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A Year, in Advance.

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"FOR GOD, FOR COUNTRY, AND FOR TRUTH."

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Single Copy

NO.

BILL ARP'S LETTERS.

"An album's pages tell of many a friend
Lost to the sight, but to the memory dear."

Those lines are the beginning of some verses I wrote in a school girl's album fifty-four years ago. The little book is near me now. It is old and worn and it makes me sad to turn its leaves and read the pretty verses that adorn its pages. The authors were her best friends and all are dead but one—the one now writing this letter. "Friend after friend departs—who has not lost a friend?" This album was captured during the civil war and carried away to Babylon and kept a prisoner in a strange land for twenty one years and then was returned through the mail. It takes conscience a long time to bring repentance to some people. That school girl is my wife—she is now sitting by her window sewing, making a little dress for a grandchild. Will she never stop making little garments? I asked Jessie last night how many garments it took for her little Caroline in each and every year, and she counted them up—eight little dresses, ten petticoats, four pair day drawers, two pair night drawers and one cloak—say twenty-five garments for winter and as many more for summer, and she makes most of all them herself. My wife has done all this for ten children until they were fifteen years old. Fifty times ten makes 500, and 500 times 15 makes 7,500 garments and she still keeps working on. But she is not worn out nor thin nor pale nor haggard nor is her eye dimmed when she has on her gold-bound glasses. Oh, these good old mothers. Mine did the same thing for her flock and my wife's mother the same for hers and so do they all—except some. I loved my mother dearly, but it grieves me sometimes that I did not love her better, for I did not realize how much she did for me and how her very soul was wrapped up in her children. Stop young man, stop and think, when you are far away from home frolicking and frolicking with your gay companions—stop sometimes, stop and think of your good mother and write to her a loving letter. Hopeful and sad she waits for every mail and never despairs.

But about albums. A friend has left his with me for perusal—one of these old time mental photographic albums with about twenty questions to be answered. I have seen them before and was amused at the answers, but this one interested me for its pages contain an autobiography of many noble and notable men. It tells a condensed story of their emotional and mental character. When a man of thought is asked to write an answer to a question he is both cautious and sincere. He knows that he is making an exhibit of his inner life to every one who reads it.

This album begins with Alex Stephens in 1874 and then follows with Robert Toombs, Herschel V. Johnson, General Kirby Smith, James K. Randall, Richard Malcolm Johnson, L. Q. C. Lamar, Richard H. Clark, John B. Gordon, Thomas M. Norwood, Rev. M. Palmer, Henry S. Foote, Logan E. Bleckley, Robert J. Burdette, Paul H. Hayne, Joel Chandler Harris, Wallace P. Reed, Mrs. Octavia Walton Le Vert, Judge Hook, Richard A. Proctor, the great astronomer, and others. Every name is noble and notable, and their answers are indexes to their characters. Stephens's favorite books are Milton, Pope and Shakespeare, his heroine Rebecca in "Ivanhoe"; his hero Washington; his occupation reading and farming; his best trait in man is truth, and in woman modesty.

Toombs's favorites are Shakespeare and Tom Moore, Gibbons and Macaulay; his characters in fiction Biondi, in history Socrates; his favorite occupation building air castles; best trait in man justice, in woman charity; the sum of human happiness is to make others happy.

Governor Johnson likes Pope, Milton and Byron and Swedenborg, knows nothing of romance; his best characters Washington and Jefferson; his occupation reading and writing; the highest traits truth and benevolence; his watchword duty.

Kirby Smith likes Gray, Young and Tennyson, Scott, Irving and Macaulay; his favorite characters Sir Gallahad and St. Paul; his favorite occupation "making love to my wife"; his best traits in man are truth and honesty; the sum of human happiness contentment.

James R. Randall likes Shakespeare and Byron, Bulwer, Thackeray and Macaulay; his favorite character in romance is Warrington in "Pendennis," in history Fenelon; occupation reading and writing; the highest trait in man devotion to principles, in woman modesty; the sum of human happiness is resignation.

R. M. Johnson liked Byron, Scott, Keats and Mrs. Hemans, Macaulay, Bulwer and Goldsmith; historic character Aurelius; occupation scribbling; sum of happiness consciousness of God's favor.

