

LINCOLN COURIER.

J. M. ROBERTS. EDITOR AND MANAGER.

ENTERED IN THE POST OFFICE AT LINCOLN AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER.

LINCOLN, N. C., NOV. 20, 1891.

UNFAIR AND UNKIND.

In another column we print an editorial from last week's Shelby Aurora, criticising an editorial which appeared in last week's issue of the COURIER.

We intended to let alone any further stirring of this unpleasant subject, the Motz tragedy, and we shall try to carry out that intention as far as possible; but the unfair and unjust criticism of the Aurora makes it incumbent upon us to speak a few words in self defense and in behalf of justice.

Now, in the first place, the Aurora has been tetotally blind to certain points in this whole matter. He never has seen but one side of this question from the very beginning. As his files will show, he took his stand before the case ever came to trial; and while the trial was in progress, long before the conclusion of the evidence, he issues a paper containing an editorial clamoring for the acquittal of the prisoners!

Why does the Aurora want us to call names? Could he or anyone doubt to whom we referred? If the editor wished to comment on that part of the article, why did he not copy it in full, so that his readers might know our treatment of the whole matter? Instead of showing the least scintilla of fairness, he tries to make the impression upon his readers that we were trying to uphold the man, when he knows that we condemn both parties in unmistakable terms.

That journal says: "Our homes must be protected and woe to the seducer who would, under promise of marriage, rob her of her fair name," and so say we. But let us see if the editor of the above named journal has been carrying out this principle by his actions in the past. We want to ask the editor of the Aurora, the great knight of the nineteenth Century, the great defender of "woman's virtue," if a certain married man, a prominent teacher in Cleveland county, did not cunningly win the love of a beautiful young lady while she was a pupil in his school and make improper proposals to her, thus injuring her "fair name"?

We want to ask him, if, soon after these facts were known, he (the editor) did not hold up the hands of this same teacher and aid in placing him in charge of the young men of Shelby and of Cleveland county? We want to ask him, if he is so bent on having the scalp of the seducer and so distressed that we did not call the parties by name whom we condemned, and if he is so chivalric and so mighty in his efforts to down the seducer; and if he is so touched by the testimony of the girl at Shelby court, (was he not equally touched by the pathetic recital of that school girl to whom we have referred?)—in the face of all these facts, we want to ask the virtue defending editor why, in the name of consistency, in the name of chivalry and virtue, in the

name of honesty and truth—yes, why—we repeat—why in behalf of the sons and daughters of Cleveland, did he not come out boldly and pointedly against that doubly guilty MAN and cry out "unclean, unclean," and woe be unto you, a "trader" of one of Cleveland's pure daughters, instead of aiding in placing him in charge of the worthy sons of Cleveland county? If the editor of the Aurora is so ready to jump upon the MAN and stamp him in the dust; if he is almost ready (as the Concord Standard charges) to sanction a lynching—if he is ready to do this in the case of a YOUNG UNMARRIED MAN who has been overtaken in a grievous and wicked fault, why is it that a MARRIED man and a man of a pure and innocent family, can leave the wife of his bosom and the tender, trusting, innocent children of his household, and play upon the affections of another woman and lead her astray and tarnish her "fair name," and still find favor and support in the eyes of the Aurora? Oh, consistency! consistency!

Again, the editor of that LARGE, gushingly literary, home-protecting (?), virtue-defending (?) journal knows that that same MAN to whom we have alluded, not satisfied with robbing the girl of her "fair name," enters the home of a married couple and foully touches the woman of another man's bosom, and wrecks their happiness so that they are separated and the woman's "fair name" tarnished forever! And yet the editor in his eagerness to protect and defend the "purity of home" and the virtue of woman, is found standing as a mighty pillar, upholding the hands of this same man who has robbed the girl of her jewel and mother home of its purity!

We dislike to allude to these matters, and we would never have done so, but for the unwarranted and personal attack which the Aurora made on the COURIER, and for the fact that consistency is also a jewel. Let justice be done in all things. If you are for stoning the guilty YOUNG MAN, let the guilty MARRIED man be stoned also. If you are so bent on protecting the "purity of home" against the SOUTH, protect it also against the MIDDLE-AGED.

In one paragraph the Aurora says it means no personal reflection on the editor of the COURIER, and then closes his article with the most discourteous, uncalculated, and unprofessional personal allusion to us that could be imagined. But, as we have shown, consistency is the beauty of his val or (?).

