

THE NEWS

Published every Thursday by the WESTERN CAROLINA PRINTING COMPANY, (Incorporated)

J. H. White, President; N. H. Rice, Vice-President; W. E. Finley, Editor

One Year \$1.00; Six Months .50; Three Months .25

Entered as second-class matter June 18, 1907, at the Postoffice at Marshall, N. C., under the Act of Congress, March 3, 1879.

THURSDAY, DEC. 23rd, 1909.

The First Christmas Tree

The meadows glistened white along the banks of the river Moselle; steep hillsides blooming with fragrant forget-me-nots where the glow of the setting sun cast long shadows down their eastern slope...

If the cloister, too, there was silence at the sunset hour. All day there had been a joyful stir amongst the nuns. A breeze of curiosity and excitement had swept along the corridors and through every quiet cell.

He had left his estate in Westsex, he would not stay in the rich monastery; he had refused a bishopric. Nothing would content him but to go out into the wild woods and preach to the heathen.

What a man was he! Fair and slight but straight as a spear and strong as an oak staff. What tales he told that day! Not of miracles wrought by sacred relics; not of courts and councils and splendid cathedrals, but of the things that men know of these things.

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The little novices gathered around him with fear in their faces. The older nuns had turned from their tasks and paused, in passing by, to hear the pilgrim's story.

But the wonderful day was over and all gathered around for the scripture of the night. It is my grandson's turn today, said the stately Abbess; we shall see how much he has learned.

Understandest thou what thou readest, my son, said Winfried. Surely, father, said the boy, it was taught me by the masters at Traves and we have read the epistle from beginning to end.

Not so, my lad, when we pray we speak to God. When we read God speaks to us and the boy blushed and said, take the book, father, and read it to me. I cannot see the meaning plain, though I love the sound of the words.

So Winfried took the book and closed it, clasping the boy's hand in his. Let us dismiss the others to their vespers, lest they become weary, said he.

Then Winfried began to translate the parable of the soldiers into the realities of life. At every turn he knew how to flash a new light into the picture out of his own experience.

Look you, my friends, said he, how this convent this night is so peaceful and quiet. It is a garden of flowers in the heart of winter. And this is what religion is to those who are chosen and called to quietude and prayer and meditation.

Come, Gregor, wear the forest's boots with me. This is a life to be called by.

The boy's eyes sparkled. He turned to his grandmother. She should be his.

My mother, she said, draw not the boy away. I need him. Draw him back to me.

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wild hills of central Germany. At the head marched Winfried clad in a tunic of fur. Close beside him, keeping step like a familiar comrade, was the Young Prince Gregor.

Behind the leaders came a pair of teamsters guiding a rough sledge, loaded with food. Last of all came the rear guard armed with bows and javalins.

The travellers were surrounded by an ocean of trees. Wouldst thou not camp here, said Gregor. Nay, said the father, we must go on.

And so hewink the trees that had fallen in the way, they pressed on until they came to a village of houses but also silent and still, though the silvery moon shed its weird light over all.

They passed it and on through the deep forest until they came to a huge oak tree that crowned a knoll. Here, cried Winfried, is the Thunder Oak and here the Cross of Christ shall break the hammer of the false God, Thor.

A great throng of people had gathered around a great fire whose smoke obscured the moon. The travellers paused for a while at the edge of the thicket and took counsel together.

It is an assembly of the tribe of which I had news three days ago said one of the foresters. They will sacrifice a horse, drink the blood and eat its flesh to make them strong. It is at the peril of our lives if we go near. Nay, said Winfried. Hide me no cross, for I have come to show it and to make these blind people see its power.

Then Winfried's voice rang out, "Hail, ye sons of the forest! A stranger claims the warmth of your fire in the winter night." "Who are you?" said the old priest. "Your kinsman from the brotherhood from far off England and a message I have from the all Father whose messenger I am."

What miracles do you work? None save what he has done by his Son. Stand aside, thou common man. This night is the death night of the sun God, Baldur, the beautiful, beloved of Gods and men.

This night the great Thor, the God of thunder and war, to whom this great oak is dedicated is grieved and demands a sacrifice.

Here, said the old man, is the sacrifice; here is the chosen one, the eldest son of the Chief, the darling of the people, and the priest brought forth a comely lad, beautiful of form and face.

Yes, Priest, I will go if my father bids me. Is it far away? Shall I run quickly? The boy's father, Chiefton Gundbar, leaned upon his spear until it cracked.

His wife, Irma, bending forward from the ranks of the women pushed back the golden hair with one hand from her forehead.

Yes, my Prince, both bow and spear shall thou have, for the way is dark and for a time it must be made blindfolded.

Naught fear I, said the boy, for I am Gundbar's son and defender of my folks. The old man led the child in his raiment of lamb's wool to a broad stone in front of the fire. He bound his eyes; all drew near. Winfried moved noiselessly until he stood close behind the priest.

