

EDITORIAL

OF GOVERNMENT, at least in democratic states, it may be said briefly that it is an agency engaged wholesale, and as a matter of solemn duty, in the performance of acts which all self-respecting individuals refrain from as a matter of common decency. The American newspapers supply examples every day, chiefly issuing out of Federal tribunals, judicial and administrative. The whole process of the Federal law, indeed, becomes a process of oppression. Its catch-polls are not policemen, in any rational and ordinary sense, but simply sneaks and scoundrels with their eyes glued eternally to knot-holes. Imagine a man of ordinary decency discovering his son reading an account of the late proceedings against Lady Cathcart. Would his exposition of the case take the form of patriotic hallelujahs, or would he caution the boy that such things are not done by gentlemen? No wonder the teaching of patriotism is being handed over to virgin schoolma'ams, who know of honor only as an anatomical matter. The business becomes too difficult for men who must face their fellow-men daily, and therewith the ancient prejudices of the race. Those prejudices, for unnumbered centuries, have run against the man who mounds the frailties of a fair one in the market-place. But the commission of Uncle Sam, it appears, repeals that obligation of elemental honor. One sworn to uphold the Constitution becomes straightway a licentiate in swinishness, with a mandate to examine the female guests of the nation publicly, and to denounce all who are not *virgo intacta*. This mandate covers not only the lowly snoopers told off to guard the ports, but also magnificoes of ministerial rank. The Cabinet of a great Christian nation meets behind locked doors to perform

a business which, if done by an honest Elk, would bring his board of governors together to kick him out.

If such obscenities were rare one might set them down to moral profit and loss, and so try to forget them. But they happen every day. If a Karolyi case is not on the front pages, then a Whitney case is there. And day in and day out the newspapers are filled with the muckeries of Prohibition agents, and their attendant district attorneys and spies. The whole trend of legislation, and with it of jurisprudence, runs toward such ideas of dignity and decency as prevail in remote and forlorn country villages, among the human debris of Puritanism. A court of justice, once a place where the state intervened to curb the savagery of the strong, is now an arena of savagery both cruel and cynical. The notion seems to be that any device of deceit or brutality is fair, so long as it helps to fill the jails. The government, through its authorized agents, sets itself deliberately to lure men into so-called crime, and then punishes them mercilessly for succumbing. Is there such a thing as a *contrat social*? Then certainly it is getting heavy blows in this great Republic. For if it is not based upon the expectation that one citizen will treat another with common decency, it is based upon nothing more than a shadow—and that expectation is fast becoming vain among us. The natural confidence that every man should have in his fellows—that they will not hit below the belt, that they will not abuse his natural trust, that he may rely upon them, in a given situation, to act according to the principles of fair-play prevailing immemorially among civilized men—this confidence, when it touches American officialdom, has no longer any basis in fact. The government,

under the Volstead Act, is a spy and a snitcher, just as, under the Alien Property Act, it is a common thief, and under the Immigration Act a blackguard.

Obviously, such things cannot go on without having profound effects upon the general American character. A government, though it may be worse than the average man it governs, is still made up of just such average men. If, by some process of legal decay, it is set to revolting acts, then the consequence must be that, in the long run, they will become less revolting. How the business has worked in other lands has been displayed with much snuffling by specialists in Americanism; unfortunately, they seem to show no interest in the phenomena when it is repeated at home. I have spoken of the father with a son ripe for instruction in the traditional decencies. Unfecund myself, I can only imagine his difficulties, but it must be obvious that they are serious. How is he to interpret such an inescapable transaction as the Cathcart uproar? Is it his duty to tell his son that gentlemen set their dogs upon loose women? Or is it his duty to say that the United States is not a gentleman?

II

Such doings, it seems to me, flow quite naturally out of the democratic theory. It holds, *imprimis*, that cads make just as good governors as civilized and self-respecting men, and it holds, *secundo*, that the notions of propriety and decency held by the mob are good enough for the state, and ought, in fact, to have the force of law. Thus it becomes increasingly difficult to be a good American, as the thing is officially defined, and remain what all the other peoples of the world regard as a good citizen—that is, one who views the acts and ideas of his fellows with a tolerant and charitable eye, and wishes them to be free and happy. The whole tendency of American law, in this day, is to put down happiness wherever it is encountered, and

the *mores* of the land march with the law. The doctrine seems to be that it is the highest duty of the citizen to police his fellows. What they naturally want to do is precisely what they must be kept from doing. To this business a large and increasing class of professional snouters and smellers addresses itself. How many noses it can muster, God only knows, but the number must be immensely large. In the single State of Ohio, with the Anti-Saloon League in the saddle, there are certainly at least five thousand, and every prowling village deacon and petty urban blackmailer is free to join the force as a volunteer. And in more civilized regions, where public opinion, even in the mob, runs against such putridities, the Federal government supplies the scoundrels.

