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THE COMMONWEALTH

E. E. HILLIARD, Editor and Proprietor. "EXCELSIOR" IS OUR MOTTO. VOL. XIII. New Series--Vol. 2. SCOTLAND NECK, N. C., THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 1897. NO. 27

IF YOU ARE HUSTLER YOU WILL ADVERTISE YOUR Business. SEND YOUR ADVERTISEMENT IN NOW.

THE EDITOR'S LEISURE HOURS.

Points and Paragraphs of Things Present, Past and Future.

While Mr. Bryan was in Norfolk last week some one who perhaps was not in sympathy with his silver doctrines remarked that he was glad to see him, and added, "You are a more handsome man than the papers represent you to be."

"Ah!" replied Mr. Bryan, "You must have been reading Republican papers." The Sheriff's Institute to be held at Morehead City this summer between the 1st and 20th of August, is something new. All sheriffs, ex-sheriffs, registers of deeds, and all others interested in the listing of taxes, will be invited to attend.

From the number of towns in the State that have voted for local prohibition recently it would seem that the temperance sentiment is growing in North Carolina. There are many who question the wisdom of prohibition in small towns who would vote for it on a broader scale. So after all the number of places that vote for local prohibition do not give a good index to the temperance sentiment in the State, for it is greater and stronger than is indicated by local prohibition.

A very intelligent gentleman who has travelled much said to us a few days ago that, considering all its possibilities, North Carolina is one of the foremost States in the Union. The soil of the State, he said, is adapted to the production of almost everything needed for the sustenance and comfort of man. And another remarked that Eastern Carolina is destined to become the best part of the State.

This is what THE COMMONWEALTH has long believed, what has it been preaching and proposes to preach still. The only thing needed for such development is for the people to wake up to the possibilities of the section, properly advertise it, and the development will come.

Hon. W. J. Bryan's visit to Norfolk last week was a most enjoyable feature of the "Chautauqua by the Sea" which is now in progress in that city. Mr. Bryan made a great speech on bimetallism and was given quite an ovation by the Norfolk people. In an interview he said some very pleasant things for the South. He has kind feelings for the South and the people of this section for the most part greatly admire Mr. Bryan.

The Norfolk people think that Mr. Bryan's popularity is increasing rather than decreasing. Some have predicted that if he continues to travel and speak it will jeopardize his chances for the presidential nomination in 1900. But Mr. Bryan seems in blood earnest in the cause of silver, and so pays no attention to such unfavorable predictions.

Mess. Hugh and Hector McLean, the bachelor twins in Harnett county, whom we have referred to in this column before this year, are 87 years old, but they write to the newspapers. Here is an item going the rounds of the press which they wrote to the Louisville Courier Journal.

"We see an inquiry as to what time the cold Friday and Saturday was. It was in February, 1835, about the 6th or 7th of the month. In Fayetteville, N. C., it killed the China shade trees. We remember the time well, as we went to a new boarding house, and the sheets on the bed felt like ice and in breathing ice formed on the blankets. The next winter we travelled in four of the southern states, and heard it often spoken of as the cold Friday and Saturday, and as being the coldest time that had been known. We saw the inquiry in the Courier-Journal of May 26. Hugh and Hector McLean. We are twins, and were 87 years old February 16th, last."

FEEBLE MINDED. AN ARMY OF THEM IN THE LAND.

WHAT OUGHT TO BE DONE WITH THEM. Some Rambling Thoughts.

BY "NEMO." (Copyrighted.)

Some months ago I dared to suggest to young men who had more energy than they could exhaust on the ordinary affairs of life, that it might be well to expend that energy for their fellow-men, by devoting themselves heart and soul to bringing about justice for workmen in the form of employers' liability for injuries suffered while at work. I pointed out that by modern conditions a workman was unable to guard himself fully against the criminal carelessness of his fellows, and I also showed that nothing but a law equal in its obligations in all States would be fair to the employer. Where this suggestion may have lodged effectively, I may not know, since these "Thoughts" are not like bread cast upon waters, to return after many days, but more like arrows shot forth at random, hitting sometimes and missing often.

