

Criminal Indifference.

I am astonished at the criticisms of the country life commission. It is my conviction that the commission will accomplish untold good by directing the attention not only of the national government, but our own home people to the pressing needs of rural life and the possibility of rural development.

It is especially unfortunate that Governor Glenn talked prematurely in an interview concerning a session which he did not attend and reported in a paper whose representative did not attend—except for a mere fraction of the time. It is high time, anyhow, for the south to get over this morbid and babyish sensitiveness about the publication of every statistical fact that doesn't please our passing fancy. The bald truth is that our death rate from typhoid fever and other preventable diseases is shockingly and inexcusably high, a burning shame to our people amounting to nothing less than a sectional crime, and it is folly to deny it.

The true southerner, the man we ought to honor and follow, is the man who looks an unpleasant fact squarely in the face and sets about getting a remedy. In Heaven's name, let's have done with our quick, popularity-hunting doctors and leaders who tell us there is nothing the matter with us, that we are the greatest and happiest people on earth and all that we need to do is to keep on forever in our old ruts of illiteracy, undeveloped resources, and out-of-date farming methods. Let us rather follow the doctor and the leader who loves the south with all his heart, but loves her too well not to use the knife of criticism and reform upon the caucers upon her economic life and general well-being. (It ought to be said that this criticism is not aimed at Governor Glenn, but at the type of man who his ill considered interview suggests.

Now to come to the point: The commission is criticized because in urging the need of better rural sanitation and hygiene Dr. Stiles pointed out the excessive death rate in our rural districts as compared with other sections of the country. For instance, he mentions typhoid fever in emphasizing the truth (of so much moment to us) that 90 per cent. of the cases and the deaths from this dread disease might be prevented by proper sanitary precautions. And he is right. The average number of deaths from typhoid in the United States is thirty-five in each 1,000 deaths, while in the Gulf Coast region it is forty-five, in the South Central Appalachian region sixty-three, in the Southern Interior plateau, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi sections, seventy-six, and the Southwestern Central regions (parts of Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, 69 per cent. Wherever the negro population is high, as Dr. Stiles points out, the lack of sanitary precaution insures a high death rate from typhoid. The negro's carelessness, and our own, as Dr. Stiles points out, in the matter of typhoid fever, hookworm disease, etc., is murdering the white women and children of the south.

But the claim is made by one North Carolina critic that the number of deaths per 1,000 population reported in the last census was not so high in North Carolina as in New York or Massachusetts or Ohio. As a matter of fact, the general census report as to the number of deaths by states is recognized by the government as so deficient that it refuses to base any estimate on these figures—although it might be said in passing that while it may be possible to pick

out, didapper fashion, certain states which compare thus favorably, it is only because in these states, having large cities, the census authorities really reported the full number of deaths, as they are unable to do in rural states, and that even here the general statistics show the North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia death rate for whites—excluding negroes—as 25 per cent. higher than the average for whites in the United States.

These are the figures whose accuracy the government stands for, and the southern man who can look them in the face and still argue for a listless, do-nothing policy is the man who murders present and future generations by criminal carelessness.

Dr. Stiles is a man who with rare self-devotion proposes to give his life to the effort to reduce this fearful Southern death rate—its excessive proportions in our cities being but typical of similar conditions in our country districts—and there is no man in America today who more heartily deserves the cooperation of every agency in the southern states.

It is not climate that makes our southern death rate so high. It is lack of sanitary precautions upon the part of our large negro population and also upon the part of a large white population as well.

In the name of human life, let us set about remedying these conditions.

CLARENCE H. POE.

Raleigh, N. C., Nov. 14, 1908.

An Addition to a Noble Cause.

The Odd Fellows of North Carolina have let the contract to Holladay & Crouse, of Greensboro, for the erection of an additional building at their orphanage plant at Goldsboro. This building as ordered by the Grand Lodge at its last session, is a memorial building to the late Nathaniel Jacobi, of Wilmington, the originator of the orphanage idea among the North Carolina Odd Fellows and a member of the board of trustees from its inception to the time of his death, and will be known as the Nathaniel Jacobi Memorial Building.

The present plant consists of four buildings—the main building, which cares for one hundred children, besides assembly room, music room, offices, etc., the dining room building, which has dining room, store room, kitchen and dormitories above that accommodate thirty boys; an infirmary, a one-story brick building containing four rooms with all necessary bath rooms and lavatories; and the home for the aged Odd Fellows, their wives and sisters of the Rebekah degree.

The plant at present is easily worth \$60,000 and the Jacobi Memorial Building will cost \$25,000, exclusive of furnishing, which will make the plant worth \$85,000. The new building was made necessary because at present they are running at full capacity, having about 130 children and three aged people. When the new building is completed the capacity will be increased to 250. In the near future the Odd Fellows intend to install a laundry and central heating plant.

The children are well cared for in every way. They attend the graded schools of Goldsboro and average a little higher in their grades than the other children, more than one of them having graduated with first honors. They are taught piano and vocal music in addition to useful occupations. There is a strong moral sentiment prevailing, a large majority of the children being members of the different churches.

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