

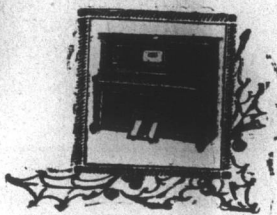
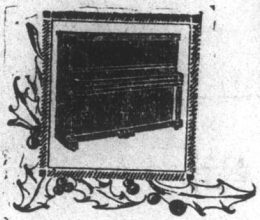
Xmas Sale of Pianos

Uprights—All Standard Makes—Fully Guaranteed.

Buy a beautiful upright Piano during our Christmas sale of Pianos. Dozens of standard models—your choice of several finishes at unusually low prices. Special inducements.

Players—New - full 9 - etan nua Models, Wonder-fur Tones and Finish

You must come into our store to see the wonderful player pianos that are on sale at special Christmas prices and terms. Be sure and have a Player in your Home this Christmas.



Standard makes Upright Pianos—mahogany finish—exceptionally beautiful tone—high grade instruments. Very special. Ask to see this Christmas special. Remember, you can trade in your old instrument. Buy new for Christmas Gift Giving.

Christmas Special Player er Outfit and Combination

This outfit includes standard make Player Piano complete with bench, and twelve rolls of music of your own selection. This outfit will be delivered to your home on a very small payment and on very liberal terms.



Music Always Brings Happiness—Buy a Player This Christmas

No home life is complete without music. Teach the children and young folks at home under proper environment. A beautiful new Player Piano purchased during our Christmas Sale will be the means of bringing happiness to you.

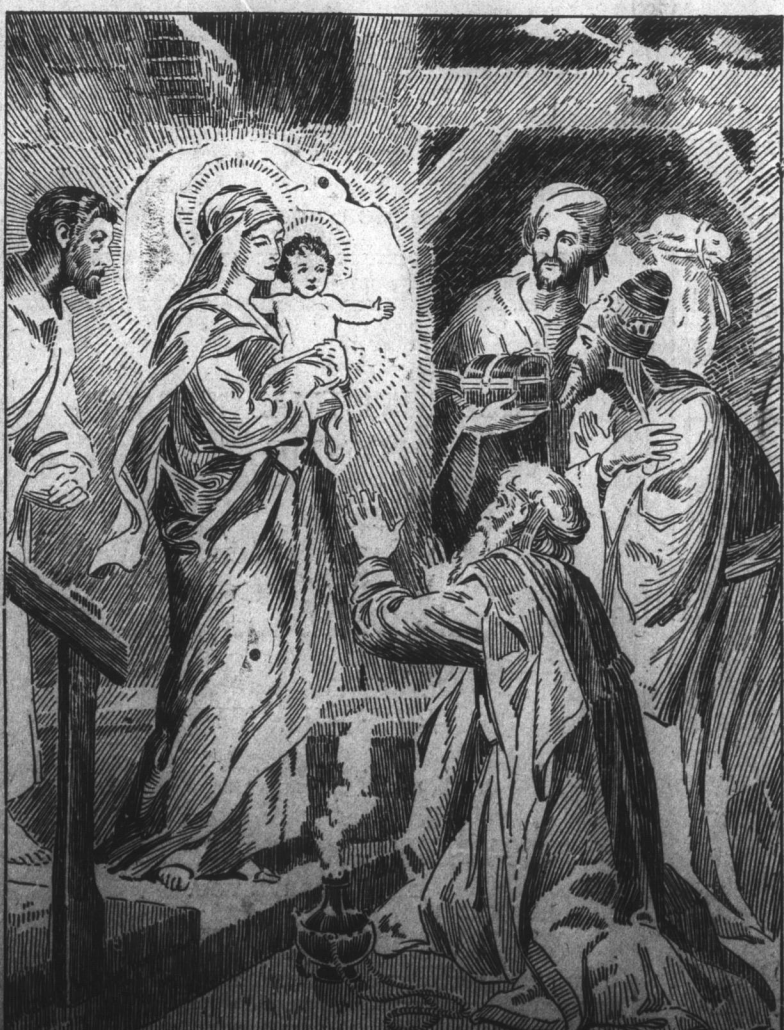
Trade In Your Old Instrument



We will accept your old silent Piano, or old Phonograph, in trade on a new Player, allowing you the full market value during the sale.

