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# THE COMMONWEALTH.

E. E. HILLIARD, Editor and Proprietor.

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SCOTLAND NECK, N. C., THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1897.

NO. 47

**THE EDITOR'S LEISURE HOURS.**

**Points and Paragraphs of Things Present, Past and Future.**

The new congressional library is now open in Washington. It has been in construction six years. It is a mammoth affair. The shelves have perhaps 400,000 volumes.

Foot ball has recently proved disastrous in Georgia. A few days ago the teams from the University of Georgia and the University of Virginia played at Atlanta, and Von Gammon, a member of the Georgia team, received such injuries that he was rendered unconscious and died from the effect. The Georgia Legislature now in session has taken a position against any further game by the Georgia University team. The faculty of the University is with the Legislature in the matter.

A man who is almost entirely dependent on the price of cotton for all he gets, said in Scotland Neck Saturday that he believes there are nearly as many bugs in Halifax county now as there were in all of North Carolina forty or fifty years ago. After all, perhaps people are not as "bad off" as they think. Where they are short in a few dollars they may have more conveniences and comforts than they had long time ago. Our grand-fathers and grand-mothers would feel "mighty comfortable" in most of our places.

A gentleman of much observation and wide reading said to us a few days ago that the campaign in North Carolina last year was as bitter as it was in 1860 and 1861. He said that feelings were not more intense in the days of secession than they were a year ago.

All these things cripple and stifle the happiness and development of any people. Every possible effort should be used to keep down bitterness of feelings amongst citizens of the same commonwealth; and when feelings run high co-operation ceases, and when co-operation ceases progress stops.

Many things that go into print may be taken "with a grain of salt," but the following item from Richmond to the New York Sun, concerning a North Carolina preacher, will doubtless shock many who believe in trying to save souls rather than damn them. The telegram read:

"The Rev. T. H. Leavitt, a North Carolina evangelist, who is conducting a revival in a church here, last night saw two young women smiling during service. Walking down the aisle to where they were he knelt and prayed that they would die immediately and go to hell. The Rev. S. C. Hatcher, who was present and who has attended the revivals, straightway left the church. He is said to have replied: 'I think it my duty to try and pray people out of hell, not to pray them in.'"

Foreign countries are watching with interest the passing events in the United States just now. A year ago the free voters of our country engaged in a great political battle. The victory was won by the Republican party, which promised a return of prosperity to the country under the administration that was to be run according to a platform of the gold standard and a high tariff. Recently that part of our country, the West, which is largely dependent on wheat as a money product of the farm, has been greatly improved by the advanced price of that product; while in the South, where cotton is largely the money product of the farm, the price has been so low, and is still so low, that there is great stagnation in business. And so the see-saw goes up and down; a sure and unmistakable evidence that the interests of the different sections of our country differ as widely as do the products of those sections. The western farmer is happy over dollar wheat and the southern farmer is depressed over low prices of cotton and the rise in flour.

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**A VISIT TO SAMOA.**

**NOTES ABOUT THE PEOPLE.**

**Queer Customs.**

Correspondence to THE COMMONWEALTH.

HONOLULU, Oct. 21, 1897.

On one occasion not long ago I had the chance to visit this island. I did not go officially. I simply went to see the country and by chance I had the pleasure of meeting the Chief and had an invitation to call on him when it was convenient. I thanked him and said I would call on him the next day at 3 p. m., if agreeable. So the next morning I arose early and ate my breakfast and fixed up myself to call on the Chief of the island. I felt as though I were going to visit the Governor of North Carolina or some great (?) man whom I had never seen before. At 3 p. m. I called at his residence and rang the gong and in a few minutes a woman met me and asked whom I wanted to see. I told her I wished to see the Chief. She asked me in and said that the Chief would be in soon.