The old man stooped to lift a black hammer of stone from the ground—the sacred hammer of Thor. Summoning his strength he whirled it through the air. It paused for an instant above the child's fair head—then turned to fall.

One keen cry shrilled out where the women stood: "Me, take me, not Bernhard." The flight of the mother toward her child was swift as falcon's swoop. But swifter still was the hand of the deliverer.

Winfried's heavy staff thrust mightily against the hammer's handle as it fell on the corner of the altar. The old priest crouched down awestricken. Then the chiefton struck the ground with his spear and gave his decision.

All have spoken but none are agreed. There is no voice in the council. Keep silence now and let the stranger speak. His words shall give us judgment whether he is to live or to die.

Winfried lifted himself high above the altar and drew a roll of parchment from his bosom. A letter from the great Bishop of Rome.

A murmur of awe swept through the Assembly. It was a splendid message, proud, strong, peaceful, loving. Tell us your message, said the chief.

My message, said Winfried, is that not a drop of blood shall fall from the heart of which shall has drawn from the heart of your princess in love for her child.

Not a life shall be snuffed out in the darkness tonight, but in the great shadow of the tree which hides you from the light of heaven shall be swept away. Two men took their places, one

on each side of the oak. Firmly they grasped the axe helms and swung the shining blades. Tree god, cried Winfried, art thou angry? Thus we smite thee! A mighty rumbling noise came overhead and seized the mighty oak and laid it low. And here his eye fell on a young fir tree straight and green. Here is the living tree, said he. No more shall ye go into the forest to keep your festival time but in your homes.

The thunder oak has fallen and I think the day is coming when there shall not be a home in all Germany where the children are not gathered around the green fir tree to rejoice in the birth night of Christ.

So they took the little fir tree and joyfully bore it to the glade and village and when they came to the house of Gundbar he bade them throw open the doors of the hall and place the tree in the midst. The children encircled it, wondering, and the odor of the balsam filled the house.

Then Winfried stood beside the chair of Gundbar and told the story of Bethlehem; of the babe in the manger, of the shepherds on the hills, of the host of angels and their midnight song. All the people listened, charmed into silence.

But the boy, Bernhard, on Irma's knee, folded in her soft arms, grew restless as the story lengthened and began to prattle sootily at his mother's knee.

Mother, whispered the child, why did you cry out so loud, when the priest was going to send me to Valhalla? Oh hush, my child, answered the mother and pressed him closer to her side.

Mother, whispered the child, again laying his finger on the stain upon her breast, see, your dress is red! What are those stains? Did some one hurt you? The mother closed his mouth with a kiss. Dear, be still, listen! The boy obeyed. His eyes were heavy with sleep. But he heard the last words of Winfried as he spoke of the angelic messengers flying over the hills of Judea and singing as they flew.

The child wondered and dreamed and listened. Suddenly his face grew bright. He put his lips close to Irma's cheek again. Oh, mother, he whispered very low, do not speak! Do you hear them? These angels have come back again. They are singing now behind the tree! And some say that it was only Gregor and his companions at the lower Christmas Eve.

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Annual Report of the Board of County Commissioners.

Annual Report of the receipts and disbursements of the County of Madison for the year beginning December 1st, 1908, and ending November 30th, 1909, made pursuant to Section 1388, Revisal of 1905.

General County Fund.

DECEMBER, 1908.

Table with 2 columns: Description and Amount. Includes items like 'To balance from last report', 'By amount overdrawn from last report', 'P'd W. C. Ammons and W. H. Henderson, expense attending court at Charlotte, J. E. Reilly warrant of attachment', etc.

JANUARY, 1909

Table with 2 columns: Description and Amount. Includes items like 'To cash from G. W. Cole', 'By amount brought forward from last report', 'P'd W. J. Weaver, county physician', etc.

FEBRUARY, 1909

Table with 2 columns: Description and Amount. Includes items like 'To balance from last report', 'Am't from J. C. Chandley, coal sold', 'Am't from J. C. Chandley, for pump', etc.

MARCH, 1909

Table with 2 columns: Description and Amount. Includes items like 'By amount overdrawn', 'P'd R. S. Tarrance, registrar of election', 'C. W. Lutz, carrying the election', etc.

Reasons for Safety.

The Bank of French Broad,

MARSHALL, N. C.

Has Capital of \$25,000; Stockholders' Liabilities \$25,000; Accumulated Profits \$12,000; Making a Total of \$62,000

which stands, not as the total security, but as the margin of security protecting our depositors.

Every dollar of this must be lost before any depositor can lose a penny.

This is a STATE Bank, operated under the strict banking laws of North Carolina.

At least four sworn reports are made each year and this Bank is examined each year by the State Bank Examiner.

Its funds are protected by a modern Burglar Proof steel safe and vault, and are insured against burglary and sneak thieves.

All of these things, coupled with careful, conservative management, assure the patrons of that supreme safety which is the prime essential of a good Bank.

NOTICE

North Carolina, Madison County.

In Superior Court.

