

TAR HEEL TOPICS

Items Gathered From All Sections of the State

Moore Fruit Escapes.

Southern Pines, Special.—The fruit men of Moore county have been witnessing a strenuous period. Friday night one of the most tempestuous storms in a long time wound up with a blizzard of snow and ice, and on Saturday morning the thermometer registered 24, with the fruit blossoms encased in globes of ice. The frost was big enough to cut with a knife, as everybody threw up both hands and conceded the complete destruction of all fruit. Orchards had been out in the fullest blossom for several days and everywhere hopes had been entertained of a bumper crop. Following the snow and ice of Friday night came another freeze Saturday night, to finish what the first night had done, the victims asserted. Many of the orchard men say the frost has done no more than to thin out the blossoms, leaving prospects of a reasonably fair, if not a good crop.

Tax Levy Is Unconstitutional.

Asheville, Special.—Judge Fred Moore, of the State Superior Court bench, rendered his decision in the matter of the Southern Railway Company against the commissioners and tax collector of Buncombe county, holding that the special tax of 10 cents on the \$100 worth of property for roads and bridges, and 18 1/3 cents for interest on bonds and sinking fund was unconstitutional and invalid, and continued the injunction restraining the tax collector from collecting from the Southern this tax, amounting to \$4,800. Practically the same point was raised by complainant's counsel relative to Mecklenburg county on account of the county levying a 10 cent road tax, 15 cent bond tax, and 25 cent convict tax and no poll tax to correspond.

A Davidson Home Burned.

Lexington, Special.—News reached town of the destruction by fire of the residence of Dr. J. E. Cathell, of Tyro, this county, in which about \$4,000 worth of property was consumed and not a thing saved except a canary bird. The insurance carried amounts to \$2,250. The origin of the fire is unknown. The popular physician was out on a professional call and his family and servants were away, it being about midnight when the fire occurred. Together with the 8-room house, all the doctor's instruments, accounts, medicines, his diploma, license, etc., were destroyed, as were 1,100 pounds of pork and lard from six hogs. The loss is exceedingly heavy on the doctor. At present he is making his home with a neighbor, Mr. Baxter Leonard.

Coffin On the Doorstep.

Charlotte, Special.—Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Russell, residents of Hickory Grove township, this county, found a crude miniature coffin on their front porch when they awoke, and in it a letter demanding money. The letter was adorned with a skull, crossbones and a blackhand. The county authorities have two neighboring youths under suspicion, and will arrest them. They refuse to divulge the names of the suspects, but they believe the affair to have been the prank of irresponsible youths, and that is the view held by the community.

Mills May Shut Down.

Dallas, Special.—The stockholders of the Monarch held a meeting on Tuesday at which the capital stock of the mill was increased \$13,000. It is rumored that the three cotton mills now in operation in this town will soon shut down for two months.

New Charters.

Raleigh, Special.—New charters as follows were issued Friday:

Wadesboro Pepsi-Cola Company, with capital of \$5,000; W. B. Blalock, George Britts and George Stanback, incorporators.

Scott Library Company, Asheville, capital \$25,000; C. H. Bobbs, J. F. Young and Henry B. Stevens, incorporators.

Salisbury Gets a Good Price For Its \$100,000 Bond Issue.

Salisbury, Special.—At a special meeting of the board of aldermen bids were opened for the \$100,000 bond issue passed at a public election last fall. Several bids were tendered and after due consideration that of N. W. Harris & Co., of New York, was accepted. The agreement under which the sale is made provides that the purchaser shall pay all legal expenses, printing, lithographing, transfer charges and delivers to the City of Salisbury without any exchange charges the sum of \$101,600.

Benton's Slayer to Hang.

Fayetteville, Special.—Sam Murchison, alias Melvin, will pay with his life for the murder of James H. Benton, which crime he committed on Sunday afternoon, February 23d, last. In Superior Court he was found guilty of murder in the first degree after a trial extending over two days. The jury rendered its verdict in thirty-five minutes after retiring to the jury room. The accused showed considerable nervousness when brought back into the court room to receive the verdict, but after it was rendered he sank back into his seat without evidence of emotion.

Saloon Keeper Makes Assignment.

