

For North Carolina: Rain, cold-er,

THE MORNING POST.

READING ROOM
TRINITY COLLEGE
Temperature for 24 hours:
Max. 70
Min. 50

Vol. XI

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No. 82

The Closing Scenes of 1903 Legislature

The Work Finished, Gifts Presented, Songs Sung and a General Good Time Among the Members. The Last Roll Call in the House

The Legislature of North Carolina for the year 1903 has closed and its history is now a matter of history for personal and endorsement or condemnation of the sovereign people of North Carolina.

The session closed at the hour of 11 o'clock yesterday, March 9th.

An unusually large number of the members remained in the city for the closing session, notwithstanding the fact that for which they got pay expired on Saturday. The last roll-call closed seventy-nine members of the house present.

On a day of gladness mingled with sadness. Everybody was glad that the work was done and at the thought of going home, and sad because the pleasant associations formed here were to be severed. Most of the members left for the afternoon trains, and others will start for home this morning.

Speaker Gattis, in adjourning the session, said:

"The work of this General Assembly is now done. For sixty days we have labored faithfully for what we considered to be the best interests of all the people of our beloved state. As the closing officer of this body, I had opportunity to observe with the words and actions of its members, and I am glad to say that I have seen nothing said or done which did not in my judgment proceed from a pure and honest desire to advance the best interests of the state.

"We commit our work to the fair and just consideration of those who are entrusted to their highest and noblest political interests. It affords me the greatest pleasure at this closing hour of the session to say that in the discharge of the duties of presiding officer I have had the kind and considerate attention of every member of this body. No unpleasant incident mars the memory of our association. There has at all times prevailed deference and courtesy among the members. I am sure without regard to party or personal differences we separate with peace and kindly sentiments one to the other.

"It is a cause for great thankfulness that we have had so little sickness and at the hand of death has not been upon any member or employe of the General Assembly.

"In accordance with the joint resolution of the two houses I do hereby adjourn this House adjourned sine die."

Business Interrupted with Song

When the House met, a number of resolutions were introduced, and a few bills were also put through. The resolutions were principally for the purpose of giving a small extra compensation to the pages and laborers. Some bills were passed on third reading, and while waiting for the final decision upon the bill of appropriation for the appropriations bill the House was taking it free and easy. Several short recesses were taken, and at the time the members gathered in a group in front of the speaker's stand, their exuberance of feeling bubbled in song.

"Carolina, Carolina, Heaven's Blessings Attend Her," was first sung, led by the handsome gentleman from Mr. Erwin, in which nearly all members joined.

Among the other songs sung were "Nearer, My God, to Thee," "Home, Sweet Home," and "Way Down in the Swanee River." There were a number of good singers among the members, and above them all could be heard the clear, strong, ringing voice of Representative Henry Phillips of Brunswick county. He attracted attention to himself by the way he sang, but him a number of the best voices joined in the opening under the dome, and with the voice and air of a master, led in the song, "Precious Name," and "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow."

The galleries were filled with many of the fair ladies of the city, accompanied by numerous visitors and the venerable Colonel Lucas of Hyde in the front of his flights turned his face toward them and waving his hand in a half-circle, exclaimed: "The ladies, God bless them, the fairest and sweetest flowers that grow and bloom on beloved Carolina's soil."

Hard of Harnett's Farewell

Taking advantage of a lull in the proceedings, Representative Thomas Herring of Harnett, one of the best members of the House, surprised his friends by an eloquent farewell speech. Through his veins, the old Scotch blood courses, and it showed itself in his parting remarks.

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the House: Xenophon, of all virtues-made use of silence, then if silence is golden. Indeed, am a bonanza. But there are times when to be indifferent would be a crime, when to be silent would be treason. Today our last close in all human probability, I call in the General Assembly of North Carolina.

Today we separate and go to our respective homes. We have had our

differences of opinion but surely there can be no heartburnings and no resentments. The troubled sea of opposing ideas which has so often been lashed into fury by contending forces is serene and still.

"At last the lion and the lamb were laid down together, and however much we may have differed on great public questions, I desire to congratulate this General Assembly that they have at last formed one subject upon which all are agreed, and that is the time for final adjournment. Brethren, let us thank God and take courage. We have gotten that near together, and the thought of so soon seeing Katy and the baby pierces the gloom of separation and points the silver lining in the rift beyond.

"I can best give expression to my feelings by telling you a story that happened in the long ago among the blue hills of Scotland. All who are familiar with Scotland's history know what a powerful influence the 'clans' exercised on the political fortunes of that country, and more than once crowned heads have sought their aid and influence. And as it happened to us a few years ago here in North Carolina, so it sometimes happens to them.

