

CONCERNING AN ANONYMOUS SCRIBBLER.

The broad, vast field of literature does not furnish anything more laughable than some of the country weekly papers with patent-inwards and the need of patent outwards. The other day we chanced to pick up one from the table and found an Able Essay on the Anonymous Correspondent, and it is needless to say that the Able Editor who wrote the Able Essay consigned to deep and dark and dank oblivion all the anonymous correspondents in the world, and their children and their children's children.

Nor is it alone the country dreadful with its appeals for cordwood and a little ready cash that tosses idly aside the Works of the Anonymous Correspondent. It is understood in all print shops of low and high degree that nothing goes unless the name of a responsible creature is scrawled thereto. All of which suggested to the Old Darling of this peculiar, periscope and pristine publication that after all the Anonymous Correspondent, or in its fuller sense, the Anonymous Writer, had made good and held the boards so far as the peoples who accepted his works are concerned. It might have been in the day of their birth that the name of the writer was known—but, be that as it may, it had been chopped off when the historians commenced to pant for relics of antiquity, and therefore unknown is the name of the greatest writer who wrote the greatest book known to the reading world. Therefore, brethren, we would admonish you to be not too gay with manuscript unsigned. It might be that, by this token, some purer stuff than has yet been recently printed sleeps its last sleep in the waste basket in the corner yonder. We have, sometimes great respect for the anonymous scribbler, and while we do not print his stuff we always read it, because we feel that if that school wrote the story of Job it might be worth while to see if any pupils of the Master who arranged that manuscript were yet running at large.

Still it is true that in this age, when men want their names printed in the blackest type in the print shop or on the title page in golden letters, that of all the writers—sage and seer, philosopher and philologist, rhetorician and reviewer, rhapsodist and rhymist, he who quotes the tragic muse or he who smiles with the lighter lines of comedy—no one ever approached, so our sternest critics say, the sublime and dizzy heights of thought and language climbed by this anonymous scribbler who wrote the story of the man of the land of Uz.

From another time and another clime this fragmentary bit of literature of a lost age and a lost world was gathered and cherished, and so strange and weird and deep, and withal so philosophical and beautiful it seemed, that those of the world who lived six thousand years ago clung to it for art's sake—then for God's sake, and finally incorporated it with other miscellaneous writings and compiled the volume known as the Holy Bible.

When the translators had completed their vandalism and had taken it from the Chaldean or Arabic or some other tongue and wrapped it in a half dozen different languages, so strong it remained that it yet thrills the man who reads and ponders! God! What would it have been in its native tongue! If the translators have of necessity torn it into shreds and left a distinct style still, what would it have been right off the reel without a change, without omission, with every syllable clear and comprehended. As French is tattered by those who would translate, think of the majesty of a book of words that has floated through the currents of a dozen worlds of letters and yet retains its originality to a degree that the best and most learned of scholars pronounce it at once the grandest and most magnificent array of words known in the language of men.

Take a barque of steel and set it adrift in the hurrying and tumultuous eddys of a swollen river; let it float on to the ocean's bosom and receive the wild waves tossed by angry force, and not many years until the floating craft is battered beyond use or recognition. But here was a book, with words set in sublime array by an unknown scribbler centuries before time began, so far as we have history, and translators here and translators there have fed upon it, drunk in the words of the Poet of the World, dragged it here and yonder, lost its identity, if it ever had any, and presented it to us as the spawn of an anonymous scribbler who failed to sign his name, and with all this rude usage it stands today the most brilliant star, the brightest exhalation in the literary firmament. Take the stuff and analyze it, study it, and off the loom with a master's wit you meet all argument, all sophistry, all coaxing and all beguiling, and is ever ready with a philosophy that shows a depth never fathomed by the scribblers who have signed their stuff since then.

Like the hungered evening wolves which howl throughout the Bible, there were many attempts made to prove that the Book of Job was written by Moses and other men, but all the attempts have failed—failed as ingloriously as the attempt made to steal from the immortal Shakespeare the name and fame that were duly his. It is said that in the older days, because the Book of Job was such a strong and striking composition, there were those who did all that was possible to make this character of fiction real, and in Oriental countries as many as six different tombs of Job, the Hero of the Book of Job, are shown to curious travelers, and Kitto's Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature, with authority, tells us that there is a tomb of Job on a high state of a dung hill on which shows that there were the same as in the tombs and with a name on the subject of the author of the Book. There are theories, there are theories; but the morning stars are they sang together is duly recorded in his own words.

