

102

The North Carolina Booklet.

101
GREAT EVENTS IN
NORTH CAROLINA HISTORY.



The Ku-Klux Klans.

—BY—
MRS. T. J. JARVIS.



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The North Carolina Booklet.

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NORTH CAROLINA BOOKLET.

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No. 1.

The Ku-Klux Klans.

BY

MRS. T. J. JARVIS.

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**“Carolina! Carolina! Heaven’s blessings attend her!
While we live we will cherish, protect and defend her.”**

THE KU-KLUX KLAN.

When Gov. Holden was installed as Governor in '68, the State was declared to be a State in the Union, and it ceased to be a satrophy under the orders of the Maj.-General. There was a legislature; but as it was elected by the negroes and their allies, it was not at all responsive to the needs of the State. Its leaders were vultures, who considered the State as their prey. The scallawags, carpet-baggers and negroes who composed the large majority were wholly irresponsible, and launched upon a course of wild extravagance in order to feather their nests at the public expense. The work of this mongrel body could not be checked by the few brave spirits, who fought day and night with desperate persistence, to stem the tide of reckless extravagance and corruption. In utter defiance of public opinion, debts of many millions of dollars were foisted upon the state, offices were created in defiance of law, with exorbitant salaries attached, bar-rooms were openly run in the galleries of the capital itself, until the statue of justice might well have blushed under her bronze bandage, and dropped the scales from her hands. The reign of terror began with renewed horror in city, hamlet and country. The Union League, a secret organization formed at the North during the war, and now embracing carpetbaggers, deserters and negroes in the south, was zealously doing its barbarious work. This secret society whatever may have been the purposes of its creation had now fallen into the hands of bad men who were making it a terrible regime for evil. These

high-handed and lawless bandits, feeling that the State was their own, and that they themselves were the law unto themselves, knew no such word as "enough." The bonds of society were loosened. Law ceased to be enforced. Lawlessness stalked abroad unrestrained. Dwellings of families were burned in the night; and in many instances families already murdered were cremated in them; on the same night in Alamance county, three distinct fires, lurid against the darkened sky, were seen burning at one time, consuming the provisions of an entire year. The incendiary torch was common. The negroes, who at first had been satisfied to till the crops on shares, were now taught to plunder and rob, such were the teachings of the political gatherings. Incendiary appeals were made to the negroes and publications given out by those high in authority from which the inference could be clearly drawn that any owner of lands, failing to employ colored labor, the said colored applicant for work might be justified in forceably taking possession of the means of living; although in many instances the owners of small tracts of land were too poor to employ outside labor and had tilled, planted and stored their own crops with their own hands, or those of their children. But, how shall we speak of the unspeakable crimes before which the holocaust would have been an enviable fate—the shame, the anguish

—————"that befell
The only sister of our race,
—A thing too horrible to tell."

When families sacrificing their land for a song would steal away to some distant state, to spend the remainder of

their days in obscurity, with the dark story locked in their own breasts?

White women were not safe even in their homes: they could not venture abroad unprotected.

The rumbling of an earthquake was at last heard over the land. Patience had ceased to be a virtue. Longer endured it would have degenerated into pusillanimity and cowardice.

The dry bones in the valley of Gehosephat were at last gathered quickly together, clothed, vitalized and armed, and *The Ku-Klux Klans became a mighty factor in history.*

The young reader, especially at the north, being absolutely innocent of information upon the subject, or else guided by the equally ignorant prejudice of persons who could see only the discolored shadow of facts, will at once conjure up a motley body of rough, unwashed, vicious men; banded together for the sole purpose of maltreating, or, even in time, for the extermination of the colored race, whom they could no longer own at so much marketable value. On the contrary, however, this wide spread movement, yclept the Ku-Klux Klans, embraced in large proportion, the proudest, the most sensitive and cultured portions of the English race. They had been slow to move, but when once they were made to realize the necessity to go forward they moved like an avalanche. Perhaps it may not be amiss to quote from that very luminous writer, William Garrott Brown, the following account of the Origin of the Order, we give it in his own words:

“When the civil war ended, the little town of Pulas-ki, Tenn., welcomed home a band of young men, who

though they were veterans of hard fought battles, were for the most part no older than the mass of college students. In the general poverty, the exhaustion, the lack of heart, naturally prevalent throughout the beaten south, young men had more leisure than was good for them; a southern country town even in the halcyon days, before the war, was not a particularly lively place, and Pulaski in 1866 was doubtless rather tame to fellows who had seen Pickett charge at Gettysburg, or galloped over the country with Morgan and Wheeler. A group of these men assembled in a law office one evening in May 1866, to discuss ways and means of having a livelier time; some one suggested a club or society. An organization with no very definite aims was effected; and at a second meeting a week later, names were proposed and discussed. Some one pronounced the Greek word "Kuklos" meaning a circle. From "Kuklos" to "Ku-Klux" was an easy transition,—and "Klan" followed "Ku-Klux" as naturally as "dumpty" follows "humpty." That the name meant nothing whatever was a recommendation; and one can fancy what sort of badinage would have greeted a suggestion that, in six years a committee of Congress would devote thirteen volumes to the history of the movement that began in a Pulaski law office, and migrated later, to a deserted and half ruined house on the outskirts of the village. The initial movement of the organization—if such it can be called—partook only of the nature of a college society, or any other congregation of men leagued together by fraternal obligations. There was scarcely more of seriousness than attends the initiation of members into the order of "buffaloes" at

the present day. Its members as Mr. Brown says, "were not 'lewd fellows of the baser sort' but young men of standing in the community, who a few years earlier would have been men of wealth." The only serious clause in the oath of membership was a pledge of profound and absolute secrecy.

Disguises were adopted even at this early day. They consisted of a mask for the face, usually white surmounted by a cardboard hat,—many of them with folds or springs, which could be shot up in an instance from two to four feet in height. A loose robe enveloped the entire person; and when the Klans rode abroad the bodies of their horses were likewise covered, and their feet enveloped in mufflers, to deaden the sound of their coming. The officers were named as follows:

- A Grand Cyclops, or President.
- A Grand Magi, or Vice-President.
- A Grand Turk, or Marshall.
- A Grand Exchequer, or Treasurer.
- Two Lictors.

At this time only men of culture, *esprit*, and good morals were permitted to join. Their objects were mutual amusement and the mystifying of their neighbors. In this their success was far beyond their most sanguine expectations. The knowledge of the Order spread like wild-fire through country, village and town. The following of the Odd Fellows, some years before, was as nothing compared to this. At this time the horrors of reconstruction were already in full blast in Tennessee; outrages of the most brutal order were of daily occurrence, and the perpetrators

went unwhipped of justice ; indeed the word *justice* seemed to have been blotted from our vocabulary. A great English writer has said that, war,—and especially an internecine war, retrogrades mankind to the border land of paganism. The Union League, now following in the footsteps of “Parson Brownlow,” flaunted the flag of the Union in the faces of ex-confederates, and made the national emblem the pretext for as foul and disgraceful crimes as ever blackened the escutcheon of a great state. Southern society had been completely inverted. The “canaille” were on top ; and the southern gentlemen down, the former were avenging their long cherished grudge against the latter, and the freed negroes were often as conscienceless as the most savage Indian tribes. The deeply wronged Anglo-Saxon, groping about for some means of righting himself grasped the Pulaski idea. Says Mr. Brown : “It seems astounding nowadays that the Congressional leaders in reconstruction did not foresee that men of their own stock, so circumstanced, would resist ; and would find some means to make their resistance effective. When they did make up their minds to resist,—not collectively or through any representative body, but singly and by neighborhoods,—they found an instrument ready to their hands.” To General Nathan Bedford Forest, the “bravest of the brave” is accredited the solving of the knotty problem, He directed the use of the Ku-Klux Klans to frighten the superstitious African into less open defiance of law.

Through what instrumentalities the order came into North Carolina it will not be permitted in the scope of this chronicle to relate. The secret brotherhood, however,

speedily clasped hands from the Tennessee line to the ocean. The outrages in Tennessee were being repeated with emphasis in North Carolina. The Ku-Klux Klans had a righteous work to perform, and when once their minds were made up they were no longer slow to act. The fanciful, mythological or oriental names of the pleasure seeking order were dropped.