This antagonism between democratic Puritanism and common decency is inherent in the nature of the two things, and leads to conflicts in all so-called "free" countries, but it is only in the United States that it has reached the stage of open and continuous war, with Puritanism sweeping the field and common decency in flight. Thus life in the Republic grows increasingly uncomfortable to men of the more urbane and seemly sort, and, despite the great material prosperity of the country, the general stock of happiness probably diminishes. For the thing that makes us enjoy the society of our fellows is not admiration of their inner virtues but delight in their outward manners. It is not enough that they are headed for heaven, and will sit upon the right hand of God through all eternity; it is also necessary that they be polite, generous, and, above all, reliable. We must have confidence in them in order to get any pleasure out of associating with them. We must be sure that they will not do unto us as we should refuse, even for a celestial reward, to do unto them. It is the tragedy of the Puritan that he can never inspire this confidence in his fellow-men. He is by nature a pedant in ethics, and hence he is by nature a mucker. With the best of intentions he

cannot rid himself of the belief that it is his duty to save us from our follies—*i.e.*, from all the non-puritanical acts and whimsies that make life charming. His duty to let us be happy takes second, third or fourth place. A Puritan cannot be tolerant—and with tolerance goes magnanimity. The late Dr. Woodrow Wilson was a typical Puritan: of the better sort, perhaps, for he at least toyed with the ambition to appear as a gentleman, but nevertheless a true Puritan. Magnanimity was simply beyond him. Confronted, on his death-bed, with the case of poor old Debs, all his instincts compelled him to keep Debs in jail. I daresay that, as a purely logical matter, he saw clearly that the old fellow ought to be turned loose; certainly he must have known that Washington would not have hesitated, or Lincoln. But Calvinism triumphed as his intellectual faculties decayed. In the full bloom of health, with a plug hat on his head, he aped the gentry of his wistful adoration very cleverly, but lying in bed, stripped like Thackeray's Louis XIV, he reverted to his congenital Puritanism, which is to say, to bounderism.

III

It is shocking to reflect that Wilson, if he could be brought back from Paradise today and restored to the throne, would seem relatively urbane, and even a bit aristocratic. In such matters the tendency is obviously for the bad to grow worse. The limber jenkins, Lansing, now completely forgotten, at least had the manners of an educated man; his successor, Kellogg, as the Karolyi case reveals him, seems to be simply a boor out of the cow country. Of his colleagues it is unnecessary to speak in detail. One is a Bible class leader. Another is the hero of the Cathcart affair. A third is a retired distiller sworn to Law Enforcement. A late member of the college, retired by Dr. Coolidge only under tremendous pressure, is awaiting trial on a charge of felony. In the department assigned to yet another there has just come

to an end a scheme to punish a United States Senator, guilty of exposing corruption, by railroading him to prison—a scheme precisely on all fours with those carried on daily by the Anti-Saloon League and the Italian Black Hand. The head of this department is a village attorney, promoted at one stroke from the cross-roads grocery-store to the Cabinet.

Such are the grand seigneurs of the nation—the custodians of its dignity and honor. They speak for it to the world. They set the tone of the national life at home. Is there any widespread murmuring against them? I wish I could report that there was, but I see no sign of it. Instead, there seems to be only a resigned sort of feeling that nothing can be done about it—that the swinishness of government lies in the very nature of things, and so cannot be changed. Even the popular discontent with Prohibition is not a discontent with its sneaking and knavishness—its wholesale turning loose of licensed blacklegs and blackmailers, its degradation of the judiciary, its corruption of Congress, its disingenuous invasion of the Bill of Rights. What is complained of is simply the fact that Scotch is dubious and costs too much. As bootlegging grows more efficient, I suppose, even that complaint will sink to a whisper, perhaps in the form of a snigger. Of any forthright grappling with the underlying indecency there is little show. It would be difficult, in most American communities, to get signers for even the most academic protest against it. The American, played upon for years by a stream of jack-ass legislation, takes refuge in frank skulking. He first dodges the laws, and then he dodges the duty of protesting against them. His life becomes a process of sneaking through back-alleys, watching over one shoulder for the cop and over the other for his neighbor. Thus a-tremble (and with a weather eye open for Bolsheviks, atheists and loose women), he serves the high oath that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

