

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A WILKES COUNTY EDITOR.

Charlotte Observer.

At Moravian Falls, Wilkes county, is published bi-weekly The Yellow Jacket, a Republican folio, five columns to the page, subscription price, 30 cents a year to single subscribers, in clubs of four, 25 cents each. In its issue of the 25th ult. appears a cut of its editor and proprietor, R. Don Laws, and another cut labeled "Part of The Yellow Jacket Force," showing the faces of Mr. Laws and another gentleman, and those of three young ladies, Mr. Laws' male companion and the three young ladies being nameless there forevermore.

Under his own separate cut Mr. Laws writes his autobiography, setting forth in addition a statement of his beliefs, methods and mental processes. This we take pleasure in appending:

"The above half-tone cut suggests a faint idea of what the editor of The Yellow Jacket looks like. We were born in Wilkes county, North Carolina, in 1868, lived on a poor farm, ate corn bread and fat meat and plowed a steer until we were 21 years old. We happened to the good luck of getting to attend school 18 months, all told. At the age of thirteen we made the first printing press we ever saw. With a wooden press and type carved from bits of maple and ivy, ink made from the roots of white walnut, we took the first impression we ever saw made with type on paper. This rude outfit only stimulated our ambition for the acquirement of better facilities for printing. Along about this time we got the idea into our "noggin" that some time we wanted to be a "one-horse" editor, so in June 1895, we managed to get up a little old press and some type, all worth about \$25, and we "founded" The Yellow Jacket—beginning it as a three-column, four paged monthly sheet and made up somewhat on the style of its matter today. For a long time it looked as if the game would not be worth the candle, but we worked the harder, hoping that a brighter day would come by and by. After awhile things did begin to come our way, but they seemed very slow. Yet we knew that Republicanism was right and we firmly believed that even our rough way of promulgating its politics would bring success in the end. As to the wisdom of these conclusions we will let the growth of the paper speak, by saying that it has reached the largest circulation of any paper in North Carolina and the largest of any Republican paper in the entire South and that the little old rickety-rackety outfit has been succeeded by an up-to-date plant and that it is paid for. But the growth of the paper is so enormous that we are now compelled to soon put in some larger and more rapid presses than ever. We hope to install this new machinery by the first of March.

"We lay no claim to literary culture nor journalistic genius. We did not model The Yellow Jacket after anything in the newspaper world. We never consulted any living soul about what to say on any subject. We have never received a dollar in 'boodle' from any source. There are not men enough this side of Hepsidam to stampede us from our position on political questions. If we believe a thing is right we propose to say so and stick to it if the whole world calls us a liar. That's the way we were built and we can't help it and we don't want to. What we say is from the standpoint of a fellow who has had to grapple with the "corn cobs of reality" from childhood.

"We hope every Republican who reads this and feels interested in the work The Yellow Jacket is engaged in will do this cause and the paper the kindness to take this copy and go out in the hedges and highways and make up a club to the tune of about one dozen. That's all we have to say in this respect."

Side by side with the foregoing is printed a tribute to Editor Laws by his friend and neighbor, James Larkin Pearson, who says in part:

"R. Don Laws is only 34 years of age, but into his 34 years he has crowded more work than the average man puts into a lifetime. In his early years, before he entered the newspaper profession, he was employed as a farmer, house carpenter and school teacher. He also sold books and worked on the railroad. He filled all these positions ably and honorably, but it was not until he started The Yellow Jacket in 1895 that he stepped into his particular "forte." In his office or in his home Mr. Laws is the same jolly good fellow he was before Dame Fortune smiled so benignly upon him. His success has not spoiled him."

Now what does The Biblical Recorder think of The Yellow Jacket's claim to a larger circulation than it has? and what does The Winston Republican think of the claim that it has a larger

circulation than any other Republican paper in the South? And yet in its current issue are three letters to the editor from Indiana, three from Illinois, and one each from Oklahoma, West Virginia, Missouri, Alabama, Virginia, Kentucky and Iowa.

This case should teach all boys what can be accomplished with a piece of maple and a jack knife, and should be a lesson to grown men to be the same jolly good fellows after Dame Fortune has smiled upon them as before, and not be spoiled or unduly puffed up by success.

Stockman Files Novel Document in Suit for Damages.