The Chiefs of the Klans in North Carolina were simply denominated "commanders," each Klan having its own ruler thus named. Those who were a menace to society whether a carpetbagger or scallawag, were to receive the blunt of their displeasure. The order was not harmful to the inoffensive portion of the colored population. They were by no means to be hung and quartered, they were simply to be frightened into a non-committal of crimes. In many instances the order was enabled to do this. The Klans began by simply parading at night. And the terrified negroes, for a time, hid their diminished heads believing that the ghosts of the Confederate dead, were stalking abroad in the land. Nor did the sight fail to awaken wonder and amazement among the un-initiated whites. No more thorough or perfectly organized body of men had ever worked together, for a common cause. The "White Brotherhood," "The Constitutional Union Guards," "The Knights of the White Camellia," "The Pale Faces" were some of the names of the Invisible Empire, generally denominated Ku-Klux by outsiders. The members of each separate order no longer called themselves Ku-Klux; but were known or rather knew themselves, only, by the name of the special order to which they belonged; and thus a

member of the "Pale Faces" could under oath, testify that he knew nothing of the existence of the "White Brotherhood" except by general hearsay. And indeed this was strictly true. Names were never handed down. No one knew the number of members in his Klan, except, perhaps, the Commander.

Horses were often whitewashed to prevent recognition. Horns as large as those of an ordinary cow, were stuffed and sewed into the brow of the masks, while red probosces or snouts almost as long as those of an Elephant were attached to the chin. The pasteboard caps, running several feet into the air, with the long white robes, caused these men to appear to be of monstrously inhuman proportions. Terrible noises, sometimes resembling thunder, at others unlike any sound that ever fell upon human ears, emanated from these strange figures. Riding thus, a party of negroes were visited at one of their union league gatherings. Many of the latter plunged headlong through the windows. They were ordered to halt and salute. Icy hands, forged from iron, or severed from the elbows of some skeleton, and consequently denuded of all flesh, were extended, in greeting, from beneath these ghostly robes. It is needless to say that another meeting was not immediately held in that place.

We have stated that the various branches of the Ku-Klux, by whatever names they might prefer to be called—were as thoroughly organized a body of men as ever united for any purpose. The brain and energy of the State were in a great measure behind it. If there were men of culture, men of chivalrous honor in North Carolina, much of

the best blood of this class fed the sinew and muscle of the Ku-Klux Klans. The stern necessity for action faced them, and they "rode" prosperously because of oppression." Often a "*noll pros*" was entered in the sham courts, where a member of the Union League had been indicted, alike for the worst of capital offenses, as for petty larceny. Men felt that they must again imperil their lives for a cause more sacred than liberty, viz: to save from starvation and foul dishonor the wives, daughters or sisters of their families.

A gentleman of profound culture, of high social standing, of exalted christian character, conversing some weeks ago with the author of this article, said: "I belonged to the order and have never regreted it. I was so located that they needed my services, though I was only eighteen years of age. I had intimated a desire to join, but I did not know that I had been balloted on, or accepted, when an intimate friend of our family, some ten years older than than myself, called to me from the veranda one afternoon, and asked me if I would take a drive with him. We were speeding down a public highway in light hearted conversation, when suddenly he turned into the woods. He would not explain the cause of this unexpected movement. When far away from the road we were suddenly surrounded by a weird and mysterious sight of ghostly beings. They would run and leap, but there was no sound. Some could extend themselves into wonderful proportions and as suddenly change to insignificant pygmies. I never knew just how it happened, but soon I found myself kneeling by a stump, around me were strangely wrought, but terribly stern faces, masking I knew not what. In uncom-

fortable proximity to my head I discovered a perfect shower of glittering daggers and grinning pistols. At the same time a human skull was held out to me, I was ordered to place my hand upon it, and begin. A strong authoritative voice dictated, and it did not occur to me to hesitate in repeating after him. The fearfully binding obligation burned itself into my young mind, through the lapse of years the words have not faded away; and the impression of every circumstance is still there. I was bound to secrecy. For the sake of myself, as well as for others, I was not to make known to any one the secret plans of the Council; and was to be ready to meet when called for.