H. L. M.

NORTH CAROLINA

BY NELL BATTLE LEWIS

Valley to Hillock

THE "valley of humiliation between two mountains of pride" is no more. The valley is now a sizable hillock and any suggestion of a plausible cause for humiliation is instantly and hotly resented. North Carolina's transformation from one of the poorest and most dejected States in the Union to a rich and lusty commonwealth has been brought about by an educational and industrial process which began about twenty-five years ago, and which, for the last ten years, has been rapid and striking. The North Carolinian, like the citizen of every other Southern State, is eager to tell you that his State is now the most up-and-coming in the South; the difference is that the North Carolinian will show you some impressive figures to support his claim. These figures relate to cotton and tobacco production, to manufactures, to good roads, to increasing land values, and to the State's expenditures for education. But the best part of its progress can be shown only indirectly on paper. After a long sleep North Carolina is awake at last.

The outcome of the Civil War developed there, as in the other States of the Confederacy, an intense hypersensitiveness, an unadmitted consciousness of inferiority, an attitude which expressed itself in scorn of the victors and blind defense of everything Southern and especially everything North Carolinian. Not until the end of the last century did a few North Carolinians come to the conclusion that the best defense against this uncomfortable feeling of inferiority was more action and less talk.

The most prominent of these were the educators, Aycock, McIver and Alderman. About the same time the State began to get on its feet industrially with the help of such men as the Dukes, the Reynoldses, the Cannons, the Carrs and the Holts.

The cause of the fact that, once it was started, it developed more rapidly than the other States of the Confederacy, is to be sought mainly in the character of its population. Whatever civilization the New South may now have is the civilization of its middle class. Appomattox meant a complete bouleversement of the Southern social order. Much more important in its development than the emancipation of the Negroes was the freedom that the demolition of the old régime brought to the bourgeoisie. Prior to the Civil War, that class had been in singularly poor shape, uneducated, poverty-stricken, insignificant, leaderless. But in North Carolina, by good luck, it had been relatively sturdier than elsewhere, for ante-bellum North Carolina had been largely a State of small farmers and merchants. Its aristocracy was less proud than that of either Virginia or South Carolina. Its class barriers were less rigid. There were few great estates, even in the aristocratic East. So, when the South degenerated into a democracy, North Carolina, to a large extent, was already degenerate, and its middle class rose faster than in the other parts of the South. In North Carolina, too, it was befriended by the rich natural resources of a State exuberantly described by its present Governor as "a land like that promised Israel." The conquest of this Canaan by the bourgeoisie is now practically complete.

II

A Divided Neighborhood

Whether because of this ancient weakness of class barriers, or because of the homogeneity of a population proudly proclaimed to be "the purest Anglo-Saxons in America," or because of an ingrowing social consciousness resulting from long, defensive isolation, or merely because of natural folksiness, I do not know, but for any or all of these reasons North Carolina is a neighborhood before it is a State. We North Carolinians all know personally a large number of our fellow-countrymen, from the mountains to the sea. Traveling from Currituck to Cherokee (the North Carolina equivalent of from Dan to Beer-sheba) one meets acquaintances and friends. This wide and neighborly acquaintance is not peculiar to a few people; it is characteristic of all North Carolinians. And it is not a cold, casual acquaintance we have with each other; it is a more or less intimate one. It includes knowledge of married ladies' maiden names and former suitors, and of family skeletons not too well hidden. It is pleasantly conducive to informality and gossip. Probably no equal area in the known world has produced so many autochthonous anecdotes of a humorous nature as North Carolina.

But this neighborhood which calls itself a State is divided into three sections, the respective populations of which regard the others with a certain coolness. If you come to North Carolina, do not make the mistake of praising the Piedmont region too enthusiastically to a dweller on the coastal plain, nor the mountains to a dweller in the Piedmont. Your praise will be accepted with moderate grace as reflecting credit upon the State as a whole, but you will be speedily set right as to the comparative merits of the sections. So strong is the feeling between the East and the West that it is an unwritten law that the two must alternate in furnishing the Democratic candidate for Governor, which, since the

black Republican régime in the '90's, has meant the next Governor of the State.

In the East are most of North Carolina's remnants of the old days. Here, before the Civil War, were the largest plantations, the majority of the slaves, the most cultured and leisurely life. Migration from Virginia helped to settle this section. Here are still a few old towns with the air of a gentler past and a mild scorn of progress, where, among brightly blossoming crêpe myrtles, one may find amenity and charm.