L. Q. C. Lamar liked best Byron and Burns, Macaulay, Bulwer and Plutarch; best characters Greatheart in "Pilgrim's Progress," in history Washington and Hampden; his favorite occupation teaching in college; the sum of human happiness the love of God.

Rev. B. M. Palmer preferred Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworth, Bacon, Bulwer, Scott and Goldsmith best characters William, Prince of Orange, Washington and Lee; his favorite occupation preaching the gospel; best trait truth; sum of human happiness a good conscience.

R. J. Burdette liked Mrs. Browning, Carlyle, Thackeray; his favorite character Colonel Newcome and Cromwell; best trait sincerity; sum of happiness a home full of friends.

Henry S. Foote liked Shakespeare and Byron, Macaulay and Tacitus; his favorite characters Old Mortality and Washington; the sum of happiness, conjugal felicity.

L. E. Bleckley chose Shakespeare, Byron and Tennyson, Hamilton, Mill and Pascal; his favorite characters Don Quixote and Marcus Aurelius.

John B. Gordon preferred Shakespeare, Macaulay and Carlyle; his favorite characters Washington and Cato; his favorite occupation raising fine stock; best trait in man, integrity, in woman tenderness.

T. M. Norwood, Shakespeare and Byron; best trait in man honor.

Wallace P. Reed likes Shakespeare and Macaulay; best character is Napoleon; best trait, justice; sum of all happiness is a happy home.

Joel Chandler Harris prefers Shakespeare, Scott and Thackeray; best characters, Jefferson and Lincoln; favorite occupation, looking after my roses; best trait in man is honesty; sum of human happiness to be at home.

All of these men name the sweetest words in our language and also the saddest. Among the last are lost—forever lost—it might have been—friendless—hopeless—forgotten, and one says most of them begin with the letter D, as disappointment, dismay, destruction, despair, debt, duns, death, damnation and the devil.

There are other writers in this album, but space forbids. These are enough for a young man to choose from. From these he can make up a good library, for there is not a questionable book among them. Shakespeare and Macaulay are in the lead for authors and Washington for character, truth for the best trait in man and modesty in woman. About half these men liked the early morn and the other half the twilight, except, however, L. Q. C. Lamar, who says his favorite hour is 1 o'clock at night. (I never knew before that he played poker.) Of these sixteen notable men just half are dead. Their record is made up and the book is closed. Their influence upon the present generation cannot be estimated nor overestimated. No great or good man or woman has an adequate idea of what he or she is worth to mankind. Last Sabbath we heard a very grand discourse upon environment from Rev. Mr. Mumford, who has established that industrial school near Macon for the rejected children of the state, those who are under the ban and whom nobody wants and nobody cares for—the children of drunken or disreputable parents and whom no orphanage will receive. The eloquent and earnest preacher declared in words that burned: "Men and women are not born, they are made! Made by their environments, their parents or their early associates." He is going over the state gathering up the friendless and pleading with the good people to give these children a chance. "Give every friendless child a chance," he earnestly exclaimed. His text was "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." It is a hardened heart who can listen to him and not give something. There should be another question in that album, what is the worst and most prevalent trait in mankind? And I would answer, "selfishness." BILL ARP.

Better Let the Districts Alone.
Charlotte Observer.
The grotesque bill, apportioning the State into ten congressional districts, according to the plan as given in yesterday's paper, was passed by the Democratic legislative caucus last night by a vote of 60 to 43. This is the bill which makes the ninth district consist of Mecklenburg, Gaston, Cleveland, Lincoln, Catawba, Burke, Mitchell, Yancey, Manion. More grotesque is the arrangement which constitutes the seventh district of the counties of Union, Anson, Richmond, Scotland, Moore, Montgomery, Randolph, Davidson, Davie, Yadkin. It is a far call from Mecklenburg to Madison, but not further than from Scotland to Yadkin.

It is the avowed purpose of this bill, as we are told from Raleigh, to make nine Democratic districts and one—the tenth—Republican, but we are inclined to believe with the gentlemen who are ready to bet that four of them will be found Republican and six Democratic.

The bill having caucus approval, however, will doubtless go through without serious opposition.