“My allegiance was to the Caucasian race, and our mothers and sisters were the patron Saints. Swift punishment was to be inflicted upon those who would seek to destroy the honor of the women dependent upon us for protection. I was to obey the “Chief” and the Council in all their proper and legitimate requirements. At the call of the Chief I was to go to those in distress; or in need of assistance and protection.

“Uncompromising determination that we would not rest from our efforts until we had established good government for the protection of our homes and property was absolutely demanded.

“We were to assist in a kind of secret policing of the entire community, for the general good; and the mutual protection of each other in cases of necessity. We were to assist in providing for those who might suffer in the performance of duty. We were to help provide for the needy. These were some of the stronger impressions which were

made on me, and remain vividly with me. There was a system of grips, signs, and pass words, but most of them are partially forgotten. The meetings were frequent and stated, but never long in the same place. They were held mostly at night, in some deserted spot or room. I was present when several ladies were taken into the order, for the purpose, as then expressed of preparing disguises and assisting in caring for those who might be injured; so as to save any publicity to them, and thus protect them from their enemies. Gross insults to women were of almost daily occurrence. Old men were abused. Our sisters were safe nowhere. Harrowing anxiety and sleepless fear hung over our community like a threatening tornado. The unbridled propensities of a newly liberated race, the grudge of people who were the offscourings of civilization, among the whites, made life one unceasing dread of impending misery. Scenes that were of frequent occurrence in those days would be discredited by those who are supposed to be skeptical, a third of a century later.

“The execution of the civil authority was the merest sham. Those who held the offices were the creation of the mongrel combination of a political influence, whose life-blood was from the foulest bilge water in the cess pools of the vicious and depraved. Frequent demonstrations and parades of their Leagues were made in the road in front of my father’s house. Some white men were mingled among the negroes in these lines, and I well remember what a repulsive sight it was; and the administration of affairs was in their hands.

“Why then appeal to Cæsar when Cæsar was both Caligula and Nero combined. In one instance a negro was caught stealing; he was tried by a magistrate, who was a member of the league, and instantly acquitted. The next night he was visted promptly, but succeeding in shooting one of our neighbors in the knee, before receiving his merited thrashing.

“So far as I know, no act of unmerrited violence was ever committed by the Ku-Klux in the community in which I lived. The Union Leaguers did go, one night, with a crowd of about thirty, to a man named Rayford and beating him nearly to death, set fire to his mill. They told him that they were Ku-Klux, but he knew better. A quarrel in the league soon divulged the whole matter. John Tyndal was in the habit of beating his wife unmercifully, and failed to furnish support for his family. One night a ghostly crowd surrounded his house and informed him that at the end of a certain period they would return for business unless he got to work and treated his family more decently. From that time on there was not a more industrious man in all that region. He was a white man.

“My father was a minister of the Gospel. One day a burly negro came to the front of the house and abused him in language most revolting. Some one passing by heard him. During the next night he concluded it was best for him to leave the country.

“A number of smilar instances could be recited, but these will serve as samples of what took place. The Ku-Klux Klans were the salvation of our country. They awed

the negroes to such an extent that they did not return to the extreme of insolence and daring any more. Some white men who dishonored their race were also helped by its presence. It was only when mean men got into its ranks that the germs of decay began to ripen and caused disaster to the order. It served its purpose well and brought relief to the people. Governor Holden, to a great extent, broke up the organization in the State, but he could not stop its influence for good; our people will never know to what extent they are indebted to these daring men for the relief which came at a most important period."

Another gentleman of prominence, and of unquestioned integrity and veracity, who belonged to the order, furnished us the following:

"In the year 1868 I was just fourteen years of age, an active and inquisitive chap, as most of boys are. One day, as I entered abruptly into my older brother's room, I saw him hurriedly concealing a strange looking "dunce cap" as I called it; and yet a stranger looking robe in a closet, which he carefully locked, while he ordered me from the room, bidding me to have the decency to knock the next time I came in. I had of course heard of the Ku-Klux and felt sure that he belonged to the order; but when questioned by me or my grown sister, he would smile amusedly, make some evasive answer and change the subject.