In his "bill of particulars" to justify his demand of \$20,000 from the Wabash Railroad for hoisting him skyward with one of its locomotives, M. B. Ayres, a stockman of Macon county, Mo., furnishes the following itemized list of personal injuries resulting from the contact:

- "Left leg crushed.
- "Patella contused, crushed, mangled and broken.
- "Knee joint permanently stiffened.
- "Left arm above elbow contused, cut and wounded—also paralyzed.
- "Ligaments and muscle attachments about elbow broken.
- "Left shoulder crushed and bruised.
- "Wrist joint destroyed.
- "Hand and fingers deprived of motion and strength.
- "Shoulder and arm shrunken and decayed.
- "Left leg rendered two and one-half inches shorter than right leg.
- "Severe scalp wound.
- "Serious injuries about head, back and shoulders.
- "Ribs dislocated.
- "Concussion of the spine.
- "Serious internal injuries.
- "Eyesight and hearing impaired.
- "Continual mental and bodily suffering.
- "Life shortened 75 per cent."

On January 7 he started from La Plata down the Wabash track. A mile out he sat down to rest, and a passenger train making forty miles an hour collided with him. The railroad representatives claim Ayres was drunk, and say they have recovered his bottle of whisky that went through the collision without the loss of a drop or a crack in the flask. The case has been transferred from Macon to Carroll county, where it will be tried in January.

In Darkest New England.

Regarding a recent race trouble in the metropolis of New England, the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot says:

"In Boston Monday an angry crowd of 2,000 persons tried to lynch a negro, and was prevented from so doing with great difficulty by the police, who responded hurriedly to a riot call. And the occasion of demonstration was not the same that usually leads to a lynching in the South. He had been guilty of no fiendish or inhuman crime. He had merely drawn a knife on a white man with whom he had had an altercation. Women and children, it is said, were knocked down and trampled upon by the mob in its efforts to get at the negro.

"If the same incident had occurred in the South a policeman would have arrested the negro, and without interference from the crowd would have quietly taken him to the lockup.

"We lynch negroes down here for inhuman crimes only. In negrophobic Boston they want to lynch him for drawing a knife."

The Express Train of the Future.

On the experimental railroad built by the German government between Berlin and Zossen a new type of express train is to be tested next year. The specifications require that the train shall maintain a speed of 74½ miles an hour for three consecutive hours. In order to diminish the air resistance as much as possible, the entire train, including the locomotive, will be enclosed in a shell of sheet steel, jointed so as to secure flexibility in rounding curves, uniform in size from end to end, and presenting no projections to catch air. The front of the engine will be wedge-shaped, and the wheels will all be of the disk instead of the spoked pattern, and will be enclosed, as far as possible, by the protecting sheath. Steam is to be the motive power, the previous experiments having shown that electric motors at high speeds unduly strain the track.

Unmarried men are excluded from the service of the Williams Street Railways, of Norfolk, Portsmouth and Newport News. Manager Gunn says the plan of employing only married men insures a steadier, soberer, more reliable class of men, who are more accommodating to the passengers and have at heart the interest of the road more than strangers and wanderers, as a majority of unmarried men are apt to be.

WHY IS CHINA POOR?

Natural and Artificial Causes of a Great Nation's Poverty.

One of the greatest disabilities under which China labors as a nation is as simple as it is sad. An immense proportion of its population very rarely get a meal sufficient either in quantity or in nutritive power. Hundreds of benevolent foreigners, both of the mercantile and missionary orders, are constantly seeking in scattered spots throughout the vast realm to mitigate the chronic distress of the poorest sections. Especially has philanthropy been effective in relieving the abnormal pressure consequent on drouth and floods. Obviously, however, external help can do next to nothing to meet a normal condition of insufficient aliment extending over a very extensive land and involving an enormous population.

One of the causes of chronic and massive indigence in China throughout most of the interior is the utter stagnation for ages of civilization. The development of this mighty race was long since arrested, and though the nation is not decadent, its conditions are stereotyped, and China is in a state of permanent childhood. Every linguist well understands that this accounts for that colossal philological curiosity, the Chinese language. It has never got beyond the monosyllabic stage, and is a mere language of overgrown babies. This condition of arrested development lies at the root of the appalling poverty of the masses in a country which nature designed to be incalculably wealthy. China is not, like Central Asia, a land of savage, howling wastes. It is one of the most fertile and flowery parts of the earth's surface almost throughout the entire area. And, moreover, its people are the most industrious agriculturists in the world, and have been so for many centuries. Fruit and vegetables are much more abundant and exist in much greater variety than we are favored with in our own country.