Industrial progress in North Carolina is primarily of the Piedmont. Cotton and tobacco factories dot this section, and from it comes most of the new noise. The Piedmont is the natural habitat of the North Carolina Babbitt. Over it the boosters swarm. But from the point of view of charm, the Piedmont is the State's most barren region. It is loud-mouthed and bustling, and only too much like a displaced section of the Middle West. Its aim is to become indistinguishable from Michigan. God willing, that high aspiration will probably be attained within the next ten years.

In the fastnesses of the mountains are the crude but stalwart Anglo-Saxons who supply Hatcher Hughes and Lula Vollmer with material for folk drama and who keep the Carolina Playmakers in existence. A horde of thriving hotel-keepers and realtors inhabit the more accessible hill country, profiting mightily from the Florida gold rush and whooping up a land boom all their own.

III

Sporting Event

Kentucky may have its Derby for the pleasure and profit of the bloods, but North Carolina has its Baptist State Convention. For years past this annual gathering of the faithful has been by far the liveliest sporting event in the commonwealth. The entry backed by the civilized

minority is Dr. William Louis Poteat, president of the Baptist denominational college at Wake Forest. For twenty-odd years Dr. Poteat has been professor of biology at this institution. A learned scientist, he has, of course, accepted and taught the theory of evolution, thus poisoning the minds of many Christian youths and branding himself as in league with Beelzebub. For years, to country boys fresh from the backwoods, he explained the record of the rocks without disturbing the foundations of his college or decreasing its income from the Baptist brethren. But since the late Mr. Bryan's crusade for Genesis, there has been considerable nosing around in his vicinity. The first discoveries were very alarming. To be sure, Dr. Poteat was an avowed Christian. To be sure, the graduates of the college were not in stampede from the Baptist corral. But Darwin's monkey books were read, and no one there had called down heaven's curse upon them. Something had to be done. So the Fundamentalists set out to get the Doctor's scalp.

With the approach of the first Baptist State Convention after the anti-Poteat faction was mobilized, the betting in the State grew spirited on the Doctor's chances of survival. Taking his opponents by surprise with characteristic adroitness, he made a speech to the convention in which all mention of evolution was carefully avoided, but in which a good deal was said about the high dignity and verity of the Christian religion. The out-manœuvred Fundamentalists lapsed into seething silence. For the time being Dr. Poteat had disarmed them with that one blow.

But by the time the 1925 convention met there had been a new anti-evolution agitation in the State. The Dayton farce had acquainted thousands of the bucolic in North Carolina, as elsewhere, with the fact that heresy was abroad in the land. Several county Baptist associations passed hot resolutions against the Wake Forest inferno, and subscriptions began to fall off. Unfortunately, when the convention came

Dr. Poteat left his defense in the hands of his friends, who turned out to be much less astute than he. They hesitated to carry the fight to the floor, and the anti-evolutionists seized the opportunity to effect a change in the method of appointing trustees of the college, which eventually will give them control. Meanwhile, Dr. Poteat will be retired automatically next year because of his age.

Nevertheless, at present, Wake Forest College, small, unsightly and otherwise undistinguished, remains as green an oasis of liberal thought as can be found in the Bible Belt. Eventually, of course, the armies of the Lord will fall upon it and reduce it to aridity. But for a time it flourishes because of the courage and intelligence of one man. He would be distinguished anywhere, but where he is, he is a miracle.

IV

The Perfect Climate

Because North Carolina, according to its boosters, has "The Perfect Climate," Asa Candler has been materially assisted in making a fortune from coca cola, a beverage concocted primarily to keep the Southern Anglo-Saxons alive through the Summer months. These months number five in North Carolina. In May a blanket of heat falls upon the State, stifling it until October. The old economic order in the South had at least this to recommend it: it was suited to the climate. It gave the superior Nordic the opportunity to sit in the shade and fan himself and left labor to the Ethiopian. But the new bourgeoisie, eager to be up and coming, suffer horribly.

October brings relief, and "The Perfect Climate" begins to have a suggestion of accuracy. In North Carolina Autumn is not curt nor brisk nor flamboyant. She comes to us gently and in tender mood, bringing haze and balm. There is about her a soft languor. Christmas has passed before we know that it is Winter, and even then Winter is mild, with much sunny, open

weather. It is this circumstance which led Mr. Leonard Tufts to buy land in the North Carolina sand hills at fifty cents an acre to make a tourist playground. This Pinehurst community is still regarded by the natives as Yankeeified and foreign. The pride of the sand hill folk is not in polo, but in their thousands of acres of peach trees, which in Spring turn a former wilderness into a cloud of lovely bloom.