On a certain afternoon I had gone into one of the great old parlors at home, and thrown myself upon a large old fashioned mohair sofa of huge dimensions; and pulling a buggy robe, which had been left there, over me, had fal-

len asleep. I was suddenly aroused by the voices in the room, and before stirring I heard my brother say :

"I have closed the door, we can talk freely here." They then spoke in terms of horror of an assault and murder, which had been committed the night previous ; and discussed the course which the Ku-Klux must pursue.

I lay perfectly still and when they had all left the room I crept out. I did not wish my brother to see me, but I foolishly told my sister of what I had heard. And when John returned in the evening she began to banter him about the Ku-Klux and their plans, and even used some of his own expressions which I had repeated to her. He looked, in angry surprise, first at her and then at me, I suppose I looked guilty. "You have been eavesdropping," he said with a haughty sneer. "Tell me what you have heard?" and to this day I have never forgotten his expression. My father was dead and I stood in much awe of this big brother ; but my pride was stung to the quick.

"No!" I cried, and I told him how I had overheard.

"Your offense is still unpardonable" he replied with chilling sternness. "A true sense of honor should have constrained you, at the first word, to announce your presence and withdraw." I and my sister, especially myself, were solemnly warned, that we would be the means of bringing untold disaster upon his head, if we ever divulged, to human being, a hint of what we had heard. I gave a solemn promise which I am sure I would sacredly have kept ; but that was not enough. The next morning my brother had two saddled horses at the gate ; and calling to me, said he wished me to ride with him. When fairly in.

to a belt of woods he suddenly turned out to an old church, where services were only held once in every few months. I was asked to go around and see if the door was opened. It was, and as I ascended the steps I glanced back and my brother was no where to be seen. A company of masked figures, already described, drew me in. My hand was placed upon a grinning skull, *and when I emerged I was a member of the order.* That evening some of the party were in our parlors. John went for my sister, at first she demurred, but he soon silenced her objections and led her in. She took the oath. She was to make mufflers for the horses feet, hats and robes for the men; and care for any that might be brought to the house, wounded or in distress. I was too young to be taken on many of the raids, but I often carried robes, horses and letters, written in cypher of which the following is a sample :

ALPHABET, A. B. C. D. E. &c.

K. L. M. N. O. &c.

Signs of meeting

At day : $4/3$ 4×3 —12th at 9 o'clock.
9

At night : $4 \overset{3}{) 9}$ 4×3 —13th at 9 o'clock.

Through this sign manual the Ku-Klux did all their correspondence, which was readily understood : and such a determined front did they present on incredibly short warning, wherever crime was committed, that the Governor himself, grew alarmed, detailed a special guard for the Executive Mansion ; and tried the menacing effect of several proclamations without result. As crime went on, the punishment of crime continued.

The following winter, with the legislature largely under his control, the Governor procured the passage of a law, making it a felony to go masked in a company, and to bear arms. This bill gave him full power to declare the State, or any part of it, in insurrection, to proclaim martial law, and to call for troops to enforce these iniquitous measures. The act was denominated the "Shoffner Bill" an act that is spoken of with abhorrance to this day, an act whose author, Shoffner, was obliged, a little latter, to seek safety outside of the State which he had dishonored; for there was no shadow of insurrection in any portion of it, certainly not more, than, when in his message of Oct. 12th, the Governor had said: "Every good citizen is gratified that North Carolina is at present as peaceable and quiet as any state in the Union." In this message he had declared "the right of the people to have arms in their houses, and to "bear" them under the authority of law is not questioned: "On the contrary it is claimed as a constitutional right, sacred to freemen." This declaration correct as it might be, had permitted the League to fill their houses with arms; and fortunately for the "sacred rights of freedmen" it had been the means of putting the necessary weapons of defense in the homes of her respected citizens. In the meantime the vandals who sold the State, and lent themselves to robbery, arson, murder, and some nameless crimes, were reveling in illgotten gains. The military were called out to help carry the elections. None but the "faithful" were to have office. The negroes were now carefully informed that the Ku-Klux were not "goblins damned," or avenging shades of confederate soldiers,

slain in battle; but the *living* ex-soldier, who was still trying to deprive him of his rights; and they were advised to use their torch, or the shot gun if necessary. A town police of four negroes and one white scallawag were called out to parade and patrol the streets of the old and respectable town of Graham. The next evening a company of seventy-five mounted Ku-Klux rode quietly through the town at midnight, and chased them from their beats. The town preferred no police, to one of that description.