And so it is, we again suggest to the fatherless and the orphaned press that since

steadfast faith in a living God, presented in a style entertaining and forceful and finished, and yet a style that stands alone in the "solitude of its own originality,"—and it a wail, the child, so far as any of us know, of an anonymous and unknown scribbler who may have been full of prunes and Peruna when he wrote!

Admittedly the oldest manuscript in the history of the world, and yet filled with what this age is pleased to term slang and vulgarisms. Filling with doubt the minds of the wise men who once upon a time revised the Holy Bible, the Book of Job got in by the game of chance—like others which for centuries had put on a front of divine origin and been accepted as the word, it was voted upon and, "by the skin of its teeth" only, was accepted, and human power mid doubts and fears finally concluded that it was direct from God, or at least was sacred stuff. And yet if it was, it had been revealed in another age and another tongue, and the joyous sage who wrote it down was of a nationality that is today unknown—belonged to a world of letters that the accumulating jetsam thrown from the universe of planets centuries ago has covered and sealed. He didn't even know the bunch that wrote the rest of it. He never heard of Moses or Aaron, or Solomon in all his glory—he simply wrote the Book of Job, turned it loose, and years after, when the compilation began, some of the wise men gathered in to their bosoms and fathered the homeless wail. But as there was no family resemblance to any of the writin' men of the compilation age outside of the failure to attempt to put the job on Moses, it still remains fatherless—and the author was an anonymous scribbler. "By the skin of his teeth" was an expression of this Classic of the Lost Age, and it is an expression used today by the Gamin of the street. For over six thousand years of recorded time this one expression which the aesthetic world today terms low, or vulgar, has lived and made clear the meaning of him who used it—and we, in our boasted progress and enlightenment, go back before history began and take the rude hieroglyphics which symbolized human thought and translate them to mean that the writer of the book of Job—that thrilling epic—seriously suggested that he escaped by the skin of his teeth—and his teeth had no skin—therefore it was a striking and singular metaphor signifying the superlative of the Last Chance. And it lived, that expression of the anonymous scribbler did—and it will live so long as men employ characters to express thought or the vocal organs perform their functions.

And the world received in its parlors and in its pews and in its studies and in its sanctuaries, the grim philosopher, Bildad the Shubite, diplomat, grafter, politician—a Mr. Smooth, the same then as now—and he was introduced by an anonymous scribbler. And it was up to him to make the story complete—to give to the leading man of this greatest drama of any age, his lines. Had Bildad not been introduced the Book of Job would have been as the play of Hamlet with Hamlet omitted.

It was that austere critic whose genius was dyspepsia, Thomas Carlyle, who wrote to the Anonymous Scribbler whom we are now considering this beautiful tribute:

"I call that (the Book of Job), apart from all theories about it, one of the grandest things ever written with pen. One feels, indeed, as if it were not Hebrew; such a noble universality, different from noble patriotism or sectarianism, reigns in it. A noble Book; all men's Book. It is our first, oldest statement of the never-ending Problem—man's destiny and God's ways with him here in this earth. And all in such free-flowing outlines; grand in its sincerity, in its simplicity; in its epic melody, and repose of reconciliation. There is the seeing eye, the mildly understanding heart. So true every way; true eyesight and vision of all things; material things no less than spiritual; the Horse—'Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?'—he laughs at the shaking of the spear! Such living likenesses were never since drawn. Sublime sorrow, sublime reconciliation; oldest choral melody as of the heart of mankind; so soft, and great: as the summer midnight, as the world with its seas and stars! There is nothing written, I think, in the Bible or out of it, of equal literary merit."

And yet this tribute was a tribute to an anonymous scribbler! It was this anonymous scribbler who propounded the question that has perplexed all philosophers of all ages and in turn been asked by them: "If a man die, shall he live again?" It was this anonymous scribbler who gave us the expression to the effect that a man "giveth up the ghost"—and it was this anonymous scribbler who did not attempt to palm off on a world of wonders the proposition that God made the world in six days' labor. He was an astronomer and told us about Arcturus and Orion and Pleiades and the chambers of the South, and the stars he designated in that long ago are still known by the names given them by this anonymous scribbler. No less geologist than astronomer, for he told us that silver had its veins and that gold was where it was found. He was also a sociologist and measured the depths of society—knew that a politician if he had pie would hold his yawp or that if a man had money he would be stilled. For did he not ask: "Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass or loweth the ox over his fodder?"