The mountains around Asheville, Hendersonville and Blowing Rock also have their tourists in Summer and Autumn, and all the year round their T. B. victims in search of health.

V

Morte-Main

The dead hand of Southern Democracy has lain for years on politics in North Carolina, and paralysis has ensued,—paralysis, that is, of all real political vigor and unprejudiced statesmanship. But the empty sound and fury continue. As the North Carolinian must be a professing Christian, preferably of the more violently evangelical variety, if he would not be gored from the herd, so he must be a Democrat, as were his Confederate forebears. The Republican party is held to be disreputable, full of niggers, descendants of deserters to the Union, carpet-baggers and scalawags. Allying one's self with these "Radicals" is simply not done.

It is strange that a game in which the dice are always loaded and the outcome seldom, if ever, in doubt should engage the enthusiastic attention of the populace. But politics, next to revivals, is the North Carolinian's chief diversion, though the only hope of anything even approaching a sporting contest is within the ranks of the Democratic party itself. Even here the upsets of the advance dope are few and far between. The party is controlled by the Simmons machine, of which the shrewd senior Senator from North Carolina is the brains. Rarely can an independent candi-

date dislodge it from control. The Governors of the State, it is said, are chosen by the machine from twelve to sixteen years in advance.

The possible nomination of the wet and Romish Al Smith for the Presidency in 1928 is now the subject of much loud and defiant comment by the Protestant evangelists and other vehement drys of the State. But even the evangelists, under the Democratic compulsion neurosis of years, will eat their brave words and vote for the Papacy and the little brown jug if Al is actually nominated. He will carry North Carolina and all the other Southern States with the same ease with which Satan, with a Democratic label, could carry them.

VI

Rural

A light breeze steals through the pines surrounding a dilapidated, two room farmhouse. A woman carrying water from a well across a yard as bare as a board stops to let the breeze fan her sweating face. She is dog-tired. The sweltering August day began for her at sunrise, and this first breath of evening is a welcome promise of relief. Putting down her bucket, she sinks on the door-step, pushing back her straggling hair. She is a woman whose youth has been prematurely worn away. She wears an ill-fitting cotton dress of a color made indistinguishable by much rough washing. A black gum snuff-brush droops from her mouth. At seventeen she married a tenant farmer and has paid for it with eight children and twelve years of drudgery. The latest baby, fretful from the heat, is mewling on the floor beside the sagging door. From farm to farm the family has moved, their household goods carried by hand. Sometimes they have made a crop, oftener they have failed. But good crop or bad, there has never been money for more than the barest support of life.

The woman looks up at the pines. Pretty, those pines, she thinks,—pretty

when they are black against an orange Winter sunset, pretty, glistening green in the clear, soft sunlight on Fall mornings, and with stars glittering through their branches, when, too exhausted to think or talk, she sits on the step at night after the children are asleep. When the pines whisper in the wind they speak to her mysteriously. She has never quite caught their meaning, but their whispering makes her wonder whether life was meant to be so hopeless and so hard. A fragment of a Gospel hymn comes to her mind:

On the other side of Jordan,
In the sweet fields of Eden,
Where the tree of life is blooming,
There is rest for me.

Rest,—but on the other side. Mighty little rest on this one. Maybe after you die things will be evened up. The preachers say they will,—no marrying nor giving in marriage, but golden streets and jewels and shining white robes for those who are washed in the blood of the Lamb. She was washed in the blood at thirteen. The memory of her conversion comes to her sharply. She came through at the biggest revival in the county, a shy, homely little girl, hysterical from the moaning and shouting of an hysterical crowd.

She will go to the revival next month at Shiloh Church in the grove up the road. She'll take the little children and leave Ed to mind the big ones. She remembers the last revival at Shiloh. How the preacher thundered! What a picture of hell with its eternal torment he painted, of heaven with its riches and its everlasting rest! No wonder the sinners trembled and wept, and the redeemed leaped and shouted for joy! In preparation for the coming revival the trees along the country roads have crudely painted sign-boards nailed to them: "Heaven or Hell for Eternity," "Ye Must Be Born Again," "Christ Died for Us."

She finds her religion in the blessed Book. She cannot read, but the preachers have told her. It shows you the way to the sweet fields, and to the tree of life, and to rest. Only the Book shows the way.