It is none of the Aurora's business whether we print a single line of "local news" or not, though both the inside and outside of the past two issues of the COURIER were filled with local matter. It is not our dictator nor have we asked to direct the management of this paper. If the knightly editor of that great journal of modern chivalry knew with what reception the last issue of his paper met by the majority of the citizens of this community, he would probably be glad to take lessons under the COURIER as to how the citizens of Lincoln county may be "delighted."

"Let the unfortunate 'heroine' alone!" What journal has been more tender in dealing with the errors of this unfortunate girl than the COURIER? When the first scene of this sad drama was enacted, out of respect for wounded relatives and friends and sympathy for the fallen, we passed it with only the following item:

"There is some news we do not publish. When one falls from the topmost round of the ladder that leads to the highest circles of society, it hurts but enough, and inflicts enough wounds upon the hearts of innocent friends and relatives, without parading before the public through the newspapers the deed that brings forth the fall."

Had the first act that became known been the last, the COURIER would never have mentioned it again. And even when the homicide was committed, we disposed of her relations to us as briefly as could be done and give our readers an intelligent account of the tragedy. And in our issue concluding the testimony we felt it our duty to give an expression of our thoughts as suggested by the celebrated trial and in doing so we tried to be fair as well as honest; and if the Aurora

will have the fairness to place our editorial, ungarbled, before his readers—though we be ever so "gentle"—we shall not fear their verdict.

We have but a few words more and we leave the subject to the reader. The COURIER has never condemned the verdict of the 12 intelligent men who composed the jury that sat through that long and tedious trial. But as a public journalist, living in the midst of the community in which "the cause of the trial originated, we felt it our privilege to give our views touching the results and its lessons; and in doing so we felt that we could not participate in shouting, in the "firing of cannon" nor lend our "gentle" sanction to the same for no reason plainly stated last week. We remember, too, that in this community live the aged and dotting parents and the affectionate sisters and brothers of the unfortunate slain; we remember the gray hairs of the affectionate father of the erring son; we remember that neither the hordes of the multitude nor the firing of ten thousand cannon can restore the virtue that is lost, nor heal the sorrows of those whose hearts have been grieved. Could the verdict of the jury that released the three unfortunate prisoners (God bless them in their freedom—and we say it with all reverence!) have released also the bonds of the tomb and restored the son that is dead to the bereaved home; could it have eliminated the blot of the unfortunat sister and restored to her the virtue of former days; could it have washed and cleansed the hands of him who rampled upon the girl's chastity, and have restored joy to his aged father and worthy, devoted family and relatives, and thus brought back happiness to all whose hearts have been wounded—could the verdict have done all these things, then would we, too, have felt that the people of this community could have joined in giving forth huzzas and shouts of joy and delight and in the firing of cannon as an appropriate expression of happiness over restored life and regained virtue.

But as it is, we can only refer the wrong to him who said, "Go and sin no more."

PRESS COMMENTS ON THE MOTZ TRIAL.

(Concord Times.) A Just Verdict.

We have carefully read the testimony as published in its entirety in the Shelby Aurora, and find that it established conclusively the following facts:

- 1. That Robt. Michal was the author of the ruin of Maggie Motz under promise of marriage.
2. The State failed after a most rigid cross examination to elicit a single disparaging fact unconnected with Robert Michal.
3. The State failed after the most strenuous efforts to produce a single witness who impeached her character save in this unfortunate affair.
4. She proved by the best men of Lincolnton, young, middle-aged and old men, that her character was spotless up to this occurrence.
5. That Samuel Motz, the deceased, was the friend, kinsman, and coadjutor of the defendants in this case that he procured Robt. Michal to go out to the place of the killing, a rented place, in order that they might persuade him to fulfil the promise of marriage and repair the wrong which he had done to her and her family.
6. That defendants were men of good character.
7. The evidence left it in great doubt who fired the first shot—the responsibility being that Michal commenced the shooting.
8. The evidence was overwhelming that the defendants did not go to the place for the purpose of killing Michal at the outset. Why would a man with a double-barreled shot gun loaded with buckshot, suffer the person he intended to kill to approach within twenty-five feet of him before shooting when he saw Michal's pistol? Why were the license spoken for? Why was the coach shell taken out there to be blown? Why was the minister spoken to? Why was the horse and buggy sent after Maggie? Was it to marry her to a dead man?