Notwithstanding these magnificent natural endowments, what is the state of things in the "Flowery Kingdom?" From lack of anything like scientific cultivation the quality of nearly all fruits is exceedingly poor, and only the splendid sunshine and the atmospheric conditions compensate for the lack of skill. Apples, pears, apricots, peaches, nectarines, plums, cherries, grapes and persimmons are almost everywhere grown in immense abundance, but no native ever studies improvement in their culture. Wheat, millet, maize, sorghum, sweet potatoes, peanuts, indigo and a great variety of pea and bean crops are produced with ease, while rice is, of course, almost universally found in cultivation. But in nearly every province the output, notwithstanding the indefatigable toil of the people, is far short of what might be attained under better management, while the quality of the foodstuffs is deficient in nutritive power. Vast tracts of soil have been impoverished through centuries of uninterrupted production without any adequate compensation. Enriching material is poor in quality. Grazing is unknown, and in most of the provinces the land never lies fallow, the natives never having learned the secret of the rotation of crops. Yet the land is still forced to produce three crops in two years without intermission.

The Chinese poverty problem is complicated. Its secondary causes are manifold but after all they are only exaggeration and aggravations of the main factor, the agrarian stagnation. One of my friends residing for a time in the interior asked an official how many beggars he was feeding. He replied 18,000. "These," he explained, "are all tenant farmers from the north. Few people who entirely own their land are so miserably poor." Thus at every point the agricultural question recurs. In the province of Wuhn last year a large relief work was initiated by foreigners. Here also the starving sufferers were chiefly of that same large class in China, the tenant farmers. Many of them were from the immense estates of the late Li Hung Chang. Where a man gives half he raises to a landlord he can, even in a good year, save little or nothing, and a poor year means famine.

Whether the great likin system of interior taxation can speedily be extirpated, as some seem to expect it will now be, is very doubtful. One of the chief producing causes of distressing poverty lies just here. A cow crossing the river at Nankin is taxed 60 cents, a pig about 1½ per cent, and chickens 2½ per cent, etc. This is the climax for all along the road before reaching the great city they have been taxed at various points, and they will be taxed again when entering the city gate. When a boatman earns a fee for rowing people across the river he must pay

40 per cent. tax. Imagine what an English workman would think and say if compelled to pay in one tax 40 per cent. of his wages! Some of the customs stations on the great roads of travel and trade are exceedingly lucrative, but the mischief of the system lies in the fact that none of the receipts go into the official treasury, for as a collector has to buy his position. He has to let the officials and their runners go through free. The rest is profit for himself.

The Egg and the Lady.

An Athens, Ala., letter to The Montgomery Advertiser tells this story: A very interesting story of an advertisement placed on an egg comes from one of the rural stores in this county. A man who clerks in the store, while packing a case of eggs for shipment a short time since, wrote his name and address upon a large white egg and stated that he was looking for a wife and that should the egg fall into the hands of some lady who would like to correspond with him looking to matrimony that he would be pleased to hear from her. He forgot all about the matter until a few days since he received a dainty little note from a lady in Brooklyn, N. Y., who stated that she had, while shopping for her sister, found this egg in the number sent to her home and had decided to write to him. She gave her age, sent some facts about herself, and he at once replied and soon photos were exchanged and a wedding is scheduled for the near future.

In Defence of Santa Claus.

A most spirited defense of the good old patriarch who fills the Christmas stockings appears in The Columbus Enquirer-Sun. It is as follows:

"The declaration of the Ministers' Union of Hamilton, Ohio, that Santa Claus is an impostor—a theatrical impostor—has caused a good deal of comment, and not a little of it is complimentary to the Ministers' Union. That there is a 'Santa Claus' no sane man will deny, and when one looks around him on Christmas morning and beholds the thousands and millions of children who have been made happy by his visit to them the night before, he does not desire to make such an unwarranted, and unreconcilable denial. 'Santa Claus' has made his annual visit to the children on the night before Christmas from a time 'whence the memory of man runneth not to the contrary,' distributing gifts and good cheer to all. The rich and poor are remembered, and if he be an impostor, as the Hamilton ministers declare, there are few, if any, who will not wish that there were more like him. The Hamilton ministers may declare that there is no 'Santa Claus' and they may excommunicate the jolly old fellow, but there was not a child in this broad land Christmas morning who does not know better. Even now they have evidence conclusive to their minds that there is a 'Santa Claus,' and all the ministers unions in the world would not be sufficient to convince them to the contrary. There is a 'Santa Claus,' and there will always will be one."