VII

Two Universities

The center of intellectual activity in North Carolina at present is—as no doubt it should be—the State university. The university has profited largely by the recent increase in State expenditures for education, and its expansion, physically and intellectually, has been marked. It shows a vigorous spirit of criticism in local affairs—one of the surest and most encouraging signs that the old Southern defense-mechanism is breaking down. The leading exponent of this new spirit is Gerald W. Johnson, director of the School of Journalism and author of numerous critical papers. It is expressed, too, in the magazine, *Social Forces*, edited by Howard W. Odum, director of the School of Public Welfare. Its expression with respect to certain religious ideas popularly regarded as sacrosanct has seriously disturbed several of the State ministerial associations, and they have adopted resolutions denouncing the magazine, and indirectly the university, as a godless public menace. In the anti-evolution fight in the General Assembly of 1925, President Harry W. Chase, of the university, alone of the presidents of the State's four higher educational institutions, appeared at the committee hearing in suave and civilized protest against the bill. Naturally enough—President Chase having been born in Massachusetts—the Fundamentalists cried out upon him as "a damned Yankee who's ruinin' our boys." Only once in recent years has the university betrayed its liberal leadership. A few months ago when it proposed to make a study of the textile industry in North Carolina, the cotton manufacturers spoke to it sharply, and the study was swiftly abandoned without protest.

Follow one of North Carolina's new good roads for thirteen miles eastward from Chapel Hill, the seat of the university, and you reach that other university that tobacco built and is now building

anew. Stupendous plans have been drawn for the expenditure of Buck Duke's eighty millions; they are to bring light of truth into many a Methodist home. The attitude of the State university toward Duke is polite but skittish. Representatives of the former may publicly give thanks to God for an ally in the war upon ignorance in the State, but nobody is fooled. Duke is too near and much too rich for the University of North Carolina to be very happy about it. Already the proposed medical school at Duke seems to have frustrated the plans of the State institution to extend its two-year medical course to four. One looks for little display of brotherly love hereafter.

VIII

The Bored Capital

North Carolina is a State of small towns. R. J. Reynolds' Winston-Salem, with a population of about fifty thousand, is its metropolis. With the new progress the question of relative population has become a burning one, and there is frantic effort on the part of several towns to drag within their corporate limits the largest number of outlying Negroes and factory workers.

The capital, however, with its thirty thousand souls, is only slightly affected by this laudable endeavor. Raleigh, a trifle bored by the new noise in North Carolina, still manages somehow to preserve a vestige of its individuality in spite of the rapid process of standardization going on elsewhere in the State. Notwithstanding the heroic efforts of its go-getting Chamber of Commerce, it gives little indication of wishing to ape the Middle West. The capital is the despair of boosters. Deaf, for the most part, to the current hosannas, it continues to be attractively leisurely.

Architecturally, North Carolina has little to boast of, but the inhabitants may reasonably take pride in the State Capitol. Pure Doric, it is a building simple and dignified. Sunlight warms its old stone to

mellow tints. It is one of the few lovely things in North Carolina—a specimen of almost startling good taste in a State where good taste is not conspicuous. There have been attempts to change and enlarge it, but, marvelously enough, public intelligence has preserved it.

IX

Historical Note

On May 20, 1775, so runs the legend, a company of North Carolina patriots assembled at the county seat of Mecklenburg, and, more than thirteen months prior to the Declaration of Independence by the thirteen colonies, declared themselves independent of Great Britain. The original Mecklenburg document is said to have been burned, but about twenty-five years later it was rewritten from memory by one of the surviving signers, then an old man. His phraseology bears an odd resemblance to that of the Philadelphia declaration. On the strength of this old gentleman's memory, the date, May 20, 1775, was forthwith inscribed upon the North Carolina State flag.

According to verifiable history, a number of North Carolina colonists did assemble at the county seat of Mecklenburg on May 31, 1775, and passed resolutions of defiance of Great Britain. These resolves were bold enough, but not as sweeping nor as grandiloquent as the declaration supposed to have been adopted eleven days previous. The transactions of May 31 were recorded in newspapers of the period, which had carried no mention of the declaration of May 20.

Controversy concerning these two dates has divided families and estranged friends and kinsmen. Several of the most reputable North Carolina historians vehemently deny the authenticity of the so-called Mecklenburg Declaration of May 20. The evidence, indeed, is sufficient to convince anyone of intelligence that nothing whatever of significance occurred on that date.

Yet the State flag bears the proud, if meaningless, inscription, and excursionists from the surrounding country come to Raleigh and gaze with awe upon the tablet to the patriots. Rather than surrender eleven days of priority to the Philadelphia declaration, the Legislature refused to allow a history of North Carolina by one of the State's ablest historians to be taught in the public-schools.