When united they were invincible, but often divisions arose followed by bloody and unending combats, and it was during one of those unhappy periods. The leaders realizing how unfruitful of good their wars and estrangements, decided to bury their animosities and henceforth live together as brethren. The good news ped on the wings of the wind and it reached the ears of Jean McClatchey; and it was wash day with her. She was standing at the wash tub with her sleeves rolled up above her elbows, giving the soiled linen a needed bath of suds and water. She was so elated over the good news that she got to singing. Sandy Stewart, a neighbor passing by, hailed and said: 'Weel, Jean, it's merry you are today.' 'Yes, Saundry, it's a time to be merry; dinna ye hear the gude news. It's a proud day for auld Scotland, a' the clans have made peace with wane another and they are a cooinn hame and the McDonalds are cooinn hame and the McNeills are cooinn hame and the Stewarts are cooinn hame and the Campbells are cooinn hame, and a' the wild McRees are cooinn and they are a' cooinn hame, and I am just as happy as I weel could get. I'm just as happy as I weel could get; O, Lord, I'm just as happy as I weel could get.' And so, Mr. Speaker and gentlemen of the House, I am going to see one of the best little wives in North Carolina, and I'm just as happy as I weel could get."

Silver Service to Speaker Gattis

A touching incident was the presentation to Speaker Gattis of a handsome and costly silver service, the gift of the members of the House. The speech of presentation was eloquently made by Governor Doughton, who said:

"The future can only be solved by faith, the present by work. That fact has been exemplified here during the work of the past two months. This is a strenuous life. It has been emphasized by the work of this General Assembly. For sixty-two days we have been in session. One hundred and twenty members, representing the ninety-seven counties of the state, coming together throbbing with the life and energy of our great and beloved commonwealth, have mingled here. How well they have performed their duty the future alone can tell. I pray that when this work has been passed in calm review, the people of the state it will prove acceptable to them.

"In our work much has depended upon our presiding officer. To be a good parliamentary requires that a man be wise, just, courteous and impartial. These qualifications are embodied in the Honorable S. M. Gattis. He has been equal to every duty that has devolved upon him. He has been wise, courteous and impartial, and now at the closing hour of this session I wish, in behalf of the members of this General Assembly, whose commission I bear, to present to him as a feeble token of our love, honor and esteem, this silver service, and to express the hope that when all is over in this world and we have all passed over the river we may meet him in that land where there will be no call for the previous question and no demands for the eyes and noses." (Applause.)

When Speaker Gattis arose to do his duty he showed openly the great emotion that possessed him. He said: "Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the House:

"It is with mingled feelings of pleasure and sadness that I rise to accept this handsome present that you have bestowed upon me and also to return my profound thanks. Mr. Speaker, on account of this honor I am unable to say what I want to say. I desire to say that in this, the closing hour of the General Assembly that I want every member to know that I have nothing but the best of feelings in my heart for every one of them. In any of my rulings and decisions I have been unfair or partial, I want to say that it has been an error of the head and not of the heart. In the coming days of my life I will look back on this General Assembly with great pride.

It has been a great pleasure to me to meet the gentlemen from all over our great and grand old state and I have learned to love them.

"I wish to return thanks to the Republican members of this assembly for the resolutions that they passed on Saturday. Although they have been few in number, I assure you that I have at all times as speaker of this body known no party. Each man represents his county—and they are all North Carolinians. (Loud applause.)

Cane for Doorkeeper Kerr

Another touching incident was the presentation of a beautiful gold-headed cane to Capt. John H. Carr, the one-legged ex-Confederate soldier, who has so conscientiously performed the duties of doorkeeper during the session. The gift was made by the pages and laborers of the House and presented by Mr. Smith of Gates in his own characteristic style.

Mr. Smith said he regretted that he had not had time to prepare a speech, but when words are to come warm from the heart they need no hackneyed phrases or rhetorical flourishes. I am commissioned for a special purpose. On the first night I was impressed with the idea that I should support Captain Carr for doorkeeper. I have the honor now to present to him a beautiful gold-headed cane. He served his state well in war; he has served us well here. Nothing is more appropriate than to present a staff to a one-legged Confederate soldier.

Captain Kerr's response was feeling. He returned his sincere thanks for having been chosen to this position. He said he had tried to do his duty, and was greatly touched by the gift, coming from the employes under him. They have been faithful and efficient.

Captain Kerr was the recipient of another present, a china set, the gift of the colored laborers of the House. This was presented by Colonel Lucas, who said:

"My friends, it has been my pleasure in years gone by to represent my people the best I could in the Legislature of North Carolina. I assure you that I go to my home with the kindest feelings for all the members of this Legislature. As the years go by and time, upon his fleeting wings, is guiding us and to the Great Beyond, I assure you I will never revert to a more pleasant association. You are men as honorable, faithful, conservative and as zealous as ever stood in this hall. I love you all."