Solicitor Osborne, recognized to be one of the ablest prosecuting attorneys in the State, was assisted by six other lawyers, some of the very highest rank. The prosecution was able and vigorous. The jury was composed of gentlemen of the very highest standing in every respect. After ten days of investigation, presided over by an impartial

and able judge, they said "not guilty." And we agree with the verdict. Every man who has a sister or daughter breathes freer upon the rendition of such verdicts. No jury in this Southland of ours has ever rendered a verdict of guilty under such provocation: "Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?" (as was quoted by one of the counsel for the defense) is a question which no father or brother, sitting as a juror, has ever been able to answer, from Jacob's day to this, except by a verdict of "not guilty." It may be sentiment, but we hope never to live in any country where a sister's or daughter's honor is not dearer than life. We hope never to see the day when the price of woman's virtue is not the life of the scoundrel who robbed her of it.

(Newton Enterprise.) Not Guilty.

The Motz case was given to the jury at twelve o'clock last Friday, and at five the jury handed in their verdict of "not guilty." Judge Graves had beforehand forbidden any demonstration from the audience on the announcement of the verdict, and none was made in the court house, but as soon as the crowd could reach the court yard they sent up a shout that was taken up all over town. The Motz boys were accompanied to the hotel by a large crowd, and the whole family, except Miss Maggie Motz, shook hands with the demonstrative and joyous crowd, and received their congratulations. So well pleased were the people of Shelby with the verdict that cannons were fired to add to the noise. It was the proper verdict to render in such cases. Few who heard or read Michal's testimony could see how the jury could arrive at any other.

(King's Mountain News.) Not Guilty.

The case was given to the jury at 12 o'clock yesterday. At 5:30 the verdict of "not guilty" was returned, and then the Motz brothers were given an ovation and a reception at their Hotel. There were cheers for the Motz's and groans for Michal. A righteous verdict, and the Shelby people did the handsome thing which they can be depended on to do at all times and under all circumstances.

(Charlotte News.) Ending of the Motz Trial.

The Motz trial at Shelby ended last night. The verdict of the jury had been anticipated and no surprise was expressed when the foreman announced that the jury had found the prisoners not guilty. The Motz boys intended to kill Michal, and the killing of Sam Motz was accidental.

(Gastonia Gazette.) The Motz Trial.

The celebrated case was closed last Friday afternoon by a verdict of "not guilty" for those brothers three who took their lives in their hands to avenge a sister's ruin. They would have slain her traducer and betrayer; they slew their own friend. And a jury of their peers have said "not guilty."

From the demonstration made at the close of the trial, and from the newspaper comments, it seems to be received as a righteous verdict. So let it be, for so the evidence made it. The greater jury is public opinion, the people, and the press and on the same evidence they give the same verdict, going further, if possible, than the judicial tribunal, and declaring guilty the treacherous rprobator who to the seduction of a confiding woman added the equally base and more heartless crime of deserting her in her shame.

The determination of the three brothers to mitigate or avenge their helpless sister's ruin men hesitate to condemn. For John Motz's brotherly devotion to his fallen sister's humanity can only stand in silent admiration—admiration none the less genuine because mute. Yet all these things bring with them a sense of regret that they had to be. To the parents of the young man who was the author of the girl's downfall the world cannot refuse sympathy; for him who is basest of teachers wrought the shame and refused to share it the world has only closed hearts and heaven—may it not be?—only closed gates. And let not by far the least of all come the heart-stricken parents of her who has been so prominent and unwillingly a figure in all this tragedy. They doubtless love their daughter as ever and she them. But

what a voiceless sorrow is theirs! May it all work out the ends for which sorrow is sent into this world.

(Charlotte Chronicle.) How far is a Woman to Blame.

The ovation given the Motz brothers at Shelby, upon their acquittal for killing Samuel Motz by mistake for Robert Michal the betrayer of their sister has given occasion for discussion again of the extent of woman's blame for her own fall.

All women and men are equally to blame for their joint sins. There is no divine reason why they are not. There was some good reason for an evation at Shelby, but a woman's honor was not at stake and woman's honor was not redeemed in the verdict of the jury which verdict was an attempted response to a chivalric sentiment that so sacredly guards the honor of women in this country.

There is a law in our Statute books which makes it a crime for any marriagable man under promise of marriage to wrong a woman and afterwards refuse to marry her. What is the intent and purpose of this law? It is to force a man to marry a woman he wronged and thereby repair the wrong. But the woman is as much to blame as the man for the existing necessity for such a law. The firing of cannon and the speech making at Shelby simply meant a rebuke to a man who had refused to help palliate and repair a wrong for which he was only partially responsible. This man is guilty of two wrongs and the woman only one. In the first they are equally responsible, in the second he alone, because she confesses that she stood ready as far as it was possible to do so, to atone their sin.