Educational Test.
The Superintendent of Schools of Spokane, Wash., desirous of testing the powers of composition existing in a class of 8-year-olds, requested that three sentences be written, each to contain one of the three words bees, boys and bear. A small girl laboriously concocted the following sentence: "Boys bees bare when they go in swimming."

LETTER FROM SAM P. JONES.

Says the World Never Needed Old Fashioned Mammies and Daddies Like It Needs Them Today.
The Atlanta Journal.

The pendulum of human affairs swings rapidly these latter days. Sometimes a fellow has to hold his breath as he looks on. The saying that "if you let it alone it will let you alone" is a great big whopping lie, but it is a lie that has been told so often that the majority of the people in this country believe it is true. A fellow said to me the other day that if a man will let whiskey alone it will let him alone. This is the whoppinest lie of all. A many home and many a man has let whiskey alone and yet because somebody else drank it a husband has been shot down and the widow and orphans have been left homeless and penniless. Sometimes a good mother that always let whiskey alone finds that it is wrecking her boy and won't let her alone, and this is true of the other devilities of life.

Tragedy and comedy. There are many things to laugh at and others that make your blood run cold. What a tragedy the papers this week report of the gruesome find out near Bolton. These horrors are not accidents or the mishaps of a day; they have their roots running backward and running downward. Society is getting more corrupt, modesty and purity are standing at less premium, decency and sobriety are spurned by many who would be esteemed respectable. When a woman loses her modesty she has already half way lost her virtue. When a man has a bottle of whiskey in one pocket and a pack of cigarettes in the other he has very little more to lose except his soul. This world never needed the old-fashioned mammies and daddies like it needs them today. We have substitutes for them called mammas and papas, of which I am whom, and they are a sorry set.

Buggy and bicycle riding, ballrooms, etc., however nice they may seem, they are like the old woman's collards when she said, "if you cook these old blue stem collards before frost bites them if you don't put heap of grease in them you will find after you have eat them that they have got the very devil in them." Buggy riding and ball rooms need grace instead of grease and a great deal more grace than goes to that phase of life. I tell you the young bucks and buckesses are up to snuff these days. I noticed a report in the New York World the other day of the woman who died at the fashionable restaurants in New York, that 75 per cent. of them took wine and whiskey with their dinners. I said it and stick to it that when a woman is full of wine she is not able to take care of herself properly in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation. But while the young folks, so called, are having a good time, there are bleeding hearts behind them suffering untold agonies, and I have said it and stick to it again, that the greatest mystery in God's economy is that the innocent must suffer with the guilty, not perchance like the dog Tray who went in bad company, for he ought to have been licked for having gotten with that gang, but the innocent, who do not consort with the guilty. Mothers, wives, daughters, husbands, suffer because of the guilt of another whom God has bound to them by ties of consanguinity.

If the devil does get his dues and gives some people their dues, there is going to be a picnic some day in Pandemonium. I have long since abandoned from my mind the thought that the devil will get anybody whom he ought not to get or that he will do any more to them than he ought to do.

But I have laughed much this week over the board of trade valentines and the Georgia minstrels. That's comedy, gentlemen, pure and simple.

The more I think about these things the funnier they get. I don't know how funny they are, however, to "Harry Hunt" and "Joel Atkinson," and then to think about Mayor Mims being troubled like he is (when he came into the mayoralty with a bottle of cologne in one hand and his curling tongs in the other) and all about a 21 years' franchise on a short street. You may say to Mayor Mims for me that his trouble has just begun, and that if his hair is not naturally curly he will soon have trouble enough to make it curl naturally, and he will find that rose water won't do to scald hoes in. He must remember the other crowd had the mayor last year, no matter who has got him this year, and time about is fair play, anyway. But them valentines—my, don't they go for Clark as well as the rest of the boys. If I had nothing to do but enjoy fun I would move to Atlanta. A fellow can have it there every day, and all he wants.