Wilmington, Special.—J. B. J. Sandlin, the saloon keeper whose license was recently revoked by the board of aldermen effective April 1st because of irregularities in the manner of his conducting his place, made an assignment for the benefit of his creditors, Joseph J. Littig, Jr., local agent for the Home Brewing Company, being the assignee. The assets and liabilities are not large and the failure is of no commercial importance.

Charters Granted.

Raleigh, Special.—A charter is granted the Johnson-McCubbin Company at Salisbury, which will deal in real estate, build houses and factories, etc., capital stock \$130,000, the stockholders being Thomas P. Johnson, J. S. McCubbin and T. H. Vanderford. Another charter goes to the Carolina Paper Box Company, of Winston-Salem, \$25,000, the stockholders being W. B. Hemingway and others, all from Norfolk.

A commission is issued to Willey C. Rodman, of Washington, D. C. as major of the Second Regiment, vice Sellers, resigned.

Truck in the East Not Injured by Cold Weather.

Wilmington, Special.—The Truckers' Journal of this city, says that it has received telegraphic reports from all the leading trucking centres around Wilmington and eastern North Carolina and finds that little if any damage, was done by the recent snowfall and consequent cold weather in this vicinity. On account of reduced acreage most growers have been able to straw their berry plants and they are well protected until gathering time comes.

State News in Brief.

The United States Department of Justice offers \$100 reward for the capture of Jim Staley, the negro moonshiner who shot Deputy Marshal Henry Reese. It ought to be easy to identify and capture Staley as he was shot twice. Several people saw him at Sanford the evening of the day on which the shooting occurred. United States Marshal Dockery says that moonshining is certainly increasing in this district and that the moonshiners are becoming bolder and more desperate. Not so much is going on now as in the winter, but more than at this time last year. Durham and Johnson are the worst counties in the district for moonshining, while Robeson leads in retailing.

At the office of the State Labor Commissioner it is learned that there is some increase of work in the State. It is said that the sawmill people make more complaints about the panic than perhaps any other class, saying it is the real thing and has hit them hard and caused a big drop in prices.

A charter is granted the Leakville Light, Power and Milling Company, to furnish electric power, etc., the amount of the capital stock being \$40,000 and E. B. King the chief stockholder.

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction has issued a very well prepared and illustrated pamphlet with designs for public school houses this taking the place of one which was issued some years ago.

There is talk of a fine new hotel at Lakeview, with Western capital at the back of the scheme. The plans are not worked out yet, but a representative of the investors has been looking over the ground and appears impressed with Lakeview as a place for a good summer and winter resort.

The number of volumes in the Supreme Court library is now 17,136 this being a gain of almost 600 a year on an average for the past four years. The number of volumes in the State Library is 41,000, and counting books which the United States sends the gain is something like 1,000 a year.

TRAINMEN ACQUITTED

Trial of Engineer Rippey and Conductor Oakley, Charged With Manslaughter in That They Were Responsible For Wreck on Southern, End With Not Guilty Verdict by Jury.

Raleigh, Special.—The jury in Superior Court late Saturday night acquitted Southern Railway Conductor Oakley and Engineer Rippey, charged with manslaughter because of the fatal collision at Auburn. Train Dispatcher Victor Parvin and his assistant are yet to be tried on the same charge.

In Superior Court there was a continuation of the hearing of the trial of Conductor Oakley and Engineer Rippey of the Southern Railway, on the charge of manslaughter in causing the fatal collision of freight and passenger trains last fall, a mile the other side of Auburn, in this county. A great many witnesses were put on among them being State Treasurer Lacy, who is a veteran locomotive engineer.

Many witnesses testified to the good character and ability of both men. Rippey having been fireman or engineer for 33 years on the Southern and never before charged with carelessness. He swore that he was sick the afternoon of the accident, forgot his orders to stop and ran by Auburn station. Oakley was taking up tickets when the train passed Auburn and when the collision occurred. Ex-Governor Aycock led in the argument for the defense and was followed by Solicitor James for the State.

Corn Train at Washington.