It was also this anonymous scribbler who had fathomed the human heart and who was touched to pity by the sorrows of others; who knew that charity was due to the unfortunate, for it was he who spoke of the poor that cried, the fatherless that had none to help him, and suggested that it was not a knave who caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.

Whether the Bohemian, the unknown writer who penned the wonderful book, had looked upon the land of Uz makes no difference—but that he loved nature and first heard the morning stars as they sang together is duly recorded in his own words.

And so it is, we again suggest to the fatherless and the orphaned press that since

MANUFACTURERS CAN HELP.

Several of Greensboro's manufacturers, the Cones and Oettingers being among those so far reported, are encouraging in every way possible the planting of gardens by their employes. It will be interesting to know the result of their experiments in actual dollars and cents saved during the coming summer, to say nothing of the amount of food released for those who cannot enjoy a similar privilege.

One large manufacturing concern in Ohio provided gardens for its employes in 1917 and required them to keep an accurate record of the time spent working the gardens and the value of the crop grown.

At the end of the season the results showed that the gardeners had received 93 cents an hour for their spare time spent in the gardens.

Another large manufacturing concern in Illinois plowed up a prize 40-acre alfalfa field and divided it into garden plots for the use of its employes. The results obtained from this garden plot far exceeded the expectations of both the company and its employes.

Manufacturers all over the country are providing gardens for their employes this year, according to reports to the United States Department of Agriculture.

THE PRESIDENT RIGHT.

The Statesville Landmark, always level-headed, in commenting upon the action of the President on the court-martial bill, concludes that he was right, as usual. Naturally, argues the Landmark, "when we think of the pro-Germans in this country, of the traitors in America who are doing what they can to help Germany and to hurt the home of their birth or adoption; who are guilty of sabotage or other offenses that would destroy our forces on land and sea; the explosions and fires that cause loss of property and life; the attempts to poison—all the numerous things that have been done by Germans and German sympathizers in this country; when we consider these things the blood boils and the feeling is strong that these people deserve death by the most direct and shortest method. The court-martial seemed to offer the remedy. In a military court there are none of the delays that so often block the law's course in the civil courts and delay justice."

"But on sober reflection we must concede that the President is right. Not only is there grave doubt as to the constitutionality of the proposed law, but in character, as the President says, 'it would put us nearly upon the level of the very people we are fighting and affecting to despise. It would be altogether inconsistent with the spirit and practice of America.'"

"When the blood runs hot and the feeling of hate takes possession, all of us would be law breakers if we yielded to our feeling. Often, probably in the majority of cases, the victims of mobs get only what they richly deserve, but that does not excuse the mob, and as lawlessness begets lawlessness, the action of the mob in the execution of criminals who deserve death is as dangerous, if not more dangerous, to the peace and safety of society as the act of the criminal."

"Therefore, while the court-martial would more quickly and promptly dispose of the disloyal, it would at the same time tend to build up military courts that would be dangerous. It is not sympathy for the offenders, but the proposed method of dealing with them is too dangerous a precedent."

"The president's opposition has settled the court-martial bill, and it is well. The duty devolving upon our citizenship is not to spend time in denouncing the disloyal and the government for not bringing them to trial, but to aid the government by, helping to secure evidence and speed up the trial of real and not imaginary offenses. Many of the loudest critics of the failure of the government to take action against alleged traitors are not willing to bear witness about the things they have heard or make report to an officer."

"Another thing is that while hatred of our enemies is natural and proper, we must not allow the feeling of hate to so take possession of us that we forget to be just. Many of the reports we hear of disloyalty may not be true. We should be sure to have the proof before making charges, so that injustice or injury may not be done; and, above all, we must guard against becoming so filled with hatred that we should be tempted to engage in the deeds of frightfulness by which the German military forces have shocked the world and have sunk below the level of barbarians."

Get ready for the wood-cutting campaign, which will perhaps be on one of these days this summer, when Greensboro people propose to fell a forest and get in a winter's supply of wood for at least five hundred families.

SELL YOUR WHEAT.

Farmers must sell their wheat. The order has gone forth that no hoarding or further delays will be allowed. The soldiers must have bread and the government is going to provide it for them if there is any wheat in the country. If the farmer will not sell voluntarily, the government will sell it for him.

Beginning May first the county food administrators will begin sending in the names of people who have wheat on hand, and the man who waits for the government to act will not get as much as those who sell in advance.