The city of Wilmington had no special Commander for Klans. The Chief of the neighboring county was sent to the city, to ask, if a member should get into trouble, in the protection of his property or his life, or the honor of his family, whether he might find a refuge there, or be sent out of the reach of lawless retaliation. He was assured that Wilmington's good citizens would do all that *just laws should have done*. In twenty-four hours "A" had spoken to "B," and "B" to "C" etc.; each man knowing only his immediate informer, until an invisible chain, so to speak, had encircled the city. Acts of violence or robbery were of frequent occurrence, within her own border: and a touch of sorrow makes the whole world kin. The bleeding city was to be made the altar of her refuge for her sister towns, and adjacent country. Great boxes marked "merchandise" were brought into the city and taken to private store houses. They contained fire arms and rifles. The faces of men were calm, but cold and set: They were a reproduction in base relief of the old time fading from vision "Regulators." And still outrages were committed; and the courts of law were silent. Governor Holden, who

was more sinned against than sinning, in that he was surrounded by a corrupt gang, who were filling his mind with foul slanders upon the people of the State, while they profited by the very conditions they had helped to create, was issuing proclamation after proclamation, maddening to the men who had the good of the State, most at heart. His agents were employing a secret detective force, and using underhand sneaks, to skulk around in suspected localities, and report the acts or language of irresponsible persons, who, in a supposedly friendly conversation, might give utterance to sentiments thoughtlessly expressed or grossly exaggerated—a very “*vox et praeterea nihil*,” perhaps forgotten, by the speaker, in the hour of utterance.

General Abbott, a federal general, who had taken up his residence at Wilmington, and had been sent, as a Senator, to represent the State at Washington, in lieu of the illustrious Graham, had been prominent in inflaming the negroes who had attacked a procession of white citizens one afternoon. He was waited on, by a party of gentlemen, who told him that in case of a race conflict, they would seek him first and hang him to a lamp post.

“Do you mean to threaten me,” cried Abbott, flushed with anger?

“No” was the deliberate rejoinder, “we don’t mean to threaten you at all. We are simply warning you.” The next day General Abbott went to Raleigh and held conference with Gov. Holden. The inflammatory speeches were less vigorous after that. Yet, over the State crimes still sat in high places, as well as low; and the Ku-Klux Klans rode by night, with the grim determination of Gra-

heme of Claverhouse : And their swift marches and fantastic disguises, often struck terror to the guilty.

There was, now, no doubt of their determination to be heard from wherever crime was committed. They had bound themselves by an obligation, so solemn, that men who duly understand the sacredness of an oath, will to this day refuse to give utterance to it ; just as an Odd Fellow or a Mason, though no longer an active member, feels in honor bound, not to divulge the nature of their obligation. And hence, it is only through the treachery or cowardice of men, who wished to make capital out of the betrayal of their friends, that the secret workings of the Order have ever been made known. The yankee school master or mistress were not all occupied with the thought of elevating the benighted African whom they delighted to teach. Certainly their methods were often injudicious. In a town, in the central portion of the State, a Northern school mistress, in instructing the colored idea how to shoot, caused it indeed to explode with shot gun force. The pupils of this maiden lady, on their way home from school, one evening , expressed a wish for some flowers in the yard of a stately old southern homestead. This missionary to the " benighted race," at once opened the gate ; and ordered her pupils to go in, and pluck all the flowers they wanted, as their parents had toiled to make the flower beds all that they were. When the lady of the house appeared on the veranda, and commanded them to desist, shells and pebbles were hurled at her, amid hootings of derisive laughter: And when aprons full of flowers had been pulled, the beds of geraniums and other flowers, were danced upon and

trodden under foot. That night a solemn body of men visited the houses of the older pupils of the school, and entering used a horse whip with some emphasis. The next day the teacher was notified that such an act of trespass *must not* be again encouraged.