Washington, N. C., Special.—The corn growers' special train of three cars sent out under the auspices of the State agricultural experiment station and the Norfolk & Southern Railway arrived in the city at 10 o'clock Saturday morning and was welcomed by a large crowd of citizens and farmers from all over the country. The special remained in this city two hours and during this time a number of interesting as well as instructive lectures were made by members of the party on scientific corn culture and how to produce more corn to the acre than heretofore, on seed selection, fertilizer plant diseases, etc. The lectures were carefully followed up by exhibits of corn specimens. In the party were C. B. Williams, director of the North Carolina experiment station; Tait Butler, State veterinarian; F. L. Stevens, biologist; R. I. Smith, entomologist; Dr. George T. Winston, of the A. & M. College; A. D. Samuels, specialist of the United States Department of Agriculture; T. J. Hudson, land and industrial agent of the Norfolk & Southern Railway.

Criminal Assault Attempted.

Belmont, Special.—An unsuccessful attempt at criminal assault was made on Miss Gladys Purnell, daughter of Rev. T. H. Purnell, about 7 o'clock Saturday evening by an unknown negro, who made good his escape. With the exception of Miss Gladys, the family was sitting on the front piazza, when they were aroused by her screams in the rear of the home. Just as she had stepped out of the house a negro grabbed her and bound a rag around her mouth. Her screams frightened the negro and he fled. Bloodhounds were brought at once from the convict camp near here but could not strike the trail, a crowd having gathered and obliterated the tracks.

Tar Heel Items.

Mr. J. N. McCausland, of the Retail Merchants' Association, of Charlotte, has asked Mr. Webb to investigate and endeavor to improve the mail service between Charlotte and Greensboro. Mr. Webb went to work on the matter at once and will thresh it out if possible. There is considerable complaint of mail service between Washington and Charlotte.

Thomas S. Rollins, of Asheville, is appointed a member of the central campaign committee of the State Anti-Saloon League.

The resignation of James S. Lewis, first lieutenant, Company E, Second Regiment, Goldsboro, is accepted, he having removed to Rocky Mount.

John W. Stewart was appointed United States Senator to succeed the late Redfield Proctor.

Chief of Police Shot.

Elizabeth City, Special.—Chief of Police A. G. Bell was shot through the left leg Saturday afternoon by James Burch, a negro, whom he was attempting to arrest. Bell shot twice at the negro, but neither shot took effect. Police Officers Thomas and Weeks and a number of citizens rushed to the rescue of Bell, overpowered and handcuffed the negro. He broke loose from the hand cuffs and struck Bell, but he was overpowered again and hurried to jail. Bell is not seriously hurt. The negro was wanted in Edenton for shooting the engineer of the steamer Plymouth.

SCORES DIE IN MINE

Fire Follows Explosion Deep in Coal Shaft

RESCUERS LOSE THEIR LIVES

In a Desperate Effort to Reach the Bodies of 18 Victims and Possible Survivors of Explosion, Probably 50 Rescuers Met a Similar Fate by a Second Explosion in the Hanna Mines of the Union Pacific Coal Company.

Cheyenne, Wyo., Special.—Between 55 and 70 men, it developed Sunday, lost their lives in two explosions in coal mine No. 1 of the Union Pacific Coal Company at Hanna. The explosions were caused by gases and coal dust, and each was followed by fire.

The first explosion occurred at 3 o'clock, killing 18 miners, including a superintendent and three bosses. The second explosion occurred at 10:30 o'clock at night, snuffing out the lives of from 40 to 50 rescuers, including State Mine Inspector D. M. Elie.

The wildest excitement prevailed in Hanna and at the mine, where hundreds of persons are congregated, including widows, children and other relatives of the victims. Men and women are running about wringing their hands and crying, while many little children, separated from their mothers, are sobbing with fear.

When the second explosion occurred, additional appeals were telegraphed to all surrounding towns for assistance. One train is rushing west from Omaha, carrying officers of the Union Pacific Railroad and of the Union Pacific Coal company.

The regular force of men employed at mines Nos. 2 and 3 were pressed into rescue work, which is extremely difficult.

The bodies of four of the 18 men who lost their lives in the first explosion, were found Sunday night, but owing to the increasing volumes of gas, which threatened to explode at any moment, no effort was made to remove them to the surface.

At 3 o'clock the fire reached the gas, and a terrific explosion followed. In a few minutes many men volunteered to enter the mine to rescue any possible survivor. Fumes and fire hindered the rescuers but they made some progress. After a long struggle, the volunteers got well into the mine. Those on the surface had begun to expect results from the intrepid daring of the rescuers, but at 10:30 o'clock the camp was startled by a second explosion that partly shut off the shaft of the mine and most likely killed the volunteers.

