

THE CHATHAM RECORD

O. J. PETERSON
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Editorials
BLIND PHYSICIANS

The observations and conclusions of this series of articles may seem very obvious to some readers and scarcely worth the effort and space. Yet it is the obvious that is often overlooked till some one stumbles over it. From Hippocrates to Harvey all physicians failed to discover that the blood circulates, though it was pulsing through the body of each every second. Tens of thousands, doubtless, died in the meantime because of failure of the world to recognize this, one of the most obvious, apparently, of all body functions.

England, for several reigns after parliamentary government became established, could not discover the simple means of harmonizing the ministry and parliament till Lord Sunderland suggested the obvious method of choosing the ministry from the majority party of parliament.

As a matter of fact, those nearest often are prepared to see least. The fat business man couldn't play golf since if he got near enough to hit the ball he couldn't see it, and if he got far enough away to see it he couldn't hit it. Our statesmen, as the average of the ages, are practically blind to the real problems of their times. While many an isolated thinker sees clearly the looming shadows, but is too remote, like the fat golf-player, to play the game.

But if even two-hundred intelligent citizens read these articles carefully, we shall feel compensated for the effort, while personally we shall have the advantage of having thought through the conditions as they appear to exist. We do not expect all our subscribers to read them. More people know how to read them than ever before, but real reading and thinking are limited to just about the same proportion of the folk. The consequence is that when tendencies of the times approach their climax, the masses, mob-like, will be in no position to see clearly and act intelligently. Even many of those who should be in position to take a broad view of the drift of the times do not distinguish between symptoms and causes. Our statesmen when they undertake an investigation into strike conditions in a mill town are acting as futilely as the physician of fifty years ago who gave a lotion for "foot-itch," knowing nothing of the real menace of the hook worm which was sapping the lives of hundreds of thousands and was largely responsible for the existence of the "pore white trash" element in the South. The writer, he now knows, suffered from a bad case of adenoids as a lad. His eye teeth appeared as tusks. The family physician, dentist as well as medical practitioner, pulled out his eye teeth, while the adenoids remained to shorten his breath and to hinder the development of abdominal muscles, which necessarily caused a slumping of the form, and which, together with the hookworm, so impoverished and debilitated his body that he could run scarcely a hundred yards without panting like a lizard. Accordingly, then, it need not surprise you that the writer, isolated though he is, has little faith in the theory or practice of the average doctor of political or economic ills. For as the writer's body today bears the consequences of the ignorance of the physicians of his youth, so this very day the masses of the people are suffering from ignorance, on the part of statesmen, of the underlying causes of poverty. Doctoring the sore spot at Gastonia or at Elizabethton is as effective as pulling our eyeteeth or giving a lotion for foot-itch. The knife is necessary to prevent the ills

of adenoids, and the essential drug to reach down into the innards of the body and eradicate the blood-sucking horde.

The writer as a consequence of the two destroyers of vitality weighs 125 pounds and is sway-backed and round-shouldered, while the condition of his youth naturally begot an inferiority complex that has effected the whole tenor of his life. On the other hand, his one full brother is over six-feet tall, as straight as a board, weighs 175 pounds without a pound of surplus fat, and has never suffered a minute from an inferiority complex. Yet he had the hook worm, although his system was able to overcome one evil, but the writer's not the two, and only the fact that adenoids had been so long hereditary in the paternal side of the family that the strong vitality of the primitive stock enabled the writer's system to outgrow finally the adenoids in the greatest measure, though the effects, as indicated, still remain, saved him from a more disastrous consequence. Also he has outgrown his inferiority complex, else these articles would not be written.

Similarly, a part of the population will be able to survive among the worst possible of economic ills and even to prosper, but the welfare of the masses in the near future, even of the existing generation, is as vitally dependant upon the early discovery of remedies for ills which already exist as the physical well-being of the present generation in the South was dependant upon the discovery and application of the hook-worm remedy. The pale and puny that characterized the South of fifty years ago are no more, and the beneficent work of the Rockefeller Institution has been extended to remote India and the isles of the sea. Similarly may poverty be banished when the right economic prescription shall have been written and a Rockefeller shall have set afoot its application.

The world can make, absolutely, enough and to spare for every person in it, and for the dogs too. Comfort may abound without any one's overworking himself. But such a Utopian condition cannot be brought about by mere local poultices. Indeed, the effective remedy must extend in its application and effects beyond the borders of the nation. Ultimately, the world's resources should form a unit, and interchange of products should be as free as privilege and modern means of transportation and an improved system of distribution can make them.