Kidd - Frix Music & Stationery Company

"PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD-WILL TO MEN"



NORTH CAROLINA'S MATERIAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Manufacturer's Record. What North Carolina has done in material and educational development could be done by every state in the South if animated by the same spirit. There is probably no state in the South which in one way or another has not advantages matching or offsetting those of North Carolina. What one state may lack in some respect in comparison with North Carolina is perhaps offset by some other advantage. There are some states that in material resources have greater advantages than North Carolina, but they have not made the most of what they have to the extent that North Carolina has.

Not merely for the purpose of giving credit where credit is due, but for the purpose of stimulating other states to put for the same kind of energy and broad vision which have wrought such marvels in that state, we would emphasize some facts presented in the Charlotte Observer as to what North Carolina is doing. Two weeks ago we told the story of a \$4,000,000 enterprise to build a great resort hotel and carry out kindred activities in Western Carolina. A few weeks before we told of the organization of Western North Carolina, Inc., to spend \$50,000 a year on a five-year publicity campaign with many other special features involved in its work. So fundamentally sound is the proposition that it has been able to secure as president to give his entire time to the work, Mr. Joseph Hyde Pratt, one of the foremost geologists and highway builders in the whole South. The Ford Motor Company is planning to build its biggest Southern automobile assembling plant at Charlotte, which is merely an indication of how active betrays activity, and how enterprise and enthusiastic work at home draw men and money from elsewhere. But the story in the Charlotte Observer indicating some of the evidences of the educational progress of the state gives facts which are even more suggestive of what is being done in North Carolina than are the figures of material progress. These facts are: "In 1900 expenditures for education in North Carolina amounted to less than a million dollars. In 1923 the expenditures total \$23,000,000, an increase of more than 200 per cent. The increase from 1916 to 1923 was from about \$3,000,000 to \$23,000,000, or about 700 per cent. "In 1900 the expenditures for new school buildings were less than \$41,000; in 1922 it was more than \$6,000,000. "In 1900 the operating expenses of the state's entire school system was less



BEGIN HERE TODAY
Sir Charles Abington engages Paul Harley, criminal investigator, to find out why Sir Charles is kept under surveillance by persons unknown to him. Harley dines at the Abington home. Sir Charles falls from his chair in a dying state. Abington's last words are "Nicol Brian" and "Fire-Tongue." Dr. Macduch pronounces death due to heart-failure. Harley claims Sir Charles was poisoned and calls on Nicol Brian to ask him the meaning of "Fire-Tongue." Brian admits that he learned its meaning in India but refuses to divulge the secret.
Paul investigates the life of Ormuz Khan, very wealthy Oriental, with whom Paul Abington, investigator of Sir Charles, is friendly.
NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY
"And outside mine," declared the inspector. "He hasn't the most distant connection with anything crooked. It gave me a lot of trouble to find out what little I have found out. Briefly, all I have to tell you is this: Ormuz Khan—who is apparently entitled to be addressed as 'his excellency'—is a director of the Imperial Bank of Iran, and is associated, too, with one of the Ottoman banks. I presume his nationality is Persian, but I can't be sure of it. He periodically turns up in the various big capitals when international loans and that sort of thing are being negotiated. I understand that he has a flat somewhere in Paris, and the Service de Surete tells me that his name is good for several million francs over there. He appears to have a certain fondness for London during the spring and early summer months, and I am told he has a fine place in Surrey. He is at present living at Savoy Court."
CHAPTER X
His Excellency Ormuz Khan
THE city clocks were chiming the hour of ten on the following morning when a page from the Savoy approached the shop of Mr. Jarvis, bootmaker, which is situated at no great distance from the hotel. The impudent face of the small boy wore an expression of serio-comic flight as he pushed open the door and entered the shop.
Jarvis, the bootmaker, belonged to a rapidly disappearing class of British tradesmen. He trucked to no one, but took an artistic pride in his own handiwork, criticism from a layman merely provoking a scornful anger which had lost Jarvis many good customers.
"Yes, sir," Jarvis was saying to a patron, "it's a welcome sight to see a real Englishman walk into my shop nowadays. London isn't London, sir, since the war, and the Strand will never be the Strand again." He turned to his assistant, who stood behind him, bootjack in hand. "If he sends them back again," he directed, "tell him to go to one of the French firms in Regent Street who cater to dainty ladies." He positively snorted with indignation, while the page, listening, whistled and looked down at the parcel which he carried.
"An unwelcome customer, Jarvis?" inquired the voice of the man in the fitting room.
"Quite unwelcome," said Jarvis. "I don't want him. I have more work than I know how to turn out. I wish he would go elsewhere. I wish—"
He paused. He had seen the page boy. The latter, having undone his parcel, was holding out a pair of elegant, fawn-colored shoes.
"Great Moses!" breathed Jarvis. "He's had the cheek to send them back again!"
"His excellency—" began the page, when Jarvis snatched the shoes from his hand and hurled them to the other end of the shop. His white beard positively bristled.
So positively ferocious was his aspect that the boy, with upraised arm, backed hastily out into the street. Safety won: "Bilney!" exclaimed the youth. "He's the warm goods, he is!"
He paused for several moments, staring in a kind of stupefied admiration at the closed door of Mr. Jarvis' establishment. He whistled again, softly, and then began to rudely open the door. "Hi, boy!" he called to the page. The page hesitated, glancing back doubtfully. "Tell his excellency that I will send round to about half an hour to re-measure his foot."
The boy departed, grinning, and a little more than half an hour later a respectable-looking man presented himself at Savoy Court, inquiring of the attendant near the elevator for the apartments of "his excellency," followed by an unintelligible word which presumably represented "Ormuz Khan." The visitor wore a well-brushed but threadbare tweed suit, although his soft collar was by no means clean. He had a short, reddish-brown beard, and very thick, curling hair of the same hue protruded from beneath a bowler hat which had seen long service.
Like Mr. Jarvis, he was bespec-