I come now with another subject that affects every community and that is clamoring for proper answer with louder and louder tones as the years roll by; a question that must be answered properly by this century or it will remain a problem for the 20th century that is absolutely frightful to contemplate—the question is as to the proper care of the feeble-minded. Now I mention it, you of course admit that there is such a question, but its importance and its magnitude are hardly likely to be felt by you, save perhaps in your community there are but a few such afflicted ones. Bear with me as I lead you to deeper feeling.

According to the Bureau of Statistics at Washington there are in this country over one hundred thousand such people—I am not referring to either idiots or insane but only to those of insufficient intellect. This 100,000 includes only those who by their parents or guardians are acknowledged to the authorities; and learned ones on this subject think it fair to suppose that there are half as many more concealed and unreported by sensitive relatives; so that our problem resolves itself into the care-taking of 150,000 people too lacking in intelligence to properly look after themselves. They are pining out a limited existence in our towns as the butts for all sorts of jokes, in our poor-houses as those who may be abused without fear, in our jails as those who have done crimes that seemed to be committed without any sense of wrong-doing, in our land as a vast army whose dull eyes look out upon life as if it were a dream. What is being done for them? The total accommodation in all the institutions that already exist for their proper care and training is 6,000. Fully twenty States give them no attention at all. In South Carolina, Virginia, Missouri and Oregon some few of them are sent to the Insane Asylums, the very last place they ought to be, since they can be trained to some degree of usefulness. In Montana they are grouped with the Deaf and Dumb, a classification that must be of damage to the deaf-mutes. Maine, Vermont and Wyoming pass them on to other States, if accommodations can be found. In the case of Maine and Vermont, Massachusetts is looked to for help, though its own State applicants exceed by hundreds every possible accommodation at either Waverly or Barre. North Carolina, Georgia, Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas, Utah, South Dakota, Colorado and a few other States do nothing for them, unless the fact that many of them naturally gravitate to the poor-houses be regarded as some thing done.

Now then, am I merely setting up a man of straw in order to make a great show of bravery in demolishing him? A glance around your own community will confirm or disprove what I say. Unlike the idiot, the feeble-minded man is able to re-produce his kind, and strong intellects do not come from feeble-minded parentage. Look around your neighborhood and see if this is correct. In nearly every poor-house of the country will be found one or more feeble-minded women; all the inevitable prey of depraved men, and year after year their offspring are augmenting the number of idiots or feeble-

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PIRATES OF CAROLINA. THE TERRORS OF THE SEAS.

These are now Things of the Past.

W. C. Allen in Wilmington Messenger.

Vessels come and go along the whole coast of America now with perfect security so far as molestation by pirates is concerned. To day the sailor from New York to Havana does not anticipate any interference from robbers on the high seas; but makes provision, on setting out, to combat only the winds and waves, the common enemies of navigators. He is not on the lookout constantly for freebooters on his right hand or his left. Teach's hole on the coast of North Carolina, one time the terror of all coasting vessels, has no special interest to the navigator now, more than the fact that, at one time, it was the trysting place of many marauders of the seas.

There was a time when things were different. From 1690 to 1720 the entire coast from Maine to Cuba was infested by bold and blood thirsty buccaners. They roamed the seas as lords of the deep, and committed their depredations with impunity; for there was no force adequate to the task of coping with them. The merchant vessel that ran the gauntlet of these desperadoes was esteemed fortunate. Many were captured and plundered, and their crews either slaughtered or sent adrift to perish in the deep. The booty that they obtained was enormous. Their adherents on land aided them materially in hiding the treasure as it was brought into the place of rendezvous. It is believed in some places that large quantities of gold and silver, buried during those times, still remain concealed along the coast of the United States.

First Methodist Sermon in America.

"On the seventh of March, 1736, John Wesley preached the first Methodist sermon on this continent," writes the Rev. W. J. Scott, D. D., in an interesting review of "When John Wesley Preached in Georgia," in the June Ladies' Home Journal. "It was delivered not far from the site of the present Christ Church, Savannah, of which he subsequently was the third rector, and was addressed to a mixed assemblage. His congregation hardly exceeded four hundred persons, including children and adults, reinforced, however, by one hundred or more of the neighboring Indians. Wesley discussed in a most eloquent manner the principles of Christian charity as argued by Saint Paul in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. He made a powerful appeal, and many of his audience were in tears. While he was not so impetuous in his delivery as in after years, his abilities at that time bespoke the great preacher and reformer.