If you are a wheat grower or have wheat on hand, don't wait to be made to sell. Sell it now.

And of course this last big storm wasn't intended by the weather man, but the weather man has to stand for it.

so loudly agin' anonymous manuscript that the stuff is not discredited and will never be until some savant comes to us with a scroll in his trembling hand and shows us the autograph of the man who wrote the Book of Job.

SAVING THE BABIES.

As in all other worth while movements, Greensboro is taking an active part in the baby saving campaign which is to be on this year throughout the United States. The plan suggested by the Children's Bureau appealed strongly to members of the Mothers' Club, which began at once to set in motion the machinery necessary for carrying it out. A mass meeting for mothers in the Municipal theatre was called for April 6; committees for the city and county were appointed and enthusiastic workers are now on the job of saving the babies.

North Carolina is asked to save 3,130 as its quota, and it will do better than that, because the people of the state are already alive to the importance of this kind of conservation along with the saving of other raw material. The present world war is being fought out for the benefit of future generations, and there is no use to sacrifice the present if there are not going to be any future generations to enjoy the fruits of our sacrifice. This is why the babies must be looked after—the conservation of human life and reduction of waste through avoidable infant mortality.

April 6, the anniversary of America's entry into the war, was chosen as the opening of the children's year, during which it is hoped to cut the infant mortality rate in the United States by one-third. In order that each state shall bear its full share of the responsibility quotas have been assigned, based on the federal census of 1910. These quotas range from New York's total of 8,455 and Pennsylvania's total of 8,318 to Nevada's quota of 60. Illinois must save 5,625 babies, Texas 5,070, Ohio 4,510, Georgia 3,543, Missouri 3,391, Massachusetts 3,094, New Jersey, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Virginia, South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma must each save between 2,000 and 3,000; Connecticut, Nebraska, Kansas, Maryland, West Virginia, Washington and California each between 1,000 and 2,000.

Not content with its assignment of 3,500, Missouri wants to save 5,000 more. "Save 50 children in your county this year and wear the cross of honor, if not the cross of war," says the state chairman of the department of child welfare. "You will need \$1,500 to secure a county nurse and provide funds for carrying on the work for a year. That is only \$30 per baby. Do you have any babies in your county that are not worth \$30?"

New Orleans has raised \$41,000 toward the work of the children's year. Illinois boasts an ample budget, with 40 counties already organized and asking for visiting nurses. Iowa has collected \$45,000, of which \$9,000 will be used in a baby health contest at the state fair. Oregon has county welfare stations, visiting nurses, and maternity hospitals. Each state and town is working out its own child salvation under guidance and advice from the Children's Bureau and the Woman's Committee.

THE HOUR OF ACTION.

The Asheville Times rings true when it says in double leads:

"Day by day the war comes nearer home. It has been so far away and our minds have been engrossed with Young Men's Christian Association campaigns, Young Women's Christian Association work, the betterment of social and physical conditions at the training camps, the Smileage theatres and so many other side issues, all good and needed, they have helped distract attention from the fact that very soon entire columns would be necessary to tell the simple story of names—dead, wounded and missing. We had not lost interest, but we had not felt the hurt so deeply until just now. There is a dark cloud and a deep burning, blistering heat in our souls today."

"It is the hour of intense service. Americans—in memory of the fathers of other days—days when men, ragged and cold and hungry, fought through the question of America's freedom—the men of '76. In memory of those men, go to the job and go to it hard. Every atom of American energy is needed. Tighten your belts. Grit your teeth. With determined men and set purpose do it—the work of freeing the world. Your boys are yonder, fighting along the Somme—fighting desperately and valiantly. Their bravery and courage and daring are astounding the world of fighters. They are acquiring themselves like men. Will you do less?"

"It is not the hour of prayer—it is the hour of service. In olden days the Israelites were fleeing from the army of the Egyptians. The night fell and camp was set beside the Red sea. In the rear came the tramping of Pharaoh's host. The grinding of the chariot wheels was heard distinctly. Fear mastered the nation only recently out of bondage. They cried. Moses prayed. God answered, and it was the answer of the hour. 'Why criest thou unto Me? Say unto the Children of Israel, Go forward.'"

"There are times when prayer is essential; there are times when action is the more essential. This is the hour of action."