again, and Parker found himself alone. He twisted his bowler hat, which he held in his hand, and stared about the place vacantly. Once he began to whistle, but checked himself and coughed nervously. Finally the Hindu gentleman reappeared, beckoning to him to enter.
Parker stood up very quickly and advanced, hat in hand.
Crossing the room, the Hindu rapped upon an inner door, opened it, and standing aside, "The man from the bootmaker," he said in a low voice.
Parker advanced, peering about him as one unfamiliar with his surroundings. As he crossed the threshold the door was closed behind him, and he found himself in a superheated atmosphere heavy with the perfume of hyacinths.
He stood dumbly before a man who lolled back in a deep, cushioned chair and whose almond-shaped eyes, black as night, were set immovably upon him. This man was apparently young. He wore a rich, brocade robe, trimmed with marten fur, and out of it his long ivory throat rose statueque. His complexion was likewise of this uniform ivory color, and from his low smooth brow his hair was brushed back in a series of glossy black waves.
One long, slender hand lay upon a cushion placed on the chair arm, and a pretty girl was busily engaged in manicuring his excellency's nails. Although the day held every promise of being uncomfortably hot, already a huge fire was burning in the grate.
As Parker stood before him, the languid, handsome Oriental did not stir a muscle, merely keeping the gaze of his strange black eyes fixed upon the nervous cobbler. The manicurist, after one quick upward glance, continued her work. But in this moment of distraction she had hurt the cuticle of one of those delicate, slender fingers.
Ormuz Khan withdrew his hand sharply from the cushion, glanced aside at the girl, and then, extending his hand again, pushed her away from him. Because of her half-kneeling posture, she almost fell, but managed to recover herself by clutching at the edge of a little table upon which the implements of her trade were spread. The table rocked and a bowl of water fell crashing on the carpet. His excellency spoke. His voice was very musical.
"Clumsy fool," he said. "You have hurt me. Go."
Parker fumblingly began to remove the lid of the cardboard box which he had brought with him.
"I do not wish you to alter the shoes you have made," said his excellency. "I instructed you to re-measure my foot in order that you might make a pair to fit."
"Yes, sir," said Parker. "Quite so, your excellency." And he dropped the box and the shoes upon the floor.
"Just a moment, sir," said Parker. From his pocket he drew out a large sheet of white paper, a pencil, and a tape measure. "Will you place your foot upon this sheet of paper, sir?"
Dropping upon one knee, Parker removed the furred slipper from a slender, arched foot, bare, of the delicate color of ivory, and as small as a woman's.
"Now, sir,"
The ivory foot was placed upon the sheet of paper, and very calmly Parker drew its outline. He then took certain measurements and made a number of notes with a stub of thick pencil. Whenever his nose too clean hands touched Ormuz Khan's delicate skin the Oriental perceptibly shuddered.
Parker replaced paper, pencil, and measure, and, packing up the rejected shoes, made for the door.
"Oh, bootmaker!" came the musical voice.
Parker turned. "Yes, sir?"
"They will be ready by Monday?"
"If possible, your excellency."
"Otherwise, I shall not accept them."
In the outer room the courteous secretary awaited Parker, and there was apparently no one else in the place, for the Hindu conducted him to the lobby and opened the door.
(Continued in Our Next Issue)