"If he was more scholastic in style than in after years, the fervor and force of his appeals were none the less felt by his hearers. Especially was this strikingly true when in the course of his discourse he adverted to the death of his father, who for forty years or more had been the incumbent of the Epworth rectory. This venerable man was asked not long before his death: 'Are the consolations of God small with you?' 'No, no, no!' he exclaimed, with uplifted hands, 'and then,' continued Wesley, 'calling all that were near him by their names, the dying patriarch said: 'Think of Heaven, talk of Heaven; all time is lost when we are not thinking of Heaven!' This was spoken by Wesley in a tremulous voice, and his new parishioners at Savannah were for the instant almost swept off their feet by a tidal wave of religious enthusiasm. Tradition has it that several Indians who were present became so greatly excited, not only by Mr. Wesley's impassioned oratory—though they did not understand a word he said—but by his gestures, that one old warrior nervously clutched his tomahawk, fearing an outbreak in the strangely-moved audience."

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About 1710 a formidable band of these freebooters entered into a compact to act together for mutual profit and safety. Edward Teach, better known by the name of Blackbeard, was commander-in-chief; and three noted pirates, namely, Henry Vane, Steed Bonnet, and Richard Worley were his chief lieutenants. Teach was the soul of the band and the dictator of all their movements. His fleet consisted at first of six heavily armed vessels of war, that of Teach himself carrying forty guns and manned by a hundred sturdy sea rovers, each man ready at any time to give his life in defense of his commander. There were no vessels in American waters at that time that could match those terrors of the sea.

With these formidable enemies of mankind scouring the seas and frequenting the coasts, the commerce of the New World was almost destroyed. They confined their depredations mostly to the southern colonies, though frequently they made bold dashes into the northern seas and carried off immense treasure almost in sight of Boston harbor. Their headquarters were established upon one of the small islands of the Bahamas, with places of rendezvous in the Cape Fear and Pamlico rivers in North Carolina and others of less note on the coasts of South Carolina and Georgia. Here they met at stated times and formulated their daring schemes of murder and plunder.

It was a time favorably suited to the purpose of the pirates. The country was sparsely settled, Georgia being yet a wilderness with no white settler within her borders, and the mother country had her navy employed in protecting her interests in other parts of the world. While the laws against piracy were stringent, they could not be enforced. The temptations upon the seas were so great that many of the boldest in each colony forsook the peaceful haunts of their homes and sought ill-gotten fortunes upon the water.

The northern colonies had been for a long time afflicted with the same trouble that then annoyed their southern sisters. Only a few years before that time, in 1695, Captain Kidd had become a pirate and a terror to the northern seas. Before becoming a freebooter he was a sort of privateer, a kind of sea rover, neither fish, flesh, nor fowl. It is a very short step from privateering to piracy, and Captain Kidd was not a man to strain at a gnat.

When the depredations of the corsairs all along the Atlantic coast became unbearable, Kidd, with a strong fleet, arrived with a royal commission, and stoutly supported by all the northern colonies, was sent against them, on the theory that it takes a rogue to catch other rogues. He went out with

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great gusto to chastise the lawbreakers, but became dazzled by the opportunity thus thrust upon him, and became a freebooter himself, creating more terror among sailors than all previous corsairs had done.

He roamed over the seas both along the shores of the English colonies and among the Spaniards of the far south. With cargoes of rich spoil from the Spanish Main and the West Indies, he would sail into the port of Boston and dispose of them with the proverbial lavishness of a freebooter. On board his vessels were the sumptuous luxuries of the tropics, the gaudy trappings of the Spanish nobles, and the precious gems from the Brazilian mines. In consequence of his liberality in handing stolen goods and bestowing them upon others, he was gladly received by many New England people whenever he chose to dwell in their midst. The great outlaw was finally captured while walking along a street in Boston, and soon thereafter paid the penalty of his high handed deeds. His capture broke up to a large extent the bands of northern pirates, but those of the south still remained as a menace to all traffic by sea.