Thus far in this series of articles, it has been demonstrated that the sources of wealth are not only passing into the hands of a mere coterie of the people but have already largely so passed. The present rate, however, brings the menace of complete monopolization hazardingly near. It is stated that in 1914 there were seven thousand millionaires in this county and that today there are three or four times as many. But while the writer deplors the condition that is enabling the few to garner the control of all means of livelihood and to reduce the masses to the state of hirelings, which, as pointed out last week, is now so largely a fact, he does not desire to suggest any curtailment of the rewards of true and serviceable initiative and enterprise.

The writer does not wish to see incentive, nor even romance, eliminated from business. Let the stalwart have his opportunity for achievement. But what we do wish to see is fair-play. We have referred in this series of articles to Robert Guiscard's hewing out a kingdom for himself in Italy after leaving France with only suit of mail, sword, and war steed. He won by brain and brawn. His knightly opponents were on equal footings. But there is no chivalry, no renown, no fairness in a mailed knight's overriding an unarmed peasant or routing a hundred of the rabble. The writer has never decried a fair fist fight when the circumstances demanded it. But when one fellow slips a set of brass knucks upon his hand and attacks his bare-fisted opponent, or draws a pistol and fires a ball into his unsuspecting antagonist, the mob is in order if ever. Likewise, when a

"OH! WHAT AN APPETITE"



Rockefeller starts out at \$6.00 a month and discovers a means of enriching himself and supplying the people with a cheaper necessity at the same time, we applaud him; similarly a Ford. They fight on equal terms with their competitors, and pay their way through the world, howsoever expensive a way, with benefits to the people. But if they have become so strong and ruthless that they disregard fair-play and the rights of the people it is another matter.

What we are undertaking now to do is to point out the unfair conditions that have been taken advantage of by men to build up fortunes and thus to draw undeserved tribute from the people. In our last week's article, we showed that many fortunes have been founded upon unearned increments in land values. The purchase of a post office lot in Greensboro at the cost of \$240,000 is a perfect illustration of the evil, the robbery of the people who made the additional values. That lot was a part of a hundred-acre tract that sold for a dollar an acre in 1800. The only value that could have been added by the owners since that date is in the actual improvements that were placed upon it. The public did the rest, the state primarily, in building the N. C. Railroad through that section, and now the nation is paying for the value which the state and the public have created.

There is scarcely a question that many of the ills of the present monopoly of the resources of wealth so menacing today can be traced to the accidental holding of lands which have thus been augmented in value. Such good fortune has not befallen the farmers as a class. They, as a rule, could thus benefit by the development only of the country as a whole. But like the inroads of adenoids and hookworm, youth was the time to correct the evils. The country is now approaching maturity and prevention is now largely impossible. Yet a tax of three per cent upon later unearned increments would take away the brass knucks from many a future battler in the economic battle. But enough for this time.

It is time for the Pittsboro school to have a domestic science class. The writer from observation is assured that such a class under a competent teacher would be of invaluable benefit to the community. It is admitted that room has been lacking for such a department, but if any rooms at all are to be built additional to the present school building, provision should be made for a domestic science department. The school has had a teacher training class, which has cost the state as much as a domestic science department would cost, while it has been of benefit to very few of Chatham county's young people. Moreover, the cost per pupil has been almost enough to pay the full expenses of a student at Boone, for instance. This year, the cost per pupil has been near \$300, while the boarding pupils had to pay their board. The sum of \$2000 spent in former years for the training class would mean much more, we feel confident, to the community if expended in a domestic science department.

MORE ABOUT "R".

"There is no contention," says the Greensboro News philologist, commenting upon our squib in the last issue, "that the native vocal equipment cannot handle 'r,' merely that it does not ordinarily use this consonant in an intermediate or final syllable when it can be avoided." But hasn't the gentleman been led into this assumption by the Northern fable that the Southerner says "suh" for "sir"? The writer happens to have lived in four Southern states, and several places in this one and Louisiana, but if he has ever detected such a general usage he has forgotten it. But we do recall as if it were yesterday how "Uncle Jacky" Vann, the patriarch of Buckhorn and owner of the only big white house on the old creek, had a by-word, "Hock, Sir," in which s-i-r was pronounced clearly and distinctly. It is just now that it has occurred to us that his "hock" was for "hark" (hark), but we doubt his knowing it anymore than the writer and the other people of the community who used the expression after him in fun knew what he was striking at. "Hark" was foreign to the Sampsonian language. The writer, though he has written columns, does not recall having ever used it before this minute.