"Do it just now—what? Either carry a gun or buy a bond. Take your choice. There is no middle ground. Show your colors. Fight with the colors or support the fighter. Men are needed 'over there,' and if you cannot go, feed and clothe the man who can go. Selfishness must not prevail. Your money must be placed in the hands of the nation. It is not sacrifice; it is really a good investment; but is there a man so small and narrow that an argument of 'profit' must be made in this hour of crisis? Stand by the Red Cross and other agencies of aid and help, and stand by the nation, not in lip service, but in work that counts. Loan the government your money; loan every dollar."

The man who will not defend himself when he has been insulted is a coward. No matter what it costs, self-respect is worth fighting for.

THE TEACHER IN THE WAR.

In her address in Greensboro Thursday night Dr. Anna Howard Shaw stated that she received hundreds of letters from teachers in all parts of the country explaining that they wanted to render some real patriotic service to their country and appealed to her, as chairman of the Woman's Committee, National Council of Defense, to know in what way that would be. Her answer to such inquiries was invariably the same: "Stay in your school room; stick to your job; you are in a position to render the greatest service right where you are."

All of which is true. The generation of men and women who are to come immediately after this world conflict will be faced by the most complex and difficult problems that have ever confronted the peoples of the earth. In the readjustments that must come we must have strong minds as well as strong arms, trained minds as well as trained hands. And how are we to have them if we neglect the men and women in the making who are to perform these herculean tasks?

And the teacher question is something to think about. It is getting to be a serious matter and one upon which the people of this state and nation must become aroused. With all sorts of opportunities for earning salaries largely in excess of what the best paid teacher gets with far less work and easy hours it is only the man or woman who loves the profession and follows it as a missionary follows his who will continue long in the ranks unless there is evidence of greater appreciation of their labor than has been exhibited in the past. Even the missionary cannot live on air, no matter what the temperature, and though the teacher may be an angel, as many of them are, as long as she is alive and in the flesh there are certain temporal needs that are supplied only through the usual channels of commerce where coin is the circulating medium.

Along with other readjustments this war is bringing home to those who have never thought of it before, that in this state and in many other states the public school teacher is the poorest paid laborer in any field of endeavor, and the time has come when the value of that labor must be recognized in a way worthy of a free and enlightened nation.

APPEAL TO NEGROES.

Recognizing the negro as a great economic factor, and hence a great military factor, United States Food Administrator Herbert Hoover has addressed a special appeal to the 12,000,000 negroes of the country to heed the appeal of the food administration in the matter of food conservation and food production. The appeal follows:

"Our nation is engaged in a war for its very existence. To win this war we must save food, grow great crops of foodstuffs and substitute other foods for those most easily shipped to our associates in this war and our own soldiers in France, thousands of whom are men of your own race. The food administration realizes that the negro people of this nation can be of the utmost help in food conservation and food production. Every negro man, woman and child can render a definite service by responding to the appeal and instructions of the food administration and its representatives. The negroes have shown themselves loyal and responsive in every national crisis. Their greatest opportunity of the present day, to exercise this loyalty, is to help save and grow food. I am confident that they will respond to the suggestions of the food administration and thus prove again their patriotism for the winning of the war."

NOT NEEDED.

The talk about an extra session of the legislature is on, and the Raleigh News and Observer has this to say about it:

It seems to be a settled conviction among those who ought to know that North Carolina people do not take kindly to an extra session of the legislature. This is probably based on the theory that North Carolina people are naturally conservative and therefore not inclined to radical action of any sort. But the nation is at war and steps that seem inadvisable and unnecessary in peace may be very advisable, wise and necessary in war. The war doesn't wait for public sentiment to produce radical decisive action. The Kaiser isn't waiting. Nothing waits in war except the losing side. It would be very unfortunate if North Carolina's established record for conservatism should prevent it from measuring up fully to its obligation to the nation and to the world in this great emergency. The existing vagrancy statute is not meeting the situation. An extra session of the legislature to add teeth to the law is the only way to make it effective. It is argued that members of the legislature would hesitate to vote for the drastic labor law that is needed because to do so would alienate the voters who would be put to work by such a law. We should hate to believe that of a single member of the legislature. What is a man's political life worth if the Germans gain the whole world?

The truth is we need no extra session. In fact, the legislature should not meet oftener than once in ten years, and then only on a special call with its specific business named in the proclamation. North Carolina doesn't need the farce enacted every other year, and some day people will realize it.

One of these days there will come a time when every man will own his own newspaper and perhaps run it according to his notions—and then the world will be one grand swell of harmony.

If the Germans get the English channel ports, there will be something more doing than has been done. And they are moving that way.