At last something like an organized effort was made to break up the gang of desperadoes that prowled about the seas. Captain Woods Rogers, a brave and trusted officer of the king's navy was sent against them with a fleet of sufficient size to strike terror into the hearts of the freebooters. He came to the island of Providence in the Bahamas, where Teach and his gang had fixed their headquarters. As Rogers approached and was about to open fire upon them, the whole of the band except about ninety hoisted the white flag, claiming the royal pardon which had been extended shortly before to all who would return to their duties as law-abiding citizens. Blackbeard and his lieutenants with their crews were not present and thus escaped. The nest was not broken up. It was merely shifted to North Carolina. The ninety that returned amnesty and had escaped the clutches of Rogers soon joined their forces with Blackbeard, and coming to the coast of North Carolina, took up their headquarters in the Cape Fear river, with other places of rendezvous in the Pamlico river and sound. There were no people living on the Cape Fear river at that time for Sir John Yeamans' colony that settled there years before had removed to South Carolina. The remains of their settlement furnished shelter and temporary homes for the pirates.

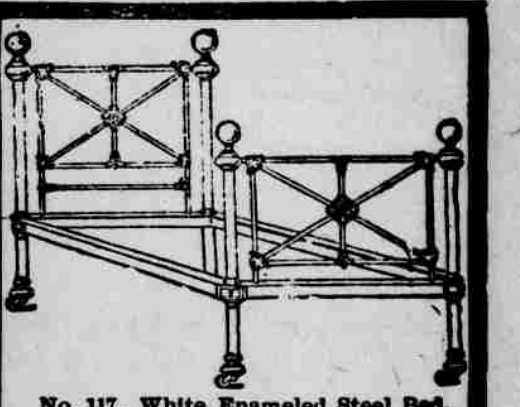
In their new quarters they seemed to put on new life and to follow their nefarious calling with more vindictiveness than ever. For some cause Captain Rogers had not followed them, but had hoisted sail and gone back to England leaving the pirates masters of the sea. Soon thereafter, Governor Robert Johnson, of South Carolina, took matters into his own hands and resolved to chastise the buccaners. Accordingly he sent out Captain William Rhett with two sloops to watch their movements and, if possible, to bring them to justice. Rhett had hardly crossed the Charleston bar when he espied Bonnet's vessel, which he chased into the Cape Fear and captured after a stout resistance. He took his prize to Charleston with thirty prisoners, who, with their commander, paid the penalty on the gallows. Governor Johnson himself soon after went in pursuit of Worley and after a desperate engagement off the harbor of Charleston captured him. The entire crew of the pirate vessel, with the exception of Worley and one other were killed in the battle; and they were dangerously wounded. They were taken to the South Carolina metropolis and immediately executed for fear that death would cheat the gallows. Vane was run down and slain soon afterwards; and the band once so formidable was materially reduced.

But piracy was not yet broken up, though it had received a signal reverse. Blackbeard, the boldest and most redoubtable of the gang, with fifty or sixty followers still hovered about Ocracoke and the Pamlico sounds. He defied capture and boasted that he was a match for the king's navy.

In 1718, while cruising off the coast of South Carolina, Teach captured a vessel having on board Samuel Wragg, a member of the executive council of South Carolina, and a man of means and influence. Blackbeard robbed Mr. Wragg of \$7,500 in specie and held him for ransom. The bold freebooter had the effrontery to send four of his men to Charleston to de-

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mand of Governor Johnson a chest of medicine threatening that if the drugs were not sent at once, Mr. Wragg's head together with the heads of all other prisoners would be sent his majesty by early breakfast the next day. The energetic governor had no means at that time to resist the bravo and pirate; therefore, to save the lives of the unfortunate prisoners the medicine was sent. After reveling in blood for years and amassing a large fortune by his deeds of violence, Teach went to Edenton, N. C., then the capital of the province, and applied for the king's pardon which had been offered to all pirates who would return to their duties of citizenship. Governor Eden granted Blackbeard and his followers the certificate of pardon, and they settled near Bath in the same State to enjoy their ill-gotten gains. About this time Blackbeard married his thirteenth wife. She was unquestionably a woman without much feminine curiosity, or she would have become somewhat inquisitive as to what had become of her twelve predecessors.



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