Doesn't Think Negroes Can Be Deported.

Speaking of Senator Morgan's plan for colonizing the negroes in the Philippine Islands, ex-Governor Hogg, of Texas, characterized it as impracticable. "The negro race is increasing at the rate of 750,000 a year," said the former Governor, "and there are nearly 10,000,000 of them already in the United States. If the Government should undertake to send them to the Philippines it would require a tremendous fleet of transports. If it takes two months for one transport to make the round trip, and the greatest number of passengers each trip would be 2,000, that makes 12,000 a year. Fifty transports would take 600,000 persons over in one year, if the conditions were perfect and the transports provided. Where would the Government get 50 transport ships? Even if this number should be furnished, the natural increase would not be provided for, and the plan is impractical from either point of view."

Crisis Met Half Way.

There were strict orders in the Philippines regarding looting, and one day a lieutenant's suspicions were aroused by a private whom he saw peering eagerly under the piazza of a house on the outskirts of Manila, writes Dixie Wolcott in Harper's Magazine.

"What are you doing there?" he demanded, in his gruffest tones.

"Why, sir," said the soldier, saluting, "I'm only trying to catch a chicken which I've just bought."

Lieutenant K. stopped and caught sight of a fine pair of fowls.

"There are two chickens under there," he exclaimed excitedly; "I bought the other one. Catch 'em both."

BE'ER WILLIAMS' CHARIOT.

Had Been Preparing, But Wasn't Just Ready For It When It Came.

It was pretty generally understood among the brethren of the settlement that some day, in the economy of Providence, an angel from Paradise was to call upon Br'er Williams, place him in a "cheeryoot" of fire and take him galloping to glory. This understanding was the result of repeated statements of Br'er Williams that the said angel had appeared to him in a dream and had warned him to put his house in order that he might be ready at a moment's notice to depart in the celestial carriage. And it was remarked that it was with a more serene countenance and ever uplifted, expectant eyes that Br'er Williams walked among his fellow-men thereafter.

"Hit may be," he said to them, "dat I'll be taken durin' my daily walk—right in de middle er de street, befo' de eyes er all er you; so hit's behoovin' er me ter be dressed en ready, en ter have my min' in ez peaceful a frame ez dat what my pictur's in, hangin' on de home wall!"

But time wore on, and many lost faith in the advent of the angel with the fiery chariot, until one dark night—long to be remembered by Br'er Williams and the community—when Satan influenced a few of the brethren, who were of a mischievous mind, to make Br'er Williams the victim of a practical joke.

He was sleeping soundly in his cabin when he heard the galloping of horses, the sudden stopping of a vehicle at his door—saw a glimmer of lights through the window chinks, and caught the sound of low, sepulchral voices.

Then there was a slow, measured knock at the door, and a voice, as from the tomb, crying:

"Br'er Williams! Br'er Williams!"

He rose to a sitting posture on the bed—chill perspiration dripping from his brow.

But no answer.

"Br'er Williams! Br'er Williams!"

His limbs shook till the bedslats rattled, and it seemed that the very shingles on the roof were dancing.

Shivering and wild-eyed he crawled forth and peeped through the shutter. Saints above him! The fiery chariot was there—the wheels blazing—the ghostly horses impatiently pawing the earth!

There was but one escape for him—the chimney. And up he crawled, as far as its narrowing limits would let him—just as the door gave way and the ghostly visitors entered.

"Br'er Williams! Where are you? The fiery chariot is waiting."

For answer they heard muffled sounds up the chimney: "Lawd, he's me ter reach de top! Good Lawd, he's me!"

But his dangling feet were visible and by them he was dragged down and carried howling to the door by two white-robed figures.

"Don't take me now!" he pleaded.

"I got a blister on my chist already, en can't stan' no mo' fire! Don't take me, Kunnel Angel, don't take me!"

But the noise and the scuffling had alarmed the phantom horses, and away they dashed down the dark road, with the fiery chariot blazing at their heels, and after them sped the ghostly visitants who had been struggling with Br'er Williams.

Then a number of the citizens who had been lurking conveniently near rushed in and asked the old man what was the matter.