X

The Witch-Fry

Not since the Act of Secession was passed in 1861 had such a crowd stormed up the stairs of the Capitol. It packed the galleries of the House of Representatives and boiled over into the lobbies and the aisles. It had come to cheer or hiss what the two opposing camps respectively considered the greatest clown-show ever put on the boards in North Carolina and the last stand of Christian civilization in the commonwealth. A spare, tight-lipped country editor had come to Raleigh to represent his county for one high purpose alone. He had come to save the youth of the State from hell. Oppressed by the magnitude of that mission, he paced solemnly around the legislative chamber. Occasionally he conferred gravely with a gentleman whose demeanor suggested the ministerial. At the very least, he could be nothing less than the inspired superintendent of a flourishing Sunday-school. The two were the author of the 1925 bill discouraging the teaching of evolution in State-controlled schools and colleges, and the anti-evolution floor-leader in the House. Over in a far corner of the chamber a large alumnus of the State university twirled his watch-chain, made a pretty speech to the prettiest woman in his vicinity, looked wearily at the crusaders, and laughed. Members of the anti-evolution cohorts came to the leaders for last minute commands. About them all was a striking similarity of facial expression, a certain tightness and grimness of mouth, a zealous and fiery gleam in

the eye, what, for want of a better term, might be called the Bryan look. In the words of a local newspaper man, they bore an unholy resemblance to the cheer-leaders at a witch-fry.

More people jammed themselves into the Capitol. It was a tense, belligerent mob. One felt that at any moment the rafters might ring with a loud hallelujah or a fervent amen. The limping Confederate veteran who for years has acted as sergeant-at-arms of the House was powerless to clear the aisles of spectators. The Speaker slammed down his gavel and declared that because of the disorder of the crowd debate was impossible without a riot ensuing, and the House was adjourned.

The crowd, a little smaller and somewhat less obstinate, reassembled the next morning and the debate, so called, got under way. For hours it dragged on, with the anti-evolutionists doing most of the talking. They condemned a brand of evolutionary science unrecognizable by any scientist present. They called upon the Lord to bless their heroic labors, and sat down, glowing with holy zeal, but temporarily winded.

The large alumnus of the university rose, briefly reviewed the unsuccessful attempts to suppress freedom of thought in the past, resented on behalf of his institution the current attempt in North Carolina, warmed to his subject, put the anti-evolutionists on the spit, and closed with considerable eloquence. Plainly disconcerted, the author of the bill shambled down in front of the Speaker's desk. He had had no idea, he explained, that his opponents felt so strongly on the subject. The bill failed by twenty-one votes.

Though defeated by the 1925 General Assembly, Fundamentalism is far from a dead issue in North Carolina. The 1925 Assembly was elected before the agitation became violent, and before the triumph of Michael and his angels in Tennessee. In the election of members for the 1927 session, the war upon evolution will undoubtedly be a factor.

XI

Law and Order

"There is no comparison between Negro life in North Carolina and in Georgia," an educated Negro woman who had lived in both States told me. "The conditions are so much better in North Carolina, the white people so much more friendly." But, like the rest of the South, North Carolina also has its Negro problem. If there is anything especially characteristic in the State's attempt to solve it, it is perhaps the fact that it is approached, certainly by the leading people of the State, with good will. Negroes in North Carolina, as elsewhere in the South, still suffer from many injustices, but lynchings are rare. When three cases of rape of white women were committed at short intervals by Negroes near Asheville last year, there was no lynching. Twenty members of a mob which tried to take one of the Negroes from jail were arrested and fifteen of these were sentenced to the State Prison or the county chain gang. Petitions for executive clemency for the members of this mob were refused. One accused Negro who succeeded in proving an alibi was acquitted by a white jury despite a white woman's positive identification of him as her assailant. North Carolina has bureaux for Negro education and welfare which are doing excellent work.

It may be that desire for fairness to the Negro is part of a new social conscience which has awakened recently in North Carolina. The jurist who is the most active representative of this is Judge N. A. Sinclair of the Superior Court. His summary dealing with the members of a Ku Klux mob which had mutilated a young Jew and his continued protest from the bench against the flogging of prisoners illustrate his attitude. Judge Sinclair has been the most consistent opponent of the Ku Klux

Klan in North Carolina. Several times, in instructing a grand jury, he has denounced the order roundly and with admirable courage. The Klan is now of no great influence in the State, although it helped to elect the present Governor.

XII

Exhibitionism

A virulent form of exhibitionism has accompanied North Carolina's progress. So remarkable has it seemed to the State's inhabitants to find themselves at last something other than the butt of ridicule, to be actually getting somewhere industrially and educationally, that the inflated chests, naturally, have eased themselves by expirations of very hot air.

