

THE CHATHAM RECORD

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SELLING PITTSBORO

At last the faith of the people of Pittsboro themselves in the future of the old home town has been quickened. As pointed out several times in these columns, the former handicaps to the development of the town are no longer in existence or have been minimized. Whereas, only a few years ago, the largest clientele of the mercantile houses of the county seat could boast were the comparatively few hundreds or thousands within a radius of eight or ten miles. But good roads and the automobile have changed that condition, and today Pittsboro is within a half-hour's drive, at the legal rate, of nearly 25,000 people.

This fact has been discovered. The Record has been heralding the new condition abroad, and the editor personally discussing it where it would have an alluring effect. Others have seen the new opportunity, and all at once outsiders have become interested in the prospects of the ancient village.

This has broadened the vision of the home folk and inspired them a real endeavor. The faith of Mr. W. G. Fields, who is spending many thousands of dollars in the erection of stores, offices, and a theatre here, has been reflected in the hearts of many who formerly considered Pittsboro side-tracked forever. A new spirit prevails. Our people begin to see that what helps the town helps each of them, and no more convincing evidence of a new spirit of co-operation is required than the page advertisement paid for co-operatively this week by the merchants and other business men of Pittsboro. There is a candid effort to sell the idea of Pittsboro as the commercial center of Chatham county to the people of the county. The sales talk is true talk, and it is to be hoped that the people of the old county will respond heartily to the appeal.

County pride, recollection of the old days when Pittsboro and its people were a power in the state, and personal interest also, should appeal to the citizens of the county. Pittsboro was a town and furnished leaders for the state when Durham, Greensboro, and many other prominent towns were unborn. Despite its Rip Van Winkle sleep, due to odds against it, the old town has a prestige of a century and a half. Its very name Pittsboro is resonant of the most magnificent statesmen of old England in the 18th century. In short, its past is an asset of real value to the old county-seat, and is not to be duplicated by any of the new towns. It can be as modern and as busy as any of them and yet retain its sentimental values.

The Record adds its appeal to that of the Pittsboro merchants. Of course, we realize that they must deliver the goods. The people must be convinced that quality and values here are the equal, if not the superior, of those in the neighboring towns and cities. But there is no reason why they cannot be, and while we add our appeal to that of the Pittsboro business houses to the citizens of the county, we warn the merchants that this is a pivotal period. The fortunes of the town revolve upon their response to the opportunities of the occasion. Convince those who do come here to trade that it is to their interest and they will come again, and their neighbors will come. Yea; if the present opportunity is thoroughly utilized, it should not seem an unbelievable thing that Pittsboro

will be drawing trade from the area of these towns and cities that have so long batted upon the patronage of the people of a county of 25,000 population. If a city lady can save \$5 by buying in Pittsboro and getting a desired outing, it seems more reasonable that she should do so than that a Chatham county lady should trade in a city at a loss of \$5 for the sake of merely going to the city. It is safer to visit Pittsboro than to risk the traffic of the city, and there is no reason why it should not be as pleasant. A visit to a city is a treat to very few of us today.

Hurrah for Pittsboro and hurrah for Chatham county!

THE PROBLEM OF THE "THING-MINDED"

A high school principal asked the writer a few days ago whether he thought a boy or girl lacking sufficient mentality, at least of the kind to master the high school subjects, should be given a diploma if he should have attended the high school for four years and have done his best.

Our answer was, No. Our conception of the reason for granting a diploma is a mark of scholastic accomplishment, and we see no more reason for granting a diploma to a youth who cannot accomplish the work designated in the high school course than to give a football player a score for doing his best at the goal but missing it. However, doing one's best is in itself an achievement and deserves some kind of reward. But the error of having a youth undertake what he is not cut out for, of undertaking the impossible, cannot be corrected by giving him a diploma indicating that he has achieved the impossible. Such an award cheapens diplomas and discounts the value of scholarship in the view of those who can achieve. Only a high standard set for grades and diplomas can bring North Carolina high school work up to the desired excellence. But, mind you, the writer is far from considering all those who cannot make the grade in high school work as fools. There are "thing-minded" persons, and many of them. That is, some people have an ability to think in terms of things but not so well in symbols. The fool in algebra may beat the mathematical genius two to one in learning the structure of a machine, or the manipulation of a tool.

The misfortune is that the "thing-minded" is forced in the Pittsboro school, for instance, to attempt to work in a sphere for which his mentality is not fitted, and, if he should by force and awkwardness finally achieve a passing grade, he has attained something in which he has neither pleasure nor profit. He must find his way tardily into his proper sphere of activity and learn by experience, after his apprenticeship should have been largely served, the fundamentals of the "thing" life. His stay in the high school devoted to book-learning alone is not only valueless, but worse. He has lost the opportunity to devote his youthful days to the character of knowledge that is of practical benefit to him.