The constitution of the United States guarantees to the people the right of petition, but that's as far as the guarantee goes, and it also gives people the right to peaceably assemble. Why don't one or the other of the street car companies employ Sister Nation with her hatchet; she would open up an avenue like a Missouri cyclone for the boys. Would'n't she go for the mayor, though, and if she just knew who cussed and who didn't cuss, from the governor down, she would exhort them all in the language she used to the Topeka jointists, "my poor hell-bound friends, I

have come to talk to you about the way you live." But I think the office of governor is too dignified for valentines, especially valentines with cussing in them. I wonder if Mayor Mims cusses. If he is very much in the habit of cussing I know he cussed when that big petition came at him—not from wrath, but just from habit. Old Uncle Simon Peter Richardson used to say that "any man who would cuss would steal." I never agreed with him fully; I just most agreed with him. But it is so much easier to catch a fellow cussing than it is to catch him stealing—that is to say, he is so much more private about his stealing than he is about his cussing. No gentleman will cuss before a lady, and the average fellow won't "take things" before a lady or a gentleman, either. Some folks emphasize what they say by putting in cuss words. That's like a fool knocking himself down every few minutes to show the world he is a good boxer, or like a dog biting himself to show that he is a biter, but there are a heap of folks in Atlanta that cuss, and if the mayor and governor do use a byword, occasionally they won't be ostracised on that account, but I wish they would quit it, and if the reporters would not report it few people would know about it.

I am off again for ten days through Ohio, Indiana and Illinois and am no longer a farmer.

With sore muscles and sore hands I have retired for a spell. Yours,
SAM P. JONES.

P. S.—I see where a preacher in St. Paul says that Sister Nation is crazy. I would love to see her run in on him. He would do like the Dutchman saloon keeper in New Orleans said he would do when the reporter asked him, "Mr. Hance, if Mrs. Nation were to come into your saloon to beat it up, what would you do?" "I would go out at the back door just as cawick as I could." S. P. J.

Three Murder Cases.
SALISBURY, Feb. 21.—The Superior Court finished the State docket to-day. Three murder cases have been tried, all the defendants being colored. Joe Melcher, accused of killing his wife, pleaded guilty of murder in the second degree. He has not yet been sentenced. Jim Alexander and Abraham Gillespie, involved in the killing of Aleck McConnell, at a festival at Cleveland, also pleaded guilty of murder in the second degree, and got 25 years in the penitentiary. Joe Koontz was convicted of manslaughter this afternoon and sentenced to 12 months on the roads. He was from Locke township and accidentally killed Tim Miller, a comrade.

Gold Hill express satisfaction with the punishment given James Howell, firebug and terrorist. Howell pleaded guilty and was sent to the penitentiary. He was put on the stand as State's evidence against Whit Morgan, the boy whom he was said to have paid to start the fire, but he was contradicted by witnesses for the defense and Morgan was acquitted. Howell's object was to get \$300 insurance on his stock of goods and he was in fact paid \$175 by the adjuster. The feeling against him at Gold Hill has been very strong.

Rich Oil Discovery Reported Near King's Mountain.

Word has been received that a rich oil well had been found near King's Mountain, the famous revolutionary battlefield, and there is great excitement in the community. The oil was discovered by Rev. P. R. Elam, a Baptist minister, of a speculative turn of mind, and without announcing the fact of the discovery, he immediately got the mineral rights for ten thousand acres in York county, S. C., and the adjoining counties of Gaston and Cleveland in North Carolina. The oil has been examined by the State chemist, who pronounced it of excellent quality, and samples will be sent to Washington for further examination. Farmers who have been excited by the find are making extensive borings in the hope of striking rich gushers. The York reports, while not positive, indicate that the further examination will show a chance for profitable returns.

New Book for Eastertide.
The Songs of Solomon have been arranged as a sacred drama by Miss Stockard. The romance of a king's wooing a shepherdess in the golden springtime of the East is a beautiful story for Eastertide. Dr. Eugene Daniels of Raleigh has written the introduction. Miss Stockard is an M. A. graduate of the University of North Carolina. Her work in literature has been much praised. She is herself taking subscriptions for this book of Eastertide. It is entitled "The Lily of the Valleys." Special attention is given to the material clothing of this excellent thought of love and spring. Bound in cloth, old Stradford paper, gilt edge. Price 75 cents. Address, Greensboro, N. C.