She was a beautiful girl, but her skin was the color of an Indian woman. I went into the Chief's office and took a seat. In a few minutes the Chief came in and bade me good morning. He was a pleasant looking old gentleman and treated me very nicely. There was nothing too good for me while in the house. We had wine and cake, then after that, we had some of the best cigars I ever smoked. They were native made. When specially invited guests are entertained by a Samoan Chief, there is a great display of flowers, fruits, &c.

They remind me of the Siamese for there is no difference in their color, but there is a difference in their mode of living, and their habits are different. Some of them are very intelligent and can speak the English language very well. There is one strange custom they have, which no other nation has and that is the custom of what the natives term "to perform the sacred ceremony"—chewing the kava and offering the liquid to the guest of honor. When the party is seated in the Chief's abode, three or four of the prettiest girls in the village are called into the room and seated tailor-fashion in a half circle facing the one who is being entertained. All being ready, the Chief hands each one of the girls a quantity of the kava nuts—a product of the island, much resembling the betel nut. The girls then commence to chew them. This operation is repeated again and again until a sufficient quantity of the kava has been chewed. Then water is brought in and the juice diluted until it suits the fancy of the Chief.

Only unmarried women are permitted to chew the kava nut. The Samoan belief is, that unless masticated by virgins, the kava loses its best qualities. After the liquid is ready for use the Chief takes up a sufficient quantity in a coconut-shell cup and hands it to the guest. Woe, be to any one who refuses it; for this is the most serious breach of etiquette that can happen in a Samoan household, and should the cup not be drained to the last drop when you return it, they will not like you any longer.

They are a very gentle and pleasant looking people. The effects of the kava is as queer as the method of preparing it. The first drink produces no effect, but the second and third, puts quite a change on one. The liquid is drunk while sitting tailor-fashion, something like the Japanese sit on their little mats, and after you drink the third cup, if you haven't a very strong constitution, you will find it almost impossible to get upon your feet. The brain is as clear as though the liquid had been clear or pure water, but from the waist down, the body seems to be paralyzed and the guest must sit and wait for the effects to wear away unless helped into some other posture.

The girls who chew this kava are not in any way inconvenienced by it, because they do not swallow the juice and they often appear to enjoy the predicament of those who try vainly to get up on their feet. The liquid tastes and looks like nutmeg water, though the flavor of soap is often detected by those who partake of it for the first time. There are but few white people that live on this island. It is a great trading port and the chief product of the island is fruit.

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Written for THE COMMONWEALTH.

**Love.**

Love is the fulfilling of the Law.

When the Saviour was asked which was the greatest commandment he replied to love God with all the soul and mind. This embraced the whole law, necessarily, from the fact that no man could break the least of His commandments if love pervaded his being. Nor could he hate his neighbor; but would be ever working by the golden rule, "Do unto others as ye would have them do unto you." Religion with all its apparent complexity, is the simplest thing in the world. It is a living, active principle, all of which is covered by Love. If you love a man you will have no disposition to harm him, or his property; and if you love God as you should, you will have very little propensity to displease him. The devil may tempt you to do it, but you will repel him, by ordering him behind you. The cause of our national troubles emanate from want of this principle. Selfishness, ignoring God, and robbing our brothers are going to damn us as a people if not soon arrested and subverted.

In our individual life we should ever keep in view the fact that Hate is the chief characteristic of the devil, not that he hates us so much, but God, and his constant effort is to rob God of the love and adoration of His children. So, to be useful and happy, and to dispell the devil of his prey, each individual christian should not only try to advance the Redeemer's Kingdom in himself, but in every possible way aid others in this grand work.

To this end let us pray and work.

JNO. D. THORNE.

Panacea, N. C., Oct. 10, 1897.

**The Avoiding of Colds.**

Youths' Companion.

In a recent issue of the Companion a few words were said concerning the usual modes of catching cold, and mention was made of the various especially sensitive areas of the body, or "cold spots," but nothing was said as to the best means of protecting these spots and preserving the body in general from colds.