Here Colonel Lucas referred very prettily to Speaker Gattis as our great, grand and noble speaker, and won hearty applause.

Just here the Colonel, breaking from the trend of his speech, said: "I want to propose a toast to the ladies. You, ladies, are the sweetest flowers that bloom on North Carolina's soil. (A general rose-tinted blush swept over the faces of the 'flowers' in the gallery.) The toast was:

"Here's to the bride-to-be—ever charming, beautiful and fair.

Here's to the one who would like to be, and is wondering when and where."

Colonel Lucas then declared that he had been requested by the colored laborers employed by the Legislature to present a handsome china set to Mr. Kerr as a means of showing their appreciation of Mr. Kerr's splendid treatment of themselves. As they had been presented with a staff to use until you go to the Shadow Land, I here present you with this china set, so that you may drink of the cup and keep the body together," said Colonel Lucas in conclusion.

Captain Kerr expressed his heartfelt thanks to his colored friends.

Capt. Lineberry named

Representative Newland, at the request of the pages in the House, made the presentation speech in giving Capt. Lineberry, the assistant door keeper, a handsome gold headed cane. Mr. Newland said:

"At the request of the pages, who desire to show their appreciation of Capt. Lineberry's kindness to them, I wish to present him this cane in token of their appreciation of him. I wish to say that the gift carries with it hearts full of love for you. May you use it as a staff in life, may you live long and when you pass into the great beyond may you receive the words of reward, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant.'"

Mr. Lineberry in reply said:

"I can not even express my heartfelt thanks to you for this gift, for my heart is too full and overflowing. I am told that it has only been the custom to present a gift to the door keeper at previous sessions, therefore in receiving this gift I appreciate it all the more. I feel that it is unworthily bestowed. I have tried to treat everybody in this Assembly fairly, and I want to also thank the gentlemen for electing me assistant door keeper. This is the first time in my life that I ever asked anything of the party. I have always voted the Democratic ticket and the first vote I ever cast was when I was 18 years old. I will explain. I was in the army—having taken my own gun and gone out to fight—and I thought that if I was old enough to fight I was old enough to vote. My first vote was for that great man—Zebulon B. Vance. I never scratched a ticket and never missed but one election and that was when Horace Greeley was on the ticket. Again, I wish to thank you for the beautiful present."

Chief Clerk Hackett Remembered

Representative Sif of Catawba was delighted to make the speech in presenting Chief Clerk Hackett with a gold headed ebony cane. Mr. Sif opened with a happy comparison of a custom of our ancestors similar to this presentation. He said:

"Amongst our ancestors there was no more beautiful custom than that of giving of a staff to a negro's head open with an axe.

that Blackstone tells how that parties went upon the premises to be conveyed and the offer delivered to the delivery of the premises described in the deed. And now, Mr. Clerk, in consideration of the faithful and skillful discharge of your duties, and in further consideration of your uniform courtesy to all whose labors have touched yours, I now declare by virtue of authority vested in me and by this token, you are enticed of the esteem, good will and affection of every member of this body without condition, limitation or reservation."

Mr. Hackett replied in a speech of thanks. He said:

"I wish that my tongue was like the pen of an able writer to allow me to express my appreciation of the beautiful gift."

He then spoke of his appreciation of the Democratic caucus in appointing him and giving him the chance to be of service to them.

"I assure you," he continued, "that this is a proud day in my life, and when I go home I will go with the feeling that I have been here among as great a body of men as ever came to the House of Representatives."

Another surprise came to Mr. Hackett when the clerical force in his office presented to him a beautiful gold and pearl-handled umbrella to carry home to his wife. Mr. Alex. Lassiter made the presentation speech in the following language:

"My Dear Mr. Hackett: With feelings of emotion and a heart filled with overflowing love and gratitude to you, sir, I desire, in behalf of your assistants, to thus express to you their high appreciation of your kindness to us, and to say to you that you have shown us every favor, every consideration and every kindness in your power. We realize the arduous duties and the grave responsibilities resting on you; and while we have tried to do our part, we feel that we have fell far short, but your consideration for our comfort has been to us a source of great pleasure."

"Speaking for myself, my dear sir, I have to say you have been an inspiration to me. Speaking for your other assistants, they as well as myself will ever hold dear in their memories and to say to you that you have shown us every favor, every consideration and every kindness in your power. We realize the arduous duties and the grave responsibilities resting on you; and while we have tried to do our part, we feel that we have fell far short, but your consideration for our comfort has been to us a source of great pleasure."

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