The Messenger.

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1897.

DESULTORIA.

We publish a neat little poem today from Mr.. Theo. H. Hill, of Raleigh, that shows that our oldest living ..orth Carolina minstrel has not ceased to think poetically, or to express himself in melodious numbers. To us there is a true poetic touch in the graceful poem on "A Wayside Blossom."

In The Methodist Review for January-February there is an elaborate paper on "Poetry and the Spiritual Life" by Edwin Mims, M. A., late professor of English literature in Trinity college, N. C., and now at Cornell university at Ithaca, N. Y. We enjoyed the reading of this essay very much. It is rich in citation, striking in its thought, elevated in conception, uplifting in purpose, and permeated from first to last with the true spirit of letters. It is a stimulating discussion, with no little of beauty and felicity of thought and language. There are some striking passages we would like to copy if we had the space. The theme is handled with fullness and is especially satisfactory and pleasant in his discussion of the poet—what are the qualities that exalt, inspire and clothe him with such supreme power. His entire essay reflects much familiarity with the best literature, has a strong strain of thought permeated with sympathy and love for the great creative geniuses, is wrought out to its conclusion with fine rhetorical effects, and exemplifies in a striking manner that noble poetry is ever wedded to spiritual life.

In our first notice months ago of Professor Sloane's very able work on "Napoleon Bonaparte" we pointed out a deficiency- hat it was very defective in its account of events immediately preceding battles, and lacking in coherency at times in tracing the progress of a battle and results. In other words, unless something familiar with the life of Napoleon, and particularly his many marvellous campaigns, you will be often puzzled to grasp the full significance of a battle. It is a very striking book in many particulars, but in reading it we felt the need of more elaboration and continuity of statement at particular stages in the life of the most extraordinay man he was writing. Its fairness, its fullness in the early life of Napoleon, its candor, its strong grouping of events in places, its very clear analysis of the principles, motives and plans of the great captain are all cleverly done and most commendable. In looking from time to time at notices of the work we failed to see the defects we thought we saw pointed out. But in The Bookman for February there is a paper on the work that sees the work very much as it impressed us. The writer says:

"So far as historical accuracy is concerned, it is not believed that criticism will disclose any very serious lapses. Some objections have been made to the military side of his narrative, and his account of Napoleon's campaigns is not likely to satisfy the specialists. It is meagre and has a perfunctory tone, as if the author found the task somewhat irksome. In some instances, as in the description of the campaign and battle of Marengo, the account is too elliptical to be intelligible."

Again it is said that "as a military historian Professor Sloane is not particularly luminous." That it is impartial beyond most writers who have written of Napoleon there is no doubt. In France there are two schools; one who eulogizes the great Italian and makes him super-human, and the other class that detracts, exaggerates and damns beyond recovery. The middle way is hardly known in France. In England it is all denunciation from Scott to Prof. Seeley. The only English work we have read that leans favorably to Napoleon is Morris' life issued a few years ago. In this country laudation has been some times extreme. Abbott, Headley and others have written without discrimination. Professor Sloane is, we think, disposed to be calm, just, impartial. He certainly does not favor too much the mighty leader. He holds the scales with judicial fairness, with possible a little inclination against Napoleon. We like his spirit, and he reminds us of Hallam and Lecky in refusing to be a partisan and a hero-worshipper. The critic in The Bookman says:

"The author's tone is judicial, and if he has not achieved perfect impartiality it is due to the character of the subject and not to the spirit in which he treats it. He refuses to be dazzled by the great man's deeds. He analyses his motives and never extenuates. The evolution of Napoleon's character is traced in the style of a psychological novelist, exposing the meanness and self-seeking of the long-headed young hero, and wretched shifts of his early days of struggle, and the sublime selfishness of his successful manhood. In this study of Napoleon's character Professor Sloane is at his best. The picture he draws is very impressive. We feel the sense of something superhuman, something 'daemonic,' as the author calls it, in the character of this marvellous man."

Of the value of his work there can be no doubt. It is take it all in all the safest and truest guide in understanding the complex character of the greatest man in modern times. It deserves to be carefully studied. Other books are essential to a thorough comprehension of this sphinx-like man of the ages. Some of the works of the last fifty years by those who stood very near Napoleon might be read with interest, and will be found as efficient aids in grasping the wondrous man. Merimee, Canstant and some others may not be overlooked in a careful study of Napoleon. The critic quoted from is not much taken with Sloane's style. It is not surely a great style—not comparable to the great historians. It is something dry, something cumbrous, lacking in imaginative illumination, but it is generally clever, and at times rises into a higher plane of vigor and intensity. The critic says it suggests the well known "crabbed and ultra German style." That is the trouble with nine-tenths of the latter day writers of history. They gather facts freely and carefully, but the presentation is bald and cold and dull, with no glow of passion, no vivid power, no imaginative inspiration. Read Gibbon, Macaulay, Green and other historic masters, and then try latter-day historians and you will see the declension in historic grouping, in pictorial effects, in a mastery of details, in a splendor and eloquence of discussion. The critic notes the dryness and says that it is not "likely to hold one's attention continuously without an effort of will," but he appreciates the real merits, so considerable, of the work. He says with due insight:

"He does not go far enough into these to satisfy the historical student, and at the same time he goes too far to retain the interest of the general reader. In these parts of his work his treatment of results in neither a biography nor a history. Worse than this, these passages are not clear. He lacks the faculty of portraying vividly the character of a period by a few brief touches. These are the main defects of the book. In spite of them it must be admitted by all that it is the best work on Napoleon that has yet appeared in English. That it will be permanently popular is very doubtful, but passages in it will always be read with interest, and it is safe to say that it is the most valuable contribution to Napoleonic literature of recent years."

We have referred to it again because it is the most important historic composition of our country that has come under our eye in years. While not of the highest rank it is a genuine contribution to the best American historic and biographical literature.

We are really gratified to see that Mr. Joel Chandler Harris' "Uncle Remus," and his other eight or more books are so well thought of in the north. The northern publishers and critics have dealt kindly with many southern writers—better than our own people have dealt. They have read the productions, while in the south they have been much neglected. "Sister Jane" has been rather damned with faint praise by some two or three northern critics, but others have said pleasant things of it. It is thought to be a good literary companion for "Uncle Remus." It is even said that it will increase his literary reputation. The Outlook says of it that it is "one of the notable books of the season, with the likelihood of being a notable book for many seasons to come." His "The Story of Aaron" is also popular and has passed into several editions.

HOME FOLKS.

The senate refused to pass the bill repealing the lease, but passed a substitute—a decided knock-out of Governor Russell.

Does the state need the office of public printer? Why? If the printing is put out at the lowest bidder can it not be more cheaply done than by any other plan?

It will probably be a good thing done to create a state board to equalize the public taxes. Such a thing has been long needed, and it can be best done probably by having a competent board to do it. We say competent—not ignorant fellows, but men of practical sense who mean to do right.

It was not true that the president would not appoint a successor to Judge Seymour, deceased. He nominated Mr. William W. Clark, and Senator Hill tried to get the senate to confirm, but did not succeed. It may come later on.

The Raleigh News and Observer says he is of New Bern, "is an able lawyer and would make a learned judge." He is a boltocrat and was an elector on the ghost ticket. That accounts for Cleveland's readiness to appoint and overlooking some worthy applicants—Woodard, Aycock, Bryan and perhaps others. The selection of Mr. Clark in preference to Senator Ransom, who it was understood sought the place, is hard to understand. The distinguished minister to Mexico has been a great favorite with Cleveland ever since 1893, when he made his peace and election sure with the burly president. Why he is now turned down needs explanation. Perhaps the Fayetteville Observer has given it in the following:

"The president's choice of Clark, the Palmer and Buckner elector, would indicate that he still regards General Ransom as a democrat, or, if not, that at least he desires to punish him for not taking a hand in the late election in North Carolina, as an advocate of Palmer and Buckner. The big boss is very exacting of those who follow his chariot wheels."

Nashville Optic: While cutting wood a few days ago Mr. J. H. Landen, living about three miles from this place, came near cutting his foot off by the axe glancing The wound is a severe one.

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LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

The defeat of the bill giving Governor Russell the appointing of one alderman for each ward in Wilmington was a triumph for local self-government over imperial power. It was a victory for the people against absolutism. While the governor would have selected his henchmen he would probably have looked to the interest of the people who own the property and pay the taxes. When that negro firebrand, Jim Young, said that people (meaning the whites) were no longer scared by the cry of negro rule, he showed just how little sense he has. If he thinks the Anglo-Saxons will quietly sit down to be robbed and cursed by the rule of his incapable race he shows he is incapable of understanding the situation. In no land in no age have the Aryan race ever failed to be dominant. It will be so in North Carolina. Anglo-Saxon liberty and supremacy will be maintained if to achieve it the Young crowd have to be disfranchised. A writer in the goldbug North American Review, of New York, evidently in sympathy with the negroes, recently gives warning after this way:

"The world should have been given clearly to understand that the white people of the south, as well as their brothers of the north or the east or west, always intended to rule, and if there were just cause now to believe that the negro would still vote unitedly, and thus menace the south with negro domination, it is safe to assert that these states would remain a "Solid South" to the end of time. History clearly demonstrates this truth, that so long as Anglo-Saxon blood feeds Anglo-Saxton hearts, so long will Anglo-Saxon intellect and Anglo-Saxon will dominate inferior races."