Husband and Wife.
Husband—What did the doctor say, Mary?
Wife—Not much. He asked me to put out my tongue.
Husband—Yes?
Wife—And he said, "Overworked."
Husband (with a long breath of relief)—Then you'll have to give it a rest. That doctor knows his business.

AN EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

How George Johnston Served Eight Years in Place of Christopher Betchler; Near Raleigh, N. C.

RALEIGH, N. C., March 2.—An extraordinary case of mistaken identity has just been developed here before Justice Montgomery, of the supreme court, in the case of George Johnstone, a white man, who has been unlawfully confined in the penitentiary for the past eight years.

Fifteen years ago a young white man by the name of Christopher Betchler was convicted in Shelby, N. C., of an aggravated case of stealing, and was sentenced to ten years in the penitentiary near this city. Betchler was the son of German parents who had resided for many years in the town of Rutherfordton. His father—Augustus Betchler—was a jeweler. After gold was discovered in Rutherfordton, Burke and McDowell counties, in 1849, old man Betchler was authorized by act of congress to coin gold dollars, and he coined the dust from the miners and brought it into dollars as high as the fifty dollar piece. "A. Betchler" was stamped on each coin and they were worth five cents more in the dollar than the coins of the United States mintage. These coins to this day are known as the "Betchler dollars," and are now preserved by those who have them as rare coins. After the war the Betchler family moved to Spartanburg, S. C. There were several sons and daughters, all handsome and well educated. "Chris," as he was called, turned out to be the "black sheep" of the flock. After he was sent to the penitentiary he remained there two years and then made his escape.

In 1893 Captain J. M. Fleming, who was warden of the penitentiary when "Chris" Betchler was received there, and who held this position until 1895, was in attendance on the superior court of Randolph county, at Asheboro, as a witness. While there a man known as George Johnstone was the plaintiff in a case which involved the title to 700 acres of land on which gold in considerable quantity had been found. Fleming saw this man and made inquiries concerning him, and found that he had located in Randolph county some time during 1888. It was in 1887 that Betchler escaped from the penitentiary. Fleming was positive that Johnstone was "Chris" Betchler and so stated. On the trial of the land case Johnstone was asked if he was not "Chris" Betchler, and if he had not been convicted of stealing in Shelby in 1885 and sentenced to the penitentiary for ten years, and had escaped therefrom in 1887? Of course Johnstone denied bitterly all this and said he was an entirely different man from Betchler. The defendants in the land case had Johnstone arrested as an escaped prisoner. Johnstone sued out a writ of habeas corpus but could not produce any witness beside himself to disprove the positive assertion of Fleming that he was "Chris" Betchler, and the judge refused to discharge him and ordered that he be returned to the penitentiary. The arrest and decision of the judge caused Johnstone to lose the land suit. As soon as Johnstone reached the penitentiary he sent for a lawyer, but had no money to pay him. He gave the lawyer the address of a number of people in Montgomery county and that of a man in Atlanta, whom he said knew him and would swear he was not Betchler. The lawyer wrote twice to each of these parties and did not receive an answer to a single letter that he wrote. The failure to have his letters returned or to receive an answer from either of the parties to whom he had written did not impress the lawyer in favor of Johnstone and he gave no more attention to the case.

Four weeks ago Colonel Ceburn L. Harris, a man of 70 years of age, who formerly resided in Rutherfordton and knew the Betchler family well, went to the penitentiary to examine the manufacture of brick, which is carried on inside the stockade. While in the yard he saw a tall white man at work and inquired who he was and was told that he was "Chris" Betchler. Col. Harris then asked and was allowed to talk with the prisoner. He stated to Col. Harris the facts herein stated as to his identification as "Chris" Betchler and asked Harris if he knew Betchler. Harris replied that he had known all the family for fifteen years before the war and while they lived in Rutherfordton. He was then asked if he, the prisoner, was "Chris" Betchler, and Harris unhesitatingly declared that the prisoner was not Betchler. A lawyer was then employed and another writ of habeas corpus was issued by Justice Montgomery and the prisoner was brought before him. Captain Fleming swore that he believed the prisoner to be "Chris" Betchler, and that he had known him as a prisoner in the penitentiary for the two years he was in the penitentiary. That he had escaped and remained at large until 1893, when he was arrested at Asheboro and returned to the prison, and that the resemblance of the prisoner to Betchler was very striking. Col. Harris was then put on the witness stand and told of the young boy "Chris" Betchler he had known before the war for fifteen years; how he had seen him grow up to be a man, and that he knew him perfectly well and could not be mistaken, and that the prisoner before the

