

Raleigh Enterprise.

VOL. II.

RALEIGH, N. C., THURSDAY, AUGUST 24, 1905.

NO. 19

BILKINS IN BALTIMORE.

He Finds an Up-to-Date Town But the Date is in Doubt—History and Antiquity Are Paramount—Valuable Facts About the Monumental City.

Baltimore, Md., Aug. 22.

Correspondence of the Enterprise.

I left Washington Monday. I didn't git things fixed up jist like I wanted them erbout that muskeeter buziness, fer the Preserdent got busy tryin' ter make them Rushyans an' Japs kiss an' make up. They air reddy ter kiss an' make up, but the Rushyans want'er git on the free list an' let the Japs foot their own bills. Me an' the Preserdent decided that Rushy would hev ter pay sumthin' or fite a gude deal, an' we ain't pertiekler which.

When I left Washington the Preserdent sed he wuz powerful sorry he hed ter stop rite in the middle ov our wurk an' made me promise ter stop ter see him when I go back South. He sez: "Zeke, them Rushyans an' Japs air more trubel ter me than raisin' a family ov step-children. But I think a whole lot ov them on both sides, an' I want ter see peece, so I'm goin' ter put in a few day's wurk er-long the line."

I tole him I wuz with him, an' if I could help him eny ter write at once.

I cum over here on the B. & O. rode on a train called the congresshual limited. Hit runs so fast hit takes two ingineers ter wurk hit. When one ingineer starts the train at Washington the other begins ter stop hit. By the time he gits hit stopped hit iz at Baltimore.

Baltimore iz lokated on Jones' Run betwixt Emery Grove an' Haverdegrass. The leadin' industyrs air Lexington Market, Elecktrick Park, Floods an' Back River. They iz awlso two telephone companies, an' everytime one ov them tries ter put up a new pole sumbody jumps in the hole an' stays thar so they can't set up the pole. This iz called the pole war. The poles air bought in Poland. Most ov the populashun ov Baltimore don't do erythin' but keep the telephone folks frum puttin' up poles. Az the company can't put up poles, hit refuses to pay pole tax.

Edgar Allan Poe, who invented poetry, which wuz named after him, wuz a sitizen ov Baltimore a gude meny years ergo before they got elecktrick cars an' cobbel-stones on the streets. Mr. Poe fussed a gude deal erbout peepel pasturin' their cows on the streets, an' hiz nabors chickens scratched up hiz gardin. Bein' a nervous feller, he razed a gude deal ov sand. One day he writ sum poetry an' couldn't think ov enything else an' called hit "Poe's Ravin'," bekase he wuz feelin' thet way. The poetry attracked a gude deal ov attenshun awl over the country, az fur az Hagerstown, an' Baltimore becum talked erbout. Things stood purty quiet fer a long time after that in Baltimore till the clothin' trade got ter boomin'.

The furst railrode in the wurld wuz built frum Baltimore ter Washington. Hit iz now called the Baltimore and Ohio. When enybody wanted ter git ter Washington quick they tuk a horse an' bugry, fer hit tuk awl day ter make hit on the train. The passengers would take their dinners er-long an' the train would stop an hour

fer dinner at the half-way house an' the passengers an' crew made coffee in the ingine. After dinner the train would go ter Washington. Hit takes 40 minits now fer the trip.

In the depoos at Baltimore an' Washington they had a sine which red: "The train will start at the usual hour if the weather be good." No trains wuz run on rainy days.

In them days the Baltimore ladies wuz so shy they wouldn't ride on the train till they hed bin interdused ter the conductork.

Baltimore is full ov old families, historickal an' other antick things; also cobble-stones. Purty nigh every family hes a family tree an' a lot ov old furniture an' sich like. Sum ov the leadin' sitizens hev tombstones in the parks either before or after they die, an' that iz why hit iz called "the monumental city."

The demand fer antick furniture iz so grate in Baltimore that several factories in Michygan air makin' hit specially fer the Baltimore trade, an' lots ov furniture stores handle nothin' else. New furniture hez ter be sold on the installment plan; but this antick furniture brings several times az much an' they will pay gold or eny other sort ov cash.

Baltimore wuz a sort of backard city till they hed a big fire thar more than a year ergo. The peepel in other places wuz sorry fer Baltimore an' wanted ter help them out by donatin' a few million dollars. But sum ov the wise peepel thar seed that hit wuz jist whut the town needed an' sed, "No, thank you, we will fite hit out rite on the ashes," and hit proved the makin' ov the town. They air buildin' hit up purty nigh az quick az hit burnt down an' hev voted fer a sewerage system an' other things an' hev noterfied New York that she will hev ter hurry.

They manufacture clothin', hats, shoes, beer an' whiskey in Baltimore an' a few other things; that's all.

Justis Garland an' I. Freeman Rasin air the prinsipel sitizens ov the town since Senator Gorman swallowed up the Sugar Trust an' moved to his country sweet.

Baltimore iz an' up-ter-date city, but hit ain't dated an' I can't tell jist whut date hit iz up to. But in ten years hit will begin ter look like a modern city. A few merchants hev awlredy begun ter advertize in the papers. They air outsiders, though, who hev drifted in frum sumwhar else. The natives air still writin' their advertisements on the pavmints and sendin' out hand-bills.

The folks in Baltimore hev sorter got reckonsiled ter street cars, but they make the railrode trains run under the ground till they git out ov the town.

Yours on the wing,
ZEKE BILKINS.

The Idlewild Farmers' Club.

Reported for the Enterprise.