So insolent and overbearing Sambos may as well make up their minds that Africa will not rule any state of Anglo-Saxon civilization. By combining for a time with depraved and corrupt whites they may achieve a temporary power, but as sure as the tides run it will be of short duration. If the white men of any state shall find that to maintain liberty and independence no negroes shall be employed in any service it will be done. If the temper as expressed by that fellow Young is the temper of his race the whites will not be long found without a solid combination. The determination of every man with a white face who has not a black heart is that North Carolina must and shall be controlled by men of the white race. No negro rule can long survive the will of the men of the Anglo-Saxon race. Misrule and abuses are sure to invite a powerful and sweeping reaction.

The fight over Newbern was more disgraceful than that as to Wilmington. The attempt to deprive the people of the right of election and to strip electors of local self-government is positively revolutionary and strikes at the very roots of liberty. Wilmington two years ago was put under a system that denied the people the right to choose their own public servants. It was a great outrage and was enough to have provoked resistance. An hundred years ago it would have precipitated a conflict. It was sought to put Newbern under the control of the negroes who pay $1 of tax to the $99 paid by the whites. Hancock, who was coaching the infamous measure, seeing its defeat ahead, suddenly tried to save himself and the bill by giving the election of mayor and six aldermen to the people, not giving any autocratic power whatever of appointment to the willing governor. If depriving the people of their rights as electors in municipal affairs is one of the evidences of Governor Russell's purpose to govern in wisdom and righteousness, what will be the condition and the extent of the evil when he takes the bit and resolves to give the democrats a taste of his "scorpion lash?"

The present legislature has no doubt many republicans who are unwilling to enter upon a general career of extremes and mischeivous measures. There are men in the combination who are utterly incapable, reckless, vengeful, ready for any measure that will increase their power temporarily and open up new ways to the pie-counter.

Young Sutton blabbed it out that the high handed plan of giving supreme power to the governor to choose for the people the public servants instead of allowing them to vote according to the practice of all free people and the principles of our government, was conceived and adopted as the only plan that could prevent—what? ruin to the city? —nay, that could prevent the white tax-payers—the education, intelligence and property of the city from controlling and managing the municipal affairs. To turn down the white people the governor and his set were willing to disfranchise the white property owners and tax-payers and hand over a city of 23,000 people to be dominated, bossed, taxed and plucked by ignorance and vice. There was never anything more positively undemocratic, unrepublican, antagonistic to the fundamental principles of a free government. Home rule, local self-government is fundamental and is the basis of every structure of liberty ever reared by a free and enlightened people. The idea of any man, republican or populist, democrat or independent, daring to subvert government by clothing a governor with supreme power—like that of the Tsar, with personal government power —is a wicked and despicable political monstrosity and should never be allowed to enter the assembly of any but slaves and political prostitutes.

ATTEMPTED BRIBERY.

Senator Hyatt Charges the Governor's Private Secretary With the Crime—A Fight in the Senate Lobby Ensues—Parties Playing Each Other for Positions at the Pie Counter.

(Special to The Messenger.)

Raleigh, N. C., February 26.—The sensation of the day here occurred at noon and was a fight in the lobby of the senate between Governor Russell's private secretary, Alexander, and Senator Hyatt. Republican Assistant Doorkeeper McArth was interviewed and says: "I was standing in the room opening on the lobby when I heard a noise of persons striking blows. I rushed in the corner where Hyatt and Alexander were and said: 'You must not fight in the senate chamber while the senate is in session.' Hyatt said: 'I will not take this.' John D. Kerr and R. B. Lacy were present. Hyatt struck Alexander twice in the chest. He had hold of Alexander. The latter was not then saying anything. After they were parted Hyatt stepped off and Alexander said: 'It was all a misunderstanding.' Hyatt at this moment returned and said 'Rascal.' I interrupted saying: 'What is the matter.' Hyatt said: 'D—— him, he offered me the secretaryship of the agricultural department to vote.' Alexander said: 'I did not do it.' Hyatt said: 'You are an infamous liar.' At this instnat I seized Hyatt and carried him to the door, telling him to go to the portico and cool off."

Alexander gives the following statement of the affair: "I was speaking to Hyatt about the lease bill and urging him to vote for the original bill. I said: 'It is claimed that federal patronage is being used to defeat the bill annulling the North Carolina railroad lease. It is claimed that no man who votes for the bill will be recognized in the distribution of federal patronage.' This was the statement I intended to refute when I spoke to Hyatt, and said: 'The governor was as able to take care of his friends as the Southern railroad was to take care of theirs.' Whereupon Hyatt said in a loud tone of voice and seemingly to attract attention, that I was trying to bribe him. I said it was a lie, that he did not understand or want to understand what I said. He attempted to strike me, but jumped out in the crowd and said I wanted to bribe him, to which I reiterated "Lie." His friends took him away and there was no further colloquy or controversy. I neither offered him a position nor promised to use my influence for him in any manner, shape or form."