In another locality, a white girl, coming from school, with her little brother, was set upon by a dozen or more colored children, emerging from their own *alma mater*, beaten unmercifully, and disfigured for life, by having an eye thrust out by a fork. The following morning a body of men visited the school, administering a thrashing wherever suspicion rested, and this time the male teacher came in for his share, as it was alleged he had walked quietly by, and had not attempted to stop the fracas. A few nights later, a member of the visiting Committee of the "White Brotherhood" was shot through his widow. Disguises were now found to be an absolute necessity, instead of a simple source of amusement or mystery. And work must be done at night.

It was about this time that the organization, in some localities fell into the hands, and under the control, of men who did not have its high purposes at heart; and who, consequently, did not hesitate to use it, not for the protection for society but, to avenge some personal grievance, or to accomplish some other selfish and dishonest end. In this way many outrages were committed, of the most wanton nature, and for which, there could be no excuse. These were not only charged up to the Ku-Klux; but they were made the pretext for Gov. Holden to declare Alamance and Caswell counties in a state of insurrection; and to call

from Tennessee one Colonel Kirk and his army of cut-throats, to aid in this pernicious warfare. Hundreds of the most prominent men in these counties were arrested and thrown into prison; some into loathsome dungeons with hardened criminals: While others were hung up by the neck to extort confession from them. Many of these were aged men of high repute, against whom no word of reproach had ever been uttered; and who, as a matter of fact, had never been members of the Ku Klux; and who knew nothing of its operations.

When these men appealed to the courts, of their State, for protection, from these marauders, they were informed by the Chief Justice that as Kirk claimed to be acting under the orders of the Governor, and set the judicial power at defiance, that the courts were powerless to interfere. But an upright courageous Judge was found in the person of George W. Brooks, of the Federal Bench, who commanded these imprisoned citizens to be brought before him: and when, after inquiry, he found nothing against them, he ordered their release.

The President was appealed to, by telegram, with the statement that Judge Brooks was usurping powers which did not belong to him. But, be it said to the honor of President Grant, he declined to interfere; and the orders of Judge Brooks were obeyed. Public indignation was at fever heat. A general election was then in progress. The people spoke at the ballot for better government: and in condemnation of the Governor's course. Kirk and his minions fled to Tennessee; and the conditions which had called the Ku-Klux Klans into existence began to pass away.

This action of Judge Brooks, for which his name should ever be honored, alone prevented a bloody conflict between Kirk and his cut-throats, and the men of the State. In the meantime, men were being ordered to Washington city, to testify before an investigating committee of Congress, which likewise demanded confessions regarding the alleged outrages perpetrated by the Ku-Klux Klans. Some of these brave men, from day to day, notwithstanding threats of imprisonment for contempt of congress, shook their heads in silence, and were ordered from the witness stand—to be recalled again on the morrow—until months had passed, and thirteen volumes of evidence had been accumulated. “From these volumes”—in the language of Mr. Brown, from whom we have before quoted. “He who lives long enough to read it all, may learn much that is true, but not particularly important; much that is important, if true; and somewhat that is both true and important.”

As the forced outcome of these investigations, prosecutions were instituted against several of the Ku-Klux who had already been testified against—some of them falsely. And who in consequence suffered a cruelly unjust imprisonment for a term of years. Yet, to quote again “this spontaneous, popular movement was too all-pervading to be attributed to any one man, or any conspiracy of a few men. It was neither an accident nor a scheme: it was no man’s contrivance; but an *historical* development.”

On the cessation of these prosecutions, and a partial restoration of good government in the State, the orders known as the Ku-Klux Klans, feeling that their mission

had been accomplished, were disbanded : and later still an unjustly delayed amnesty-act was passed.

The author of this sketch has given this subject a good deal of thought and study, during the past year. We have read books, legal and simple narrative, receiving the latter with such allowance as was necessary, where affidavits had not particularized statements ; we have visited in various localities of the State, where the order, or orders referred existed in greatest force. We have talked with ministers of the gospel, and men of high official positions in church and State : and we have, all imperfectly, but conscientiously, given our honest views, as deducted therefrom. And, if the question had to be "studied against its proper background of a disordered society and a bewildered people," we have tried, likewise to do that.