Then it is a cruel and unjust judgement that will pass upon the woman as harshly as the man. He deserves to receive not only the righteous indignation of public sentiment, but a striped habit and a couch in a cell. As a matter of course she will receive what she deserves. But notwithstanding the fact they both will receive due punishment in one way or another, they should not abandon the hope of making the best of the situation. So be it.

(Hickory Mercury.) The Motz Case.

This was the most noted trial ever witnessed in this part of the State. After over a week of anxiety of friends, and hard legal work by Attorneys, for and against, the three Motz boys were acquitted for the killing of their cousin Sam Motz. After the acquittal, the friends of, with the acquitted, indulged in a general banquet. The lawyers and all, it seemed, taking a part. The people are still divided as to the decision of the jury. Some think they ought to have been found guilty, while others say they ought to have been acquitted. The demonstrations after the rendering of the verdict were out of place. It matters not what the facts in the case were, such "corn shucking" affairs, tend to lower the dignity of our courts of justice. There is no doubt about there being something wrong with the whole affair—more than has ever been brought to light, yet the law-abiding citizens can only hope that all will be well, and no harm will come of it. The way to keep such things down is to give them no encouragement. Let the past be forgotten and all work for better things in the future.

(Concord Standard.) Sentiment Justifies Murder.

Standard readers are acquainted with the Motz-Michal stink that occurred in Lincoln county, sometime during the past Summer.

The case was moved from Lincoln to Shelby court for trial. It consumed over a week Friday evening the trial—one of the dirtiest cases on the record of the State—same to an end.

The witnesses had their say, but none of them did not say all that they possibly wanted to.

The Motz girl, whose downfall precipitated this trouble, was there—dressed in black, and looked crushed in spirit and in life—this had its effect on the jury.

Bob Michal was there; he testified. Mean things could be said about him; charges could be brought against him and the lawyers could call him names, demon &c.—this had its effect on the jury. Nothing could be said about Maggie Motz The court, from the very nature of things, could not go into the merits of her course—she was

not on trial—neither was Michal.

The father, crushed and loaded with pain, led his daughter to the witness stand—this had its effect.

The lawyers had their say. They are said to have been eloquent, touching and powerful. They pictured a sad picture—a father and home ruined—brothers outraged—a beautiful, loving girl damned, so far as this world is concerned.

The Shelby Aurora made a blood-thirsty attack on Bob Michal and almost advocated his assassination, during the trial.

The judge charged the jury before a breathless crowd.

The jury took the case—it went out and it returned—the foreman answered: "Not guilty."

Here it stands: Maggie Motz is no longer a virgin, but she will live under a cloud on earth—Sam Motz, a cousin, conspirator (or not a conspirator, probably, but if so a cowardly would be assassin, who deserved his fate), is dead—John, Caldwell and Charlie Motz, murderers, are free. Bob Michal, who from his own evidence, is a dirty, sorry fellow, is foot loose. And a cold, sneak, conspired murder goes unavenged!

Sentiment and not justice prevailed—a ruined woman and not law did the work.

Bob Michal and Sam Motz drove out from town—that was part of the conspiracy—John, Caldwell and Charlie Motz went through the woods with guns—they were on a matrimonial gaming—they were going to "persuade" (?) Bob Michal to marry their sister—they took guns, which are very useful (?) in matrimonial persuasions. It was at this scene that John Motz fired his gun, killed Sam Motz and tried to kill Bob Michal.

The jury says they are not guilty. Has it come to this, that men may pick up guns, and waylay others and kill one and attempt the life of another, and they go scott free?

Bob Michal is a mean man—as mean as they make them—and ought to be punished and will be punished, but, if law is the right and proper thing, the Motz boys are murderers. Sentiment reigned and declared them justified. But there is a day of reckoning and Bob Michal, the Motz boys and Maggie Motz too will get justice.

In another Editorial the Standard says:

In another column the Standard prints a clipping from the Shelby Aurora (this paper has given apparently a most excellent report of the celebrated Motz case) in which the editor shows a mighty little discretion and no little anticipation and a powerful little sense of justice.

If the Aurora has any influence—and we believe it has, if not it ought to have—it has by that very article assisted in thwarting justice. Everybody knows that justice cannot be expected every time in court. Men, of former good and unimpeachable character, may at extreme moments concoct and swear lies—to save men, interested men will do most anything. The way the Aurora shoots off itself, it is not guilty of the slightest suspicion of discretion.

The court was not trying Bob Michal; it presumably was trying the Motz boys. The poor girl may have sworn to the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. This can easily be doubted. She knows (Concluded on local page.)

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