Senator Hyatt, of Mitchell, was specially interviewed tonight and gave out the following statement about his fight with Private Secretary Alexander:

"Alexander came to me this morning and began talking to me about the lease question. We had quite a little friendly talk, lasting about a quarter of an hour. Alexander attempted to persuade me to vote to annull the lease. I explained to him my position, stating I was sent to the senate by the people of my district and that I had received several petitions from them asking that I use my influence in favor of the lease and that as their representative, I would do as they desired. Alexander then said the governor was going to take care of his friends and asked me if I would accept a position if it was offered me. I told him that, all things considered, I would do so with pleasure, if it was offered in a proper manner. Alexander then left me and appeared in very good humor. In about half an hour he returned to the senate chamber and beckoned to me. I left my seat and went to him and we walked into one of the library rooms in the senate chamber. On arriving there, Alexander turned to me and said that if I would stand by the governor in this North Carolina railroad lease question Governor Russell would appoint me secretary to the board of agriculture at a salary of $1,500. As he said this, I grabbed him by the lapel of his coat with my left hand and struck him on the neck with my right hand and followed up the blow with several on the chest and shoulders and told him he war a dirty, contemptible coward to make me such a proposition, and I looked upon it as an infamous insult. I was so mad that I would have hurt him badly but for the fact that the assistant sergeant-at-arms and Representative Aiken grabbed me and came between us. They asked me what was the matter and I told them the damned coward had tried to bribe me by offering me a position in the agricultural department for my vote on the railroad lease question. I consider this offer as a bribe of the lowest order, and I resented the insult by striking the cur who made it. I consider my honor as a man dearer to me than any position Governor Russell or his allies can offer me. I denounce the act as a piece of cowardly business, and in resenting the insult I have done what any true North Carolina citizen should have done. I will rise before the senate and refer to the matter as a personal privilege, and will see if the governor can offer bribes to members of the assembly with impunity. I do not come from a district where such act would be tolerated."

At the republican caucus tonight D. H. Abbott was chosen for railway commissioner, receiving thirty-seven votes, White getting twenty-eight. Quite a row was kicked up and seventy votes were cast while only sixty-nine were present and some negro members threatened to bolt the caucus. Negro members say Governor Russell is trying to induce them to attack the bill which gives him power to appoint the judge of the Eastern criminal circuit by saying if they keep quiet they will get the eastern hospital. They think he has slated Dr. Alexander as head of the hospital.

Populist bolters caucused tonight and named their directors for the insane asylums, penitentiary and agricultural department. It seems that there was an effort to induce them not to name any of their own number for positions, but it failed though, Babbitt introduced resolutions to that effect, and several were named. It is ascertained that the bolters' committee asked the republican caucus last night what the latter proposed to do and whether it would stand by its agreement to divide the offices, as Governor Russell refused to answer the committee.

It is said that at the bolters' caucus tonight a resolution was adopted to stand by the Charlotte police commission bill which was favorably reported by the committee this afternoon. The caucus also decided to support The Code commission bill.

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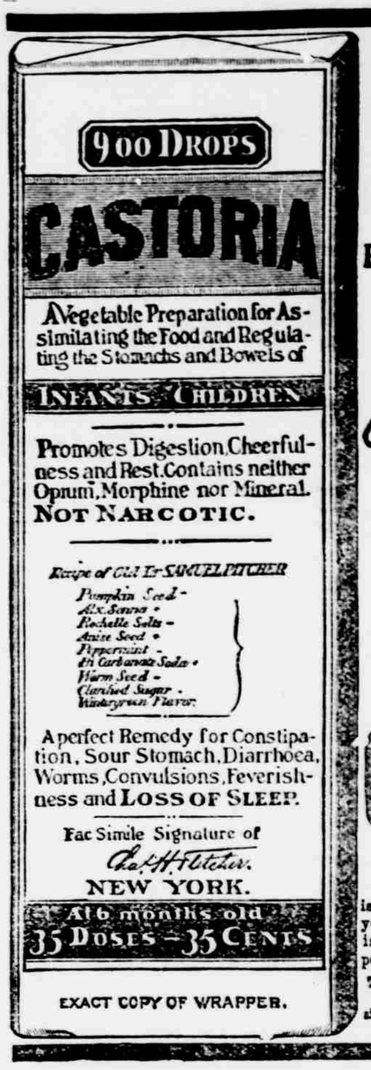

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