It is not always sufficient, however, to point out a danger; it is often of even greater importance to show how the danger may be averted. Most people properly recognize a cold as avoidable, and think they are greatly to be commended for the prudence they exercise in protecting themselves; but if they did not know it, they are really doing all they can to make themselves susceptible to colds by weakening their resisting powers.

A German professor once wrote a long treatise, with a learned title, on how to avoid catching cold. After tracing the history of colds from the earliest ages, studying their causes and symptoms, and cataloguing the remedies which have been used by the most eminent physicians of all times, he concluded with a short chapter on prevention.

His plan was to inure the back of the neck to drafts by having some one direct a current of air upon it from a bellows three times a day.

The writer had the correct idea, although its practical application was clumsy, and he was a long time in reaching it. The best and only way to escape colds is to meet the causes that produce them and not to run from them.

Let the body be hardened by a cold sponge bath or even a cold plunge, followed by brisk rubbing with a "scratchy" towel, every morning. Let the clothing be adapted to the season, though always as light as possible, but keep the neck uncovered—no turn up coat collar, no muffler, no boa. Never let the temperature in the house rise above seventy degrees in the winter. Air every room systematically every day, no matter what the outdoor temperature may be. Always have fresh air in the bedroom; there is nothing poisonous in "night air," popular belief to the contrary notwithstanding.

In a word, don't be always afraid of catching cold; don't coddle, but meet cold and wet and changes of temperature like a man—or rather, like a horse, and you will then run a better chance of being as strong as a horse. Of course you must strengthen your armor where it is weak, but if you recognize in yourself a weak place, a "cold spot," don't cover it up with more clothes, but toughen it, and toughen your entire body until it is one homogeneous resistant whole.

**THE BILTMORE FOREST.**

**THE FIRST ATTEMPT AT SYSTEMATIC FOREST MANAGEMENT MADE AT BILTMORE.**

W. W. Ashe in News & Observer.

It is an interesting fact that the first attempt at systematic forest management in America was made at Biltmore in North Carolina. It is less gratifying, perhaps, to North Carolinians to know that it was the conception of an alien and materialized under the working-plans of an alien. Unlike other ideas first advanced in this State, or plans here first proposed, but which were elsewhere matured, and now here are scarce more than memories, or struggle for existence, while flourishing elsewhere, forest management has secured a hold which bids fair to be permanent. Like the good roads, its increased benefits, when once appreciated, will permit no return to former methods.

Mr. G. W. Vanderbilt owns two forests in the mountains of this State which are under the same management: One the Biltmore forest, lying a few miles to the southeast of Asheville and embracing about 8,000 acres; the other the Pisgah forest, of 95,000 acres, covering the eastern and southern slopes of the Pisgah ridge with its spurs, and the valleys of some of the western tributaries of the French Broad river.

The Biltmore forest is on the rounded river hills of the Asheville basin, the river dividing it. Its most distant portion is about ten miles from Asheville. Although it has been under forest management only about seven years the woodland shows great improvement over the surrounding forest which has none of the protection. Under the present management it shows what may be done with a piece of woodland, near some town or large factory, in the way of utilizing its wood production for fuel without lessening the yield capacity of the soil.

The timber on the river hills of the French Broad was never of the best quality; but at the time of its acquisition several decades of cutting for lumber and fuel with constant pasturage and frequent fires, had in many instances reduced the number of growing trees to only a small proportion of what the soil was able to produce. Young trees had no opportunity to develop, which meant that a portion of the farmers' capital, the soil, was not being utilized, but lying idle.

The first step after the adoption of a forest policy was to secure immunity from fires and the exclusion of cattle. The presence of cattle under certain conditions may be permissible, but every practical precaution is taken to guard against fires. Although there are only three men, who among other duties have to act as fire guards for the 8,000 acres, few fires of any extent have occurred. Fires are regarded as causing more damage to the woodland than any other thing and stopping them the first measure to be taken in any plan to better its condition.

