out it doesn't take long to get together a billion dollars. Just now we spend millions an hour to carry on the war. So let every man think about his Thrift stamp. Also every boy and girl. All of us can come in on this—no man is too poor to do his bit.

CAMP GREENE TO BE BIGGER.

The news is that Camp Greene, at Charlotte, is to be increased seven thousand people. That will make a city within itself, and Charlotte feels that it is an ill wind that blows good to nobody. These camps bring money into towns, and while many people think they have a demoralizing influence, why shouldn't they, if money is the root of all evil?

HITTING THEM HARD.

The ruling is that all theatrical companies carrying excess baggage and extra cars must quit the road; that car service is the one thing necessary now, and if it happens, what will the people do? True, they have the movies; the films come by express and could, perhaps, come by parcels post, and the crowd can look on the mute pictures and draw its own conclusions. But in the theatrical world there are hundreds of thousands of people who know no other line of business. What will they do? Thousands of old men and old women who entertain the people will be left alone and must take up knitting. The circus will perhaps be tabooed. The papers are crying out against race horses; the pulpit is saying there is no need of the midway at fairs; and so it seems that with our wheatless days and meatless days we are to have circusless years and theatreless weeks, and all the time what will the railways haul after the congestion is over?

It appears that the government had priority in many things, thousands of things, and the regular channels of transportation became congested, literally choked, and all terminals and depots were filled with goods long in transit, and the immediate effort is to clear the tracks. If all competing passenger trains are to be taken off; if the tracks are to be cleared regardless of route and regardless of which company does the business, just so it is done, certainly it will not take long to clear things up, and then perhaps traveling shows will be welcomed to make the wheels move.

It is said that out of New York hundreds of trains go daily, all starting for the west or the south, and many of them run empty cars. The idea is to concentrate and let a few trains as possible carry the passengers. That is to say, if three hundred men were starting south and three or four different lines were there with the elegant Pullman coaches, all but one train would be cut out, and the passengers would tumble into that one train, and the extra locomotives would be called into play to help pull freight. If this were done, certainly it wouldn't take long to clear up traffic now belated, and with a hundred per cent. increase in freight facilities looks like the tracks could be kept clear.

However, if the circus doesn't come, and if the barn stormers are put out of business, no one of us can help it. We all have faith in General Director McAduo to do things just as they should be done.

A GOOD RULING.

Many soldiers who have enlisted left behind their unpaid bills. Creditors accordingly have been sending the bills to the soldiers at camps and in many instances asking officers to assist them in getting their just dues. The war department has very properly ruled that it isn't running a collection agency and that those who have personal bills against soldiers must manage their own affairs; that the government will not allow its officers to assist in collections. Many a man who owed a bill and found himself in camp perhaps couldn't pay it, and perhaps on his small salary he will not try to pay it until after the war.

NO LUMBER BEING CUT.

It is said that because of the scarcity of hands no lumber is being cut in North Carolina this year. Up to the cold snap none had been sawed, and during the last thirty days it would have been impossible to saw it, and the sawmills here and there have been idle, which suggests that lumber will be lumber next year. The same is true as to the wood situation. There is an abundance of wood ready to cut, but the farmers in Guilford county insist that it is impossible to secure help enough to run the farms, and a dozen in this office within the last few days tell us that wood is a very scarce article. One farmer in this morning says that in his little neighborhood of twelve farmers ten young men have gone to war, others have gone to munition plants, and the farms are left without any help at all, and the question is: How will they get in wheat crops and tobacco crops next spring? It is really a more serious situation than the city folk realize, and something must be done to get help to put seed in the ground, or there will be a small crop for the next year, and that means something no one wants to think about.

A WORTHY ALLY.

The desire to "get rich quick" is by no means confined to the United States, or, for that matter, to the Orient, and neither is the effort to cater to that desire. That both are active in Tokyo is made evident by a circular issued from the Wall street of that city recently, and reading:

To the wide-awake public: One who wants to make money why not try stock business at such a rare extraordinary chance? Even a fool his pocket is swelling up every day. Why? Because he is daring it blindly. Awaiting your orders, more or less, yours faithfully, Okino Yonesaburo, stock exchange broker. Bargain money advance.

All of which proves that the little yellow man is an apt scholar and worthy to be the ally of his big brother in the struggle for American ideals of high finance and independence.

THE RALEIGH MESS.

Collector Bailey writes the Raleigh Times and accuses it of trying to insult him and abuse him and make him appear as a local boss, and the Times replies in big type and rather puts it over Bailey. Too bad when a politician refuses to take and give, and give and take. However, in these zero days a little hot stuff comes in mighty handy and helps conserve fuel as well.