Whether the schools can accomplish what actual apprenticeship can for the thing-minded is a doubtful question. The interests, or the talents, of the group so vary that it would take a fortune to establish every kind of vocational plant needed and almost a university faculty to operate the school. For instance, we have seen youths with a mechanical turn of mind who profited as little from a course in high school agriculture, and found as little interest in it, as they would have found in Latin. Our own son, for instance, took two years under agricultural teachers, along with demonstration farm work, and could hardly have planted a row of beans in rainy weather so that they would come up. But he knew more practically about electricity from hanging around garages and helping just anybody that was working on a car than his

dad knew after a theoretical study of electric phenomena. One evening the youth failed to appear and all night the young chap was out. His father found him at sunrise the next morning helping a Clinton citizen who was trying to get a kink out of his car in time for a trip, and the two had stuck to the job all night, with hopes of hitting the trick the next minute and from sheer doggedness. Yet ten minutes in the garden was a bore to the youth, and the same was true in a Latin class, or even a history or English literature class.

The problem, then, would be to fit the schools and provide variety of interests. Whoever can solve it will be a benefactor to the thing-minded. Yet an agricultural equipment and a course in agriculture and allied subjects and a home economics equipment and instruction would provide educational advantages to many of the thing-minded, besides giving opportunity for the symbol-minded who may be also capable of equal achievement in thing-thinking, to do apprentice work in a vocational subject.

Home economics is absolutely needed in the Pittsboro school, and, if possible, an agricultural course combined with shop work. The teacher-training class operated here for several years, is of no real practical value to the town or county, and the per capita cost of training to the state, which has paid the bills, has been extremely high. We are confident that the fact that "the state pays it" is the only reason that the course has been retained, and that fact falls right in line with the suggestion quoted last week from Gerald Johnson in the Baltimore Sun, that the school funds are subject to all kinds of stupid raids. "If we don't take it, some other community will get it," is the argument; so it is taken. Then, when the legislature is in session, the heads of the various school departments estimate the needs for the next biennium upon the basis of what has been used, including the virtual extravagances such as are manifest in the per capita cost of something like \$250 a year per teacher-pupil here for mere instruction—a sum that would almost pay their entire expenses at the Appalachian School at Boone. And thus the vicious extravagances are perpetuated.

Recurring to that son of ours, it is only fair to say that we believe he can learn anything, but his teaching lacked the vitalizing touch with actualities and could not compete in attraction with the town and country full of real things. Accordingly we, sensibly we believe, let him get his education where his interests lay. He could not attend a mechanical college. He lacked the string of "units" necessary, and would have wasted years getting them with little else. He went to carrying a chain for a surveyor; directly he could use the instrument and make the calculations, was in fact a tolerably good practical surveyor. He went with a highway engineering team, and lo, within a short while he was carrying the leveling instrument and making calculations. Today he owns his own business within about 100 feet of a similar business operated by a University graduate, and we doubt whether any advantage is in favor of the latter. Therefore, not every "thing-minded" youth lacks ability in symbols, but some, as the youth in question, are thoroughly attracted by realities that they must have them to vitalize their interest in the theoretical. The writer took a course in surveying and navigation at college, and after eight forty years can, he assumes, calculate areas by the traverse tables or by triangulation; but in his course he peeped into a transit once or twice during the limited field exercises, and if he started to survey today would have to learn the use of the instrument. Accordingly, if you needed a surveyor, the boy who quit school in the ninth grade would do the job more certainly than the father who

took every branch of mathematics, he believes, that was taught in North Carolina 40 years ago.

Let the directors of the school system of the state chew upon these thoughts a bit.

WHY NOT AN INVENTORY?

The extraordinary development of schools in North Carolina and the expenditure of millions of dollars annually for their support have been largely based upon the idea that universal education means the industrial development of the state and the upbuilding of the moral fabric of the people. If this should not be a correct notion, then the expenditure of the many extra millions for high school and college facilities for the masses has been in great measure a waste and a disappointment.

There is scarcely another institution in the world that would not find out whether its aim of existence is being achieved. Even missionary societies delve into the records to discover the degree of their success. But it seems that no one in North Carolina has ever considered it of importance to undertake to discover whether the magnified school system is accomplishing what it was established to accomplish.

We suggest that an inventory would not be out of place. It is only too apparent that the penitentiary is getting an unusual share of the younger people. The state should be concerned to know who these young people are from the educational standpoint. Also, if the graduates who have swarmed from the high schools and colleges during the past ten years, say, are going to achieve the desired aims, it is possible at this time to discover the fact, or at least an indication of it.

We suggest that the roll of the high school graduates in 1919 and 1924 be called and every one accounted for, and that a list of vocations be drawn and the number of graduates in each vocation be published. While many have not struck their pace yet, it is, nevertheless, possible to get an idea, and a rather definite one, of the prospects of the achievement of the aims of the modern school developments.

Personally, we have no definite opinion as to the answer. It might be very gratifying or the contrary. We don't know. Do you? But wouldn't you like to know?