When he had breath enough he gasped: "Looky what you gone en done now! De fiery cheeryoot come fer me, en fo' I had time ter jump in you folks comed up en skered it off."

Fell Dead of Starvation.

A hatless and coatless man about 33 years old tottered down Elm street yesterday afternoon and stood looking into the subway excavation at Franklin street. His face was pale and his teeth were chattering.

Watchman Kane thought the man was looking for a job and spoke to him, but the man made no reply and walked over to a restaurant at the corner of Elm and Franklin streets, where he stood gazing through the window at the folks who were eating inside.

He stood there for a few minutes and then walked down Elm street. When he got in front of 72 Elm street he fell to the sidewalk. An ambulance was summoned by a policeman, but the man was dead when the surgeon arrived. Coroner Scholer said it looked to him as if the man had died of starvation.

Every manner of living, each of our actions, has a particular end in view, and all these ends have a general aim—happiness. It is not in the end but in the choice of means that we deceive ourselves.—Aristotle.

Learning to Save.

Youth's Companion.

The School Savings Bank is not everywhere a familiar institution. Yet in one hundred and eighteen towns and cities in twenty-four States and two Canadian provinces there are nearly fifteen hundred schools where the system of school savings is practiced. The depositors number over one hundred and sixty thousand. According to statistics brought up to January, 1902, the total deposits had exceeded a million and a quarter dollars, of which more than four hundred thousand dollars still remained to the credit of depositors.

These figures mean something. They mean that in many places the pupils of the public schools, under wise teachers, are learning one of the most important lessons of life—the lesson of thrift. The method of teaching it is practical. On Monday mornings the teacher collects such savings—in pennies, nickels or dimes—as the pupils wish to lay aside. The depositors have learned that their money is safe, and that it can be drawn out at any time of need.

This work, as yet without official organization, has been going on in America for about seventeen years. In various countries of Europe it takes its definite place in the curriculum of government schools, and is regarded as having the highest educational value and importance.

Sooner or later, in some form or other, the system will be made a part of the American scheme of education. We are a peculiarly practical people. We wish our young people taught, beyond anything they may learn from books, the elements of common sense. The first of these is the realization that for nearly everybody the proverbial rainy day is bound to come. A system of school savings is one of the best educational means yet devised to prepare for it.

People Who Enjoy Being Miserable.

Cleveland Press.

How can anybody enjoy being miserable? Men do, and so do women. They surround themselves with an atmosphere of gloom. They hug trouble to their breasts. They make mountains out of mole-hills, and there are tears and groans when there should be smiles.

Perhaps you have a cynic in your employ. You can pick him out with your eyes shut. He has the blues from Monday morning till Saturday night. He will tell you that he always gets the worst of it from everybody; that his talent isn't recognized; that his genius is wasted; that he isn't getting enough money; that there is no future for him—and a lot of tommyrot like that.

After that comes the brooding stage. Any man who broods over real or fancied wrongs is dangerous. He is not sane, and he is also a mighty poor workman, whether he is making hoe handles or counting money in a bank. He deliberately destroys his own efficiency and chance for success, and all for the perilous and questionable happiness of being miserable.

Mr. Depew Was In.

"Is Mr. Depew in?" said a life insurance agent, handing his card to the office attendant.

"I'll see, sir," replied the minion, going into the Senator's sanctum.

Mr. Depew glanced at the card and shook his head in the negative. Although the upper part of his body was hidden from public view by his desk, the Senator's legs were plainly visible as he sat with his side toward the desk.

"Mr. Depew is out," said the attendant.

"Well," said the insurance solicitor, glancing through the half open door, "I wish you'd tell him when he comes in that I think my company would positively refuse to accept him as a first class risk unless he will agree to always take his legs with him when he goes!"

Disappointing.

"Be you Dr. X—?" asked a tall, lean man, walking into the office of a practitioner.

"I am," replied the doctor.

"Well, look a-here, old fellow," marked the visitor, "I'm glad to yer at last. D'ye remember how yer set a feller's arm and didn't charge him for it?"

"Yes," said the doctor, with the prospect of a big fee rising before him.

"I'm that feller. I've broke the other arm, an' I've come to have it set on the same terms."

Mr. James W. Osborne, formerly of Charlotte, who had charge of the prosecution of Mollenix, and who made a great reputation by his skillful management of the case for the State, has entered suit against The New York Sun for \$75,000 damages.