But recurring to "sir"; not only was it pronounced with the full "r" sound, but in cases of enthusiasm or emphasis was made into "Yes, sir-ree," or "yes, sirree bob"—why the "bob" this writer qualifieth not. We grant, however, that when the stress is moved from the syllable, it is shortened, the vowel sound practically disappearing, and the "r" being greatly clipped. But that fact need not be attributed to any tendency in any sloven pronunciation against "r". The nunciation is to slur unaccented syllables. It is a rare Tarheel who pronounces distinctly the "g" in final "ing", and the "i" gets the veriest touch. In "Carolina", whose rhyming with "finer" by a poet brought up the question of the omission of r's by Carolinians, the raw native pronunciation omits the "o" rather than the "r"; the same omission occurs in Caroline, a woman's name. It was "old Miss Car'line Carter", in which the "Car" is pronounced "care", and thus in "Car'lina".

We further aver that there is no particular prejudice against "r", that it is seldom as a final sound lost altogether, though the fact that "er", "or", "ur", and "ir" occur so often in unaccented final syllables, accounts for the slurring of such syllables more frequently than that of almost any other kind. But it is only an occasional person in our observation who loses the "r" sound altogether and makes "sir" into "suh", and "mister" into "mistuh"; while practically all of us eliminate entirely not only the "g" in "ing" but also the nasal character of the "n" before "g". While we should leave it to a test to prove that the "o" in "Carolina" is omitted oftener than the "r".

We not only disclaim any unusual prejudice against "r", but go further and insist that there is a tendency, and a strong one, to add a shadowy "r" sound to words ending in

"a", and even in other vowels. Let our Greensboro brother ask the first dozen aged men he meets who managed McKinley's campaign and wore the dollar-mark coats in the cartoons, keeping his ears attuned, and see what answers he gets. The writer's paternal grandfather owned only one slave, and though master and slave have been dead nigh a hundred years, the writer knows full well that the slave was "old Hanner." In fact, the family name of Hanna is spelled in this section with an "er", while in Waynesville the family, probably a part of the Sandy Creek dispersion after Alamance, spells it "Hannah". Now, there is no disposition here to contend that Southern folk roll their "r", but only that they do retain at least the shadow, and not only so but add shadowy r's to words ending in "a" and sometimes to other final vowels. In the current Pathfinder is found a statement that a Florida citizen took notes on the streets of Miami as to the number of the pronunciations he heard of the word Miami. He heard 19 different variations, and what is in point here, eight of the variations he spells with a final "er", and another with a final "our", while an "r" is introduced into the middle of them. That certainly indicates a strong inclination to give a final "r" sound to one word ending in a vowel, but the people who so called the words were probably representative of the whole country, showing that the tendency mentioned is not confined to North Carolina.

But referring again to the rhyme Carolina and finer, it is a double-syllable rhyme and the accented syllables of the rhyme are "lin" and "fin". In such case only a very slight variation of the final a toward er would perfect, or at least make passable the rhyme.

Helen-Maria if it doesn't rhyme with friar. And the fact that "en" was taken by Mr. Dawes' hearers for "and" indicates that the dropping or elision of "d" is as common as that of "g", and certainly that of "r". No, Sir; there is no special pique against ol' r.

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YOUR CHILD AND MY CHILD

Fear Cultivation
"The other night," said Jane, "I was over at Laouise Prince's house, and her little Kenneth started to kick and stamp because she couldn't go out with us. You know Louise prides herself on not standing any nonsense from her children. 'Kenneth,' she said, 'if you don't stop this minute and behave, I'll call a policeman, and he'll put you into a big black prison.'"
"A prison wiv a bear in it" faltered Kenneth—his eyes big with fear.

"Yes, a great big black bear, who aets naughty boys," said Louise in her most awe-inspiring voice.

"Oh, I be dood! I be dood!" wailed Kenneth. Louise seemed to think she had managed him very well.

"How about their older boy, George?" asked Jane's sister. "I met Kenneth, Senior, yesterday and he told me they were quite worried about George. He's a great boy of fourteen and yet he is horribly afraid of the dark and so nervous and excitable they don't know what to do with him. They're talking of taking him to Dr. W.—the big nerve specialist, you know."

"That's just my point," rejoined Jane. "I suppose when he was a baby like Kenneth, Louise made him mind by treating him to tales of dark prisons and big black bears. Of course, he's nervous, who wouldn't be? Really, it's amazing in a sensible woman like Louise, isn't it? She doesn't plant deadly nightshade in her garden and expect it to bear roses. She doesn't feed her family on arsenic and expect them to wax strong and grow fat on it. Yet she plants fear in her babies' minds and then wonders why her children are nervous cowards!"—Mary S. Haviland, in "the Parents' Magazine."



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