The victims are all below the tenth level and it is probable that flames have consumed the corpses.

Bomb Thrown in New York.

New York, Special.—Saturday as the police were dispersing a crowd of 10,000 idle people who were holding a socialistic meeting without a permit, a bomb was thrown with telling effect. The bomb was intended for the police, who with rough firmness had broken up a meeting of 10,000 unemployed. It exploded prematurely in the hands of the assassin, horribly wounding him, killing his companion, injuring slightly four policemen and throwing to the ground a score of those who were massed in the vicinity.

To Try Banker Montgomery.

New York, Special.—William J. Montgomery, former president of the Hamilton National Bank, who was indicted on two counts charging the over-certification of checks, will be placed on trial before Justice Dowling in the Supreme Court. Montgomery has entered a plea of not guilty of the indictment.

Guilty of Embezzlement.

Macon, Ga., Special.—The jury in the case of former Cashier C. M. Orr, of the failed Exchange Bank, charged with embezzling funds of the bank, after being out about three and one-half hours, returned a verdict of guilty. Judge U. V. Whipple sentenced the defendant to seven years in the penitentiary. A motion for a new trial was made.

Germany Accepts Hill.

Berlin, By Cable.—Emperor William, having been fully advised as to the attitude of President Roosevelt and the feeling of the American public in regard to the alleged refusal of His Majesty to receive Dr. David Jayne Hill as American ambassador to Germany, in succession to Charlemagne Tower, has withdrawn all the expressions of disapproval he recently sent to President Roosevelt and would be pleased to receive Dr. Hill as American ambassador.

SMITH SUCCEEDS WHYTE

Former Governor of Maryland, Already Elected to Senate For Six-Year Term, Is Chosen to Fill Out Unexpired Term of Senator Whyte—Election to Be Questioned.

Annapolis, Md., Special.—In separate sessions the Democratic members of the two houses of the Legislature voted unanimously for former Governor John Walter Smith for United States Senator to fill out the unexpired term of the late William Pinckney Whyte. Ex-Governor Smith already has been chosen for the full six-year term beginning March 4th, 1909. The Republican members decided at a caucus not to participate in the election, taking the ground that any other course would be in violation of the Federal statutes. One member of the House, however, bolted the caucus and voted for Congressman William H. Jackson.

It is understood that the legality of the election will be questioned, it being contended that the necessary time between the notice to the Legislature of a vacancy and the election of a successor had not elapsed as required by law.

Former Governor Stewart Appointed to Succeed Late Senator Proctor.

Rutland, Vt., Special.—John Walcott Stewart, of Middleburg, was appointed to the United States Senate by Governor Fletcher D. Proctor to fill the vacancy created by the recent death of Senator Redfield Proctor. Mr. Stewart has accepted. His term will expire this coming fall, when the Legislature meets in regular session. Mr. Stewart is 83 years of age.

Merely Settles Jurisdiction.

Washington, Special.—In the case of the State represented by Sheriff Thomas F. Hunter, of Buncombe county, appealed from the Circuit Court of the western district of North Carolina, the Supreme Court, Mr. Justice Harlan dissenting, sustains Judge Pritchard. The decision, read by Mr. Justice Peckham, was handed down Monday morning, along with the famous Minnesota case, both of which involved the question of jurisdiction. In no sense does this decision invalidate the North Carolina rate law, but settles the habeas corpus jurisdiction.

Ask For Protection Against Black Hand.

Jackson, Miss., Special.—John Womack, his brother and son, prominent planters of Simpson county, Mississippi, appealed to Governor Noel in person for protection against Black Hand threats. The men were ordered to leave Simpson county within 30 days or "stretch hemp," meaning they would be hanged. Governor Noel advised the men to return to their homes and be on active guard.

Church and Depot Blown Down.

West Point, Ga., Special.—A severe wind storm late Monday at River View, Ala., blew down a Methodist church and the Chattanooga Valley Railroad depot, unroofed one store and slightly damaged several other buildings. A heavy rain followed the wind storm, adding to the damage done by the latter. No loss of life has been reported.

Night Riders Shoot a Negro.