The trees which were standing seven years ago were considered as worthless except for fuel, and much of the best fuel timber, the hickory and white oak, had been cut. The object of the present management has been to continue the removal of the old trees, where it could be done without loss, and at the same time to reproduce a crop of young trees in their place. In this new crop which is being started preference is given to the valuable trees: White oak, post oak, hickory and pine, trees which will eventually make building materials or railway ties. In many places a thick young growth has appeared beneath the few old trees remaining, which is regarded as a most promising sign.

Throughout this forest the landscape effect is paramount, as through it wind many miles of pleasure drives, and no cutting must be done which will in any way tend to mar the beauty of the scene. In fact, entire hillsides which were formerly under cultivation are being, or have been, planted in young trees. This is not done as an advisory forest measure, since the cost of planting is entirely too large in proportion to any hoped for returns, but merely as a soil covering, a garnish for barren hills, a veil to obscure ever-

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deepening gullies, to cover what are now blots on the landscape. Many of these pleasure drives are expected some day to form a part of an arboretum, or rather an arboretum is to be planted on either side of the drives. That is, all the trees which can be gotten to grow in the climate of Biltmore are to be planted along these roads. Trees from everywhere are to be tried, both native and foreign, from the southern hemisphere as well as the northern. The nursery is already stocked with thousands of specimens ready to be placed along the arboretum roads. It will afford the botanist an excellent opportunity of study; the lover of trees can here compare the beauty of rival species, and their adaptability to these soils and conditions; and even the forester may be benefited, may secure some species suitable for introduction into the mountain forests which will be a valuable addition to the timber trees of the State. The arboretum, however, has nothing to do with the matter, as it is for beauty, or study, or a matter of experiment in the department of the various trees at Biltmore; while the forest and its entire management, so far as is compatible with its utilization as a portion of the landscape gardening, is to secure an income, a continuous income, from woodland.

For a great many years the products of the Biltmore forest must be of a low grade, fuel, and often fuel of a poor quality, the chief efforts of the management being directed toward starting a young wood of desirable kinds of trees, cord wood. At present the cutting amounts to only a few thousand cords a year. This is hauled to the river from the hills on either side, and from there is floated to Asheville, where it is caught in a boom, a dam of floating logs. This method of transportation is cheaper than hauling with wagons. The roads from the forest to the river are constructed so as to be down grade all the way. Though the roads are only of earth they are carefully graded and have no steep places. This permits very large loads of cord wood to be carried.

The cutting of the wood is to be so distributed that what is cut during a given period, say ten years, will not exceed what will have grown during that time. At present the annual cutting is less than what is being yearly added

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by growth, so as to permit the woods, which are too thin, to thicken up; and much of the cutting being done is with the object in view of removing old trees, or defective ones, which by their shade are interfering with the growth of young trees beneath them. It is like weeding in a cotton field to remove valueless plants which would soon choke or crowd out the cotton.

Does it pay? So far the Biltmore forest has been paying for the improvement cuttings which have been made, as well as for all operating expenses, and the possibility of increased returns is greater each year, as, while the operating expenses remain about the same, those for improvements become less and the products become of a higher grade and of greater value. That it is a financial success is assured; how great a success it will take years to tell—after the more worthless kinds of trees have been gotten rid of, and the valuable made to grow in their place.

The conditions surrounding the Pisgah forest are so different from those existing in the Biltmore forest, and it has been under forest management such a short time, that but few important results have as yet been obtained from it.

While there are features in the management of the Biltmore forest which could not be generally utilized, as using the river for transporting cord wood, there are other principles which sooner or later every owner of large amounts of woodland must adopt who wishes to place his investment on a sound producing basis. There are some things in which the State, as a measure to protect and increase the value of the property which it taxes, must take action, as preventing fires in sections in which the individual or local authorities are powerless to suppress them. Others, as methods of cutting to increase the value of the growing wood, or to start a young growth of yellow poplar, with oak, or other tree, and such matters of detail are entirely within the province of the individual.

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