A PRETTY GIRL WAS MANICURING HIS EXCELLENCY'S NAILS.

tacted, and his teeth were much discolored and apparently broken in front, as is usual with cobblers. His hands, too, were toll-stained and his nails very black. He carried a cardboard box. He seemed to be extremely nervous, and this nervousness palpably increased when the impudent page, who was standing in the lobby, giggled on hearing his inquiry.
"Shut up, Chivers," snapped the hall porter. "Ring the bell." He glanced at the cobbler. "Second floor," he said, tersely, and resumed his study of a newspaper which he had been reading.
The representative of Mr. Jarvis was carried up to the second floor and the lift man, having indicated at which door he should knock, descended again.
There was a short interval, and then the door was opened by a man who looked like a Hindu. He wore correct morning dress and through gold-rimmed pince-nez he stared inquiringly at the caller.
"Is his excellency at home?" asked the latter. "I'm from Mr. Jarvis, the bootmaker."
"Oh," said the other, smiling slightly. "Come in. What is your name?"
"Parker, sir. From Mr. Jarvis."
As the door closed, Parker found himself in a small lobby. Beside an umbrella rack a high-backed chair was placed. "Sit down," he was directed. "I will tell his excellency that you are here."
A door was opened and closed

proportion for the same period and purposes was \$3,496,750.
"In 1900 the percentage of illiteracy in North Carolina was 29.4. It had been reduced in 1920 to 13.1, the percentage of the white race being 7.2."
Commenting on what it calls the amazing educational progress during the period of 23 years, the Observer says that "in some respects the progress of the last three years has been greater than that of all the previous twenty years combined," and we venture the assertion that the progress of the future will far exceed the progress already made.
But in addition to this wonderful educational progress the Observer might have turned to the Blue Book of Southern Progress and found indications of the remarkable advance in material things.
In 1900 the capital invested in manufacturing in North Carolina was \$68,283,000. In 1920 it was \$669,144,000.
In 1900 the value of the manufactured products of North Carolina was \$85,274,000, and in 1920 the total was \$943,808,000.
In 1900 North Carolina cotton mills used 100,000,000 pounds of cotton; in 1920 they consumed 449,000,000.
In 1900 North Carolina produced 29,700,000 bushels of corn. In 1920 it produced 54,030,000 bushels.
Perhaps no more striking illustration of the material progress of the state could be given than a contrast of the figures of its banks and their resources and deposits.
In 1900 the total resources of the national banks of North Carolina was \$15,362,000. In 1920 it was \$181,816,000.
In 1900 the total deposits in national and state banks were \$16,700,000. In 1920 it was \$3,189,705,000.
In these comparisons we have used the figures of 1920 because they are the official Census figures and their accuracy cannot be questioned.
If North Carolina's population could be bodily transferred to any other state in the South, and the population of that state lifted over and dropped into North Carolina, so as to give the North Carolinians a full sweep, the same marvelous results would be accomplished. The North Carolina people would turn a desert into a garden. They would dare to spend money for education and for other things because they have learned by experience that the expenditure of money for material and educational progress is the wisest investment that a state can make.
Rose-Grown Orange Blossom.
At a wedding at Ballston, near Bradford, England, the orange blossom carried by the bride and worn on her gown was taken from a tree reared at her home from a pip of the first orange eaten by her as a child.
Had an Engagement.
Little Billy is attending kindergarten. As he was bidding me a loving farewell he said, "Mother, I will be late coming home. I have to lick a fella."
Hypnotism Long Practiced.
Hypnotism has been known and practiced for ages, but the word hypnotism was originated by Dr. James Braid of England, who gave public exhibitions in 1841.
Sport and Ferocity.
When a man wants to murder a tiger he calls it sport; when a tiger wants to murder him he calls it ferocity.—G. B. Shaw.
Pigmies from Coal.
The pigmies of more than 400 species are obtained from coal.