Hopkinsville, Ky., Special.—A band of night riders rode at midnight into Godenpond village, and later firing off guns went to the hotel and forced Tom Weaver, a negro tobacco packer to accompany them. They took him a short distance and told him to run. When he failed to obey promptly the riders began shooting at him, two bullets entering his shoulder and hip.

A Chicago Franchise.

Chicago, Special.—After a fight that has extended through the administration of Mayor Dunne, the city council, after a fight lasting until early Tuesday voted an amended franchise to the Commonwealth Edison Company. The new franchise, its enemies declare, gives the company a virtual monopoly in furnishing electricity for light and power, giving it a right to discriminate in rates for service furnished and to charge whatever it may please for emergency service.

Railroad Wreck; Twelve Killed.

Berlin, Ky., Special.—Twelve persons were injured, several fatally, when a passenger and a freight on the Cincinnati Southern met in a head-on collision three miles north of here Tuesday. Both engines were smashed and rolled down a thirty-five foot embankment with several coaches.

GILLETTE EXECUTE

Pays Penalty For the Murder of Sweetheart

MADE A PRIVATE CONFESSION

His Spiritual Advisers, Deeming I Privilege Refused, to Make Confession Public—Gillette Prepares Public Statement Announcing His Faith in God and Perfect Assurance of the Safety of His Soul Which Is Given Out.

Auburn, N. Y., Special.—Chester E. Gillette Monday paid the full penalty of the brutal murder of Grace Brown. He went to his death in the electric chair at Auburn prison without a sign of weakness and with the same lack of emotion which has characterized him from the day he was arrested charged with the crime. Gillette appeared to have been fully reconciled to his fate and in a statement given out by his spiritual advisers immediately after the execution it is indicated that he had made a confession of his guilt. This statement was signed by the Rev. Henry McIlvray, of Little Falls, and the Rev. Cordello Herrick, the prison chaplain. It was as follows:

"Because our relationship with Chester Gillette was privileged we do not deem it wise to make a detailed statement, and simply wish to say that no legal mistake was made in his electrocution."

Gillette's Statement. Gillette himself, so far as the public were concerned, never admitted his crime. His last word, in the form of a statement which he prepared with painstaking care, was made public after he had been put to death. In this statement Gillette said:

"In the shadow of the valley of death, it is my desire to do everything that would remove any doubt as to my having found Jesus Christ, the personal Savior and unfailing friend. My one regret, at this time, is that I have not given Him the pre-eminence in my life while I had the opportunity to work for Him. If I could only say some one thing that would draw young men to Him I would deem it the greatest privilege ever granted me. But all I can say now is, I know in whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.

"If the young men of this country could only know the joy and pleasure of a Christian life, I know they would do all in their power to become earnest active Christians, and would strive to live as Christ would have them live.

"There is not one thing I have left undone which will bar me from facing God, knowing that my sins are forgiven, for I have been free and frank in my talks with my spiritual adviser and God knows where I stand. My task is done, the victory won.

Signed,
"CHESTER E. GILLETTE."

Any fear which the prison officials may have entertained that Gillette's remarkable composure would desert him at the last moment was quickly dispelled when he stepped from his cell to the corridor leading to the death chamber. His step was firm, strong and he walked rapidly toward the instrument of death.

Mrs. Gillette, mother of Chester made a statement Monday in part as follows:

Mother's Statement. "Though it is a very bad thing for me to feel Chester was responsible for Grace Brown's death, yet it was the wish expressed to him continually by me that if he was guilty, to say so before the world, and that in his triumphant death I felt that God has answered my dearest wish and prayer.

"And I am also so thankful to know that he did not strike Grace Brown as described by the prosecution. A full account will never be given out, for he did not strike Grace Brown."

Story of the Crime.

The crime for which Chester E. Gillette was sentenced to forfeit his life in the electric chair in Auburn prison was the murder of his sweetheart, Grace Brown, near Big Moose in the Adirondacks on July 11th, 1906. Gillette was convicted on circumstantial evidence after a sensational trial in which the pathetic love letters of "Billy" Brown, as the girl was familiarly known among her associates, to Gillette, played an important part. The girl who perished in the waters of Big Moose lake had trusted Gillette to make amends for the wrong he had done her by making her his wife, and her letters which were found in the young man's room after his arrest at Eagle Bay, have been considered by many as classic in their simplicity and their tender pleading for the right that was her due.