court was not "Chris" Betchler, but that since he had seen him in the penitentiary he had no doubt as to his matter over and had taken a test that would certainly show the prisoner was Betchler. Harris asked the prisoner to exhibit his leg above the ankle for examination. The prisoner complied with this request and Harris made an examination and said that the prisoner was not "Chris" Betchler because Betchler had the mark of a bad dog bite on his right leg, which he received when he was a boy of ten years old, and that Harris had seen the dog. On this evidence Justice Montgomery discharged the prisoner from further imprisonment.

The attorney of Johnstone is now awaiting a decision of the Supreme Court in another case as to whether the State's prison is such a corporation as can be sued. If this decision is to the effect that the State's prison can be sued the attorney of Johnstone intends to sue for a large sum in damages for the false imprisonment, which lasted eight years.

A State Stock Law.
North Carolina will have a general stock law applying to every county and township in the State; that is, if the General Assembly passes the bill which the Senate Committee on Propositions and Grievances has decided unanimously to report favorably.

This bill was introduced by Senator Speight, of Edgecombe, and as stated above, brings all parts of North Carolina under the law preventing stock from running at large.

Senator Arrington, of the committee, offered an amendment providing that the commissioners of any county could exempt their county or any part thereof from the stock law, if they so desired, and authorizing the commissioners to levy a special tax in any territory thus exempted to erect a fence around the same. This amendment was adopted by the committee and will be reported with the bill to the Senate to-day.

Many of the counties in Eastern Carolina are not now under the stock law, and this bill will excite universal interest. Indeed the Senators would not be surprised at a flood of petitions pro and con.

The Kettle and the Pot.
A college professor, who prided himself on his correct English, heard his wife remark: "I intended to tell Jane to bring a fresh bucket of water." "You doubtless mean a bucket of fresh water," corrected the professor. "I wish you would pay some little attention to your rhetoric. Your mistakes are curious." A few minutes later the professor said: "My dear, that picture would show to better advantage if you were to hang it over the clock." "Ah," she replied, quietly, "you doubtless mean if I were to hang it above the clock. If I were to hang it over the clock we could not tell the time. I wish you would be more careful with your rhetoric my dear. Your mistakes are curious." And the professor all at once became very interested in his book.

State Sunday School Officers Elected.
At the State Sunday School Convention at High Point, the following were elected as officers for the coming year, viz: President, Prof. Geo. H. Crowell, superintendent of the graded schools of High Point, chairman executive committee, N. B. Broughton, of Raleigh; treasurer, Joe H. Weathers, of Raleigh, statistical secretary, H. H. Snow, of Durham; recording secretary, S. M. Smith, of Elon College.

Forty-seven counties were represented with 215 delegates. The handsome sum of \$100 was received from the collection Friday night. The meeting as a whole seems to have been quite a success.

His Neck Broken by Kicking at a Dog.
Destler, Neo. Special.

August Koerwitz, a German farmer living north of here, broke his neck this afternoon while kicking at a vicious dog. Koerwitz had just come to town and hitched his team. He started to cross the street when the dog ran at him. The farmer made a vicious kick. The ground was icy, and Koerwitz slipped and fell backward, breaking his neck. He died instantly. Koerwitz was 50 years old.

Weavers on a Strike.
GREENSBORO, Feb. 26.—Dissatisfaction among the employees of the Revolution cotton mills culminated in a strike of all but six of the weavers. The dissatisfaction arose over a change from day payment to payment by the piece. Weavers have already been employed to take the place of over one half the strikers. There is no strike among operatives in any other department of the mill.

Evangelist Fife is holding a meeting in the Presbyterian church in Navasota, Texas. He is having large audiences. He said in his opening service that he came not as a preacher, but as a business man; that for years he had traveled as a salesman of a mercantile house. He was still drumming, however, but had changed houses and was now drumming for a bigger house—he was on the road for Jesus Christ.