While Greensboro has had a few cases of fuel shortage, it is to our credit that great cities like New York have fared infinitely worse. Wherefore, New York should at once start a municipal woodyard.

NO GREAT HURRY.

The County Commissioners promised the Committee interested that they would again hear the citizens on the proposition to establish a county welfare league and employ a whole-time superintendent at their January meeting. The Committee having this important matter in hand has concluded that the first of the year is a bad time to go before the Commissioners, they have so many things to look after at such a time; therefore it has been decided to postpone the matter until perhaps the first of March.

In the meantime the Committee is gathering facts and figures going to show that what Judge Harding has said was a fact in this county; that the Commissioners could not make a better investment, if nothing but dollars were considered. Also different organizations which wanted to assist in presenting the matter have not yet had time, because of weather conditions, to get in their reports, and many prominent citizens of the county will not be able to attend the meeting because of excessive cold weather, which has put them far behind with their farm work.

At the meeting in March the citizens will again go before the Commissioners and ask for action. They only want a part of the fund necessary, citizens pledging themselves to raise something like twelve hundred dollars.

In the meantime the hope is that the Commissioners will find time to thoroughly investigate the need for a county welfare league and be in position to make the small appropriation asked for by so many of our citizens. Every day the police court is furnishing evidence that a whole-time county superintendent would find ample work to do; that he could save to Society many weak and erring ones who are hastening to destruction. The local columns of the paper today furnish such evidence, and almost every day cases are reported that should excite interest along the lines suggested.

WONDERS NEVER CEASE.

When Judge Hylan was being abused in his campaign for mayor of New York it was freely claimed that if he were elected New York would be notoriously wide open. But it happens that Hylan has appointed as Police Commissioner a man he never knew personally, but a strong man named Bugher, and in a local story we read this:

Mr. Bugher made it plain that "pull," political or otherwise, would have no place in the department so long as he was at its head, and issued a warning against any attempt to bring such influence to bear. He also expressed himself decidedly that there would be no "wide open town." Mr. Bugher said that he had been informed by Mr. Untermeyer, speaking for Charles F. Murphy, that Tammany Hall desired no part in the running of the police department and that it was the desire of the responsible leaders of Tammany that the organization be free in every respect from the administration of the affairs of the police department.

Think of a "lid on" New York City, and think of an administration where Tammany had nothing to do with the police department. We have had below zero weather in North Carolina; we have had shooting stars in Tennessee; we have had an attempt at municipal woodyards, and none of these things surprise us. But to know that New York is to be run by a man who never sought the job, who is opposed to vice, and who will enforce the law, and who isn't to be dominated by Tammany Hall—well, we must all admit we are living in a New World, and strange things are happening.

GUILFORD'S MEDICAL MEN.

Members of the Guilford County Medical Association did the right thing and the square thing in choosing a woman for their president this year. In these days of service and sacrifice, when women are being called upon to bear their full share of the world's burdens, it is but fair that they should share in the honors so hardly won. The Guilford doctors, than whom none are in position to better understand woman's contribution to their profession, have measured up to their opportunities as broad-minded, thinking men; Twentieth Century men, who realize the age in which they live.

KEEPS ALL GUESSING.

Russia just now keeps the whole world guessing. The latest news from that scrambled mess is to the effect that Kerensky is yet the strong man of the empire and that in the fulness of time and the right time he is again to be the recognized leader. It is believed—perhaps the wish is father to the belief—that Russia is going to turn down the German overtures for peace and that Germany will be forced to keep her soldiers where they can look after the three million uniformed Russians who may do something. In this event it is said that Germany will send back from the western front the soldiers she sent there; and if this happens the Italians, French, British and Americans will perhaps do a chore which will decide the issue. Therefore Russia is the one country on which the eyes of the whole world rest, and if she does something quickly it may hasten the end of the war.

MIGHT MANAGE TO GET ALONG.

The Christian Science Monitor rises to remark that "no reasonable person in the United States objects to conservation of the national game of baseball, but the magnates of the sport might as well understand that the nation can exist, until further notice, with one league and fewer games. The nation, for that matter, could pull through until the return of peace without any professional leagues or professional games."

With a fifty million dollar money crop of illicit corn likker in the state, why should a farmer buy Liberty bonds? No reason in the world, and Collector Bailey certainly knows the number of illicit stills, which he conservatively places at three thousand five hundred.