Mr. Brown was writing for a northern magazine. Sir Walter Scott, in his original preface to his life of the First Napoleon, makes this significant statement, "I am writing a history for the English people." And, in it he consequently failed to discover many of the justly distinguishing, and equally justly extenuating, circumstances of Napoleon's wonderful personality. We are glad that we are writing, regardless of the special prejudice of any particular class of readers. Mr. Brown, concludes *his* argument thus, "If one asks of the movement, was it necessary?" this much at least may be answered ; that no other plan of resistance would have served so well. If one asks, "was it successful?" the answer is plain. No open revolt ever succeeded more completely. If one asks, "was it justifiable?" the "yes" or "no" is harder to say.

We have to reply, in conclusion, that, if no other plan of resistance would have served so well; when, as we have shown, "resistance was a necessity:" and it succeeded; *then*, without question, it was justifiable, since "the end attained was mainly good."

Many of the actors in this tragedy have passed away. If somewhat that seemed unjustifiable was done; at least, remember this, that—

"There are deeds, you may not know,
Lashing the pulses into strife :
Dark memories of deathless woe,
Pointing the bayonet and knife."

The invisible chain that linked the great brotherhood of the Ku-Klux Klan together which was first broken by the dismemberment of the order, nearly thirty years ago, has been yet more widely disintergrated by the fell hand of the great destroyer, Death.

If the clasp was indeed of steel: and this modern order of Knighthood wore a breast-plate of brass, and an ungloved, mailed ^{hand} had, when it became imperative that a blow must be struck; then let the reader calmly review the provocations; even as they are so feebly and imperfectly given here; and say, if he can, that he could have imitated the Divine meekness, and turned the other cheek.

"And there were also many other things—the which if they should be written, every one," would fill far more than the thirteen volumes of Congressional investigation, which sought, in vain, to criminate them.

THE END.

See last page of com. on the King

Great Events in N. C. History

Resistance to The Stamp Act, 1765 - page 6

Barron's on the Cape Fear River Nov 28 - 1765

Resistance to Stamp Act in Virginia Feb 27 1766
from "Memoirs of Old Church's" Vol II - pp - 434 - 436

WHEN THE KU KLUX RODE. BY
Eyre Damer. \$1 net; by mail, \$1.10.
Neale Publishing Company, New
York.

No political organization of equal magnitude and importance has been so grossly misunderstood as the famous Ku Klux Klan. An organization—one might better say an institution—of the purest patriotic motives, it was variously maligned during its lifetime, and since has been constantly misinterpreted. Today only painstaking students of post-bellum history have an adequate conception of its aims and motives, of the conditions which necessitated it or of the beneficent work it accomplished. To the rest, the Ku Klux Klan is a mystery of vague outline, dramatic, fascinating, of which grotesquely caparisoned horses and black-shrouded figures are the only salient features.

Mr. Damer's new book on the subject is adroit and stimulating. It is a dispassionate history of the conditions that obtained in the Black Belt for a decade subsequent to the war of the States. As conditions in the Black Belt were typical of conditions in all the area covered by the operations of the Klan, the book is, practically, a history of the social and political forces that created the Ku Klux Klan.

Without rancor and without haste, without hesitation or hysterics, giving in every instance place, names and dates, nailing facts steadily, on and on, Mr. Damer follows the growth of the reconstructiton horror from its beginning to the restoration of Anglo-Saxon supremacy in the Black Belt, showing how the Klan was the most powerful single agent in that restoration.

His work is so logical and level-headed, so simple and direct, that the narrative is almost painful in its cumulative effect. Following this heaped-up testimony, one understands with perfect clearness why there was a Ku Klux Klan, just what it had to do, the appalling odds against which it had to work, and how it conquered those odds.

In his preface, Mr. Damer refers to himself as one "who was in the midst of the struggle and a close observer." His description is justified by his book. "When the Ku Klux Rode" is a fine example of historical writing, candid, logical and intelligent