"What in thunder is the matter?" asked an excited member soon after the echo of I. Hoe's horn of assembly had died away among the defiles and fastnesses of the Hill. "Must have a meeting to-night, Josh is coming to see us. Let's give the old man a send-off." "Good! I'll go round and tell the boys to be at the barn at early candlelight." Now, Josh is a character. A solid, level-headed old

farmer. Religious to a degree; temperance to two degrees—doesn't drink anything but hard cider, corn whisky, the fruit brandies, and a little water occasionally.

The hour of meeting arrived; so did the members; candles were lighted, seats arranged, and the membership called to order, and dues collected, and as Mr. I. Hoe was about to explain the reason of the call, a loud "Whoa, Blaze, gol darn ye, don't smash the fence down!" And, Josh had arrived. In a moment he was being greeted by "the gang" down in the barn yard, all greeting at once, and one or two rummaging the hay and fodder in the wagon-bed. "Here, you boys git out'n that," called Uncle Josh, who moved the seat aside and pulled out a five-gallon jug with cob stopper, which was totted upstairs, and a member rushed down to the house after tin-cups and dippers to come back limping and explaining that he fell over that durned bull calf of I. Hoe's and wrenched his ankle and sprained his shoulder. "Just bathe it with a quart of this good old hard cider," Uncle Josh suggested. "Oh! oh! such a waste!" went up in chorus.

"Now, boys," said Uncle Josh, after he had filled up all round and had taken a position a-straddle of the jug, "I was down here about three weeks ago to see the State Fair folks and find out if they was going to hold a high moral show fit for a deacon and a father to go into. I wanted them to put a muzzle on I. Hoe, for he took me around to the other Fair, and he know'd all the gals, and showed me such cuttings up as set me thinking even in sermon time; and I don't want to see them again, for I've seen 'em once. And I wanted a drink one day while I was here; I heard there wasn't no bar-rooms in the town, so I asked a man with a red nose where I could get a drink. He said: "The dispensary is over there."

It looked like a common, low-down whiskey shop, so I went in. I never was in a dispensary before, and I'll never go again—less I want a drink of the meanest corn whiskey on earth. I watched other folks, for I didn't know how to act, and I bought a half-pint of corn, and pulled the cork out, when the feller that sold it to me yelled out: "You can't drink that in here." I had already got a taste, and said: "That's so, stranger; that stuff will kill at forty rods. I'll go out in the woods and drink the rest, where it won't hurt no one but me. I'm told that place is run by the best people; that they voted to hire men to sell that stuff; why, it'll burn the insides out in thirty-seven days; and that they keep that place and sell that stuff to stop drunkenness. Well, it'll do it, for it'll kill everybody that uses it. I just looked round to see who was running the shop. There was six 'good men,' I suppose, handing it out as fast as they could; there was another solemn looking man sitting back among the barrels. They said he was a deacon. Was he there watching to see if any of his flock came in? I don't know, but he looked mighty solemn. That kind of whiskey selling makes sneaks out of a man, so I sneaked out and went to a vacant lot behind a store and drank the balance of what I bought." "Boys, bring up your dippers!" and Uncle Josh filled up again.

After they had all bragged over the

old man's cider, and looked for more, Uncle Josh took up his speech where he left off.

"I can't for the life of me see what right a 'good man' has to claim that a 'good man' has a right to engage in or to indorse the whiskey business, call it by any name you please. And the ground upon which they do so is a quick-sand that will swallow them up sooner or later—that is, if they patronize their own shop. The effect of whiskey is the same upon a man whether sold by a member of a church, or by a low-down sinner of a bar-keeper. One is just as much responsible for the making of a drunkard or pandering to a drunkard's appetite, and the consequent pauperizing of his dependents, as the other. And there is many a 'good man' who honestly thought in the beginning that he was doing right, but now knows that he is doing wrong and has done wrong all the time, but hasn't the manhood or moral courage to say so. Some of the money goes, they tell me, to schools. Isn't it 'tainted money,' I wonder, that is taken from one man's unfortunate children and given to another man's fortunate children? Some goes to make good roads. That is better, for the farmer that starts from Raleigh with a jugful of the stuff that I bought, runs less risk of having his neck broken by his mules when he gets too drunk to guide them to his home. And I am told that the taxes of Raleigh have been reduced ten cents on the hundred dollars. And the whole thing finally simmers down to dollars—to cents; to cents against souls. It won't do to roll up your eyes and ask argumentatively, 'Am I my brother's keeper?'"

"Say, boys, we'd better pull the stopper again, for this is mighty dry talk I'm giving you; but I don't get a chance at you often." And the stopper was duly pulled.

After the participants had wiped their respective moustaches on their shirt-sleeves, and again eulogized Uncle Josh's cider, the old patriarch resumed:

"As I said, this dispensary business makes sneaks out of men. They won't let you drink the stuff there, so the stores and backyards and alleys are turned into tippling-places—especially on Saturdays—by both niggers and whites. The store-keepers complain, but are afraid to say anything for they might lose trade—dollar against principle again! But I made a discovery. Next door is what was once a saloon; now a tippling shop. Buy your bottle for fifty cents and take it in there, get a glass and pay two and a half cents for its use? How ridiculous! Your liquor will cost a dollar a pint at least. And there is the worst kind of treating, too—instead of doing away with treating.

"Let there be prohibition. Let the offense of selling the stuff be punished by fine so heavy that it will stop the sale or manufacture—for the dollars will rule then, as now. But before that comes let's finish the cider."

And the jug was emptied. The members dispersed; some tumbled down the ladder; others fell asleep on the way home; but we had all listened to a splendid temperance lecture that no doubt will benefit everyone.

Uncle Josh will come again, soon.
I. HOE, Secretary.