North Carolina, the boosters tell us, can claim more superlatives than any other State in the Union. It has the highest mountain east of the Mississippi, the most dangerous cape on the Atlantic coast, the bones of the first white child born on the American continent, the longest bridge over navigable water in the world, the purest Anglo-Saxons in America, the largest denim and hosiery mills on earth, the oldest State university in the United States, the planet's largest cucumber market. North Carolina mills manufacture every inch of cloth used in B.V.D.'s. The Hindenburg Line was broken by North Carolina troops, worthy scions of those Confederate warriors who were first at Bethel, farthest to the front at Gettysburg and Chickamauga, and last at Appomattox. The newspapers of the State have united to turn North Carolina into a boosters' paradise. Talk to the average North Carolinian for five consecutive minutes, and if at the end of that time he is not extolling the glories of his homeland, you may be sure that he is not in health. The State's motto, "*Esse Quam Videri*," has become a joke.

AMERICANA

ALABAMA

LAW ENFORCEMENT note from the Alabama back country in the Columbus (Ga.) *Enquirer-Sun*:

The other day a man eighty-four years of age was tried, convicted and sentenced to serve six months in the coal mines at Weiger, near Birmingham, and in addition, fined \$500, for violating the Prohibition law in Hale county. This old man was a Confederate soldier, having served under General Joseph E. Johnston.

ANOTHER from the Birmingham correspondent of the New York *World*:

The Ku Klux Klan set out to-day to close all Chinese restaurants in this city. Its campaign evidently has the full approval of law enforcement officials. Search-warrants for liquor were issued by the Court of Misdemeanors to W. W. Israel, Cyclops of the Klan. Twenty robed Kluxers swooped down on three Chinese places. Fifty diners were searched and the raids netted a small flask of whiskey taken from the hip pocket of a college student. The raiders carried pistols. Their spokesman, clad in full regalia of the Klan, served the warrants on the Chinese proprietors. As he and his men searched the diners he told them: "Finish your meals and get out and stop patronizing these Chink joints unless you are looking for serious trouble. There are plenty of good 100% American cafés in town."

ARIZONA

BUSINESS advertisement in the *Arizona Daily Star*, of Tucson:

SPECIAL SERVICES TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

REV. WALTER B. GREENWAY, D. D.
of Bethany Temple, Philadelphia, Will Deliver
a Series of Addresses
Public Cordially Invited

We give both "Special" and regular Laundry Services. Send the family bundle here.

TUCSON STEAM LAUNDRY

Look For Our White Autos

Phone 587

P. E. Howell, Manager

CALIFORNIA

COMFORTING words from the *Baptist Fundamentalist*, published at Sacramento:

The last days truly are here. The devil knows his time is short, and he is gathering his forces for the last stand. But the God that thundereth is in heaven, and looking on. Only by His mercy are these Bible-denying evolutionists permitted to live. He could with one stroke of His power put them out of commission, but that is not His way. He lets them hang themselves.

SPECIMEN of musical criticism from the eminent Los Angeles *Record*:

Miss Warren, whose voice shows an excellent musical training, sang Mozart's D minor *concerto* with a restraint and delicacy of expression which entranced the audience.

WANT AD in the pious Los Angeles *Times*:

WANTED—A light complexioned colored man who can make good during next four months, can secure a job to travel for two years all over world, looking after party of ladies. Exceptional good pay. Must be single, not over 35 years old, good dresser and over average size, one who understands working around ladies. Answering full details and your telephone number. Address O, box 577, TIMES BRANCH.

UNITED PRESS dispatch from Santa Rosa, in the Realtor Belt:

"A season of prayer to open the eyes of Luther Burbank to the irreparable injury done to the cause of religion by his utterances" was called here today by Mrs. Mary Patchett, president of the W. C. T. U. Burbank recently admitted he was an "infidel." Mrs. Patchett invited "all women and mothers and all who believe in the efficacy of prayer to join together in a season of prayer for Mr. Burbank, that his eyes may be opened and that our youth may not be led astray from the religion of their fathers."

CONNECTICUT

FROM *Marriage Bells*, published by the Eastern Agency, Bridgeport:

8586. Who will save me? I am in the grip of romance, my only weakness; take pity on me, with eyes toward Heaven I pray for my mate; will give my life's devotion to a girl under 135 pounds who will save my health and future from a living hell. Am struggling one more year for a professional career; am 29, 5-7, of nice appearance.