C. J. Ebbs, administrator of I. N. Ebbs, deceased, vs. Mildred E. Ebbs, W. S. Ebbs, Hattie Brown and husband, Arthur Brown, Lillie Hill and husband D. B. Hill, E. B. Ebbs, Horace Ebbs, Laura Martin and husband McBe Martin, Dora Ebbs and Mary Ebbs.

Mildred E. Ebbs, W. S. Ebbs, Lillie Hill and husband, D. B. Hill, E. B. Ebbs and Horace Ebbs, defendants above named, will take notice that an action entitled as above has been commenced in the Superior Court of Madison County to set aside and cancel a certain deed executed by the said I. N. Ebbs to Mildred E. Ebbs on the 15th day of January, 1900, which said deed is duly registered in the office of the Register of Deeds for said county in Deed Book No. 14, page 381, and to sell the land described in said deed for the purpose of paying the debts of the said I. N. Ebbs, and the said defendants will further take notice that they are required to appear at the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Madison County on the 2nd day of January 1910 at 1 o'clock p. m. at the Court House in said County and show why said judgment should be reversed.

This the 1st day of December 1909.

J. H. WHITE, Clerk Superior Court.

NOTICE

North Carolina, Madison County.

J. H. Reece vs. J. W. Potter and J. T. Hubbard.

The defendants above named will take notice that a motion has been made by G. W. Hensley, assignee of Plaintiff in above entitled action in the Superior Court of Madison County before the Clerk for the purpose of receiving a dormant judgment for \$75.00 in favor of the plaintiff and against the defendants. Said judgment having been duly assigned to G. W. Hensley on the 7th day of November, 1906, which judgment was docketed in the Superior Court of Madison County on the 20th day of January, 1907, page 199 and the said defendants will further take notice that they are required to appear at the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Madison County on the 2nd day of January 1910 at 1 o'clock p. m. at the Court House in said County and show why said judgment should be reversed.

This the 1st day of December 1909.

J. H. WHITE, Clerk Superior Court.

NOTICE

Having qualified as administrator of Sidney Lunford, deceased, late of Madison County, N. C., this is to notify all persons having claims against the estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 15th day of November 1910 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment.

This the 17th day of Nov. 1909.

J. H. MASSEY, Administrator.

Hexamethylenetetramine

The above is the name of a German chemical, which is one of the many valuable ingredients of Foley's Kidney Remedy. Hexamethylenetetramine is recognized by medical text-books and authorities as a uric acid solvent and antiseptic for the urine. Take Foley's Kidney Remedy as soon as you notice any irregularities and avoid a serious malady. I. E. Burnett.

FOLEY'S URINO-LAXATIVE

The Superior Urinary and Urinary Remedy

NOTICE OF SALE UNDER EXECUTION

North Carolina, Madison County.

In the Superior Court—Before the Clerk.

J. H. Guthrie vs. George Gahagan, Jr.

By virtue of an Execution directed to the undersigned from the Superior Court of Madison County in the above entitled action, I will, on Monday the 3rd day of Jan. 1910, at 12 o'clock M. at the court house door in said county sell to the highest bidder for cash to satisfy said execution, all the right, title and interest which the said Geo. Gahagan, Jr., the defendant, has in the following described real estate, to-wit:

A one-fifth undivided interest, he being the defendant's one fifth undivided interest in all the real estate of which G. W. Gahagan, died seized and possessed of, situated in Madison County, N. C., and more fully described as follows: Tract No. consisting of all the lands belonging to the said G. W. Gahagan, deceased, lying between the William King branch and Jewell Hill and being designated and set apart to G. W. Gahagan who was the father of the defendant in a division of the lands of G. W. Gahagan, Sr., grand father of the defendant, among the heirs of the said G. W. Gahagan, Sr., and deceased in said deed executed on the 17th day of Aug. 1880, and recorded

This the 1st day of Dec. 1909.

G. W. COLE, Sheriff.

Here, Reader, Read

Joseph Schell, 422 South St., Danville, Ill., writes: "For over eighteen months I was a sufferer from kidney and bladder trouble. During the whole time was treated by several doctors and tried several different kidney pills. Seven weeks ago I commenced taking Foley's Kidney Pills and am feeling better every day and will be glad to tell any one interested just what Foley's Kidney Pills did for me." I. E. Burnett.

Notice of Sale Under Execution

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This the 1st day of Dec. 1909.

G. W. COLE, Sheriff.

Rich Men's Gifts are Poor

beside this: "I want to go on record as saying that I regard the Rev. Dr. Hensley as one of the greatest men that God has made to man." writes Mrs. D. Rhinevald, of Vastal Center, N. Y. "I can never forget what it has done for me." This glorious medicine gives a woman beauty, youth, vigor of body and brilliant health. A quickly cured Nervousness, Rheumatism, Melancholy, Headache, Backache, Painful and Daily Spasms, soon builds up the weak, ailing and ailing. Try them. Dr. Hensley's Pills.