The Greensboro News declares that Al Smith did not father its use of the double conjunctive "if and when." Anyway, we were struck last fall with the frequent use of the double conjunctive by Al Smith in his radio speeches and straightway thereafter the double form began to appear in North Carolina newspapers. Moreover, as a close reader of the Daily News editorials, we are confident that the double form has been of the rarest use in them. This is the first time we have detected it ever. But it has been of frequent occurrence in other North Carolina papers the past ten months. We recall seeing it in the Biblical Recorder and the Harnett News the same week. We admit that "when" and "as" do not mean the same thing, but if McDonald does come to America and Mr. Hoover has an interview with him, it will necessarily be "when" he has come. Therefore the uselessness of the double form. Besides, "when" means "at what time," and as "if" usually implies the possibility of the event happening at no time, in that case we should have a word fixing the time of an event that may not happen at all.

The News gracefully admits its error of syntax into which it was led by the double conjunctive. Of course, the Record did not mean to use the phrase "double futurity." "Double" had appeared two or three times in the article and the printer evidently glanced at "doubtful" and took it for another "double." The editor of the Record does not have an opportunity to read its proof, but it is very seldom that we have occasion to lament such an error.

WHEN NEWS IS NEWS

(From The Hamlet News-Messenger)

The business of gathering, sorting, collating, verifying and interpreting news is a fascinating one, but like every other business or job it has problems peculiar to itself and not understood by the average outsider. Some of these problems are more vexing on a small paper where every member of the staff has from two to a dozen positions to fill than they are on larger papers where the work is more completely departmentalized. The editorial staff of the big newspaper consists of one or more persons whose sole duty is to write editorials; others have nothing to do except to collate and rewrite news which has been gathered by still other reporters. Then the business office is entirely separate from the editorial and is manned by business, advertising and circulation managers and their assistants, each of whom has some particular duty to perform. In the mechanical department the work also is apportioned there being men to set advertisements in type, others to set news matters in type, while still others handle the make-up of the pages and the presses.

On small papers such as The News-Messenger effort is made to departmentalize the work, but the same person must of necessity handle several. The same folks that gather the news must also sell the advertising, and then upon returning to the office must act as lay-out and rewrite men. The same typesetting machine must handle news, advertisements and job printing, and the same folks that have done the outside work must do the mechanical work, too. The natural result is that for the day or two before the paper goes to press every person and every piece of machinery is taxed to meet the demands made upon it.

Small papers like this cannot afford special correspondents and editors for sports, society and finance as the larger papers do. Baseball fans sometimes criticize the home paper because it doesn't do justice to sports. Women

and others interested in society sometimes think that the paper does not cover social affairs in sufficient details. An instance of this kind occurred recently. A social affair of more than usual interest to many of our readers occurred. The News-Messenger had no society editor who could be detailed to write it up. Every reasonable effort was made to get the story for the following week's paper. A representative of the paper called at the home of interested parties. No information upon which a story could be written was obtainable. Then two weeks later a full account of the affair was sent in to the office. It was just what we had tried to get, but when it came it was two weeks old. That part of the force charged with responsibility for such decisions decided that the news value of the article had been destroyed by the time lapsed and it was not printed. There was some criticism because it had been omitted, there would have been some criticism for handling stale news if it had been printed. The paper chose what it believed the lesser evil.

A newspaper is bound to be impersonal or it loses all of its standing as a real newspaper. We often have articles submitted with request for publication, when they really contain no news and would serve only to embarrass some other reader of the paper. Again we are frequently petitioned not to publish other items of real news value and which our duty to most of our readers requires us to handle. In every such case personalities and personal feelings are ignored and the decision reached, whether right or wrong, is that which in our judgment is for the best interest of the most folks. We make mistakes, of course; but we would like for all of our friends to understand that no items are omitted or published because of personal ill-will or friendship.

"Gee! Dis Is a Cinch"
Mrs. O'Brien—"Was your old man in comfortable circumstances when he died?"
Mrs. Finnegan—"No, 'e was under a train."—Judge.

A DEFINITE OBJECT

Do not save money just for the sake of saving. That isn't the idea at all. Have a definite object. Then thrift will have a new meaning to you.

Save to pay for a home; to give the children an education; to take that vacation you long for. Save to eventually have an income from your investments. Save to be able to start in business for yourself. Have some definite object in view—you can attain it. Let our bank help you. Start now.

THE BANK OF GOLDSTON

HUGH WOMBLE, Pres. T. W. GOLDSTON, Cashier
GOLDSTON, N. C.

HIT THE BALL HARD

—if you would win the game

And so it is in the game of life—we must hit the ball hard every working day—to win. Even then you are not winning the game if you are not saving a part of your earnings. You must lay aside a certain sum for a rainy day to win in the end. A savings account is the easiest way of building this fund. Come in today and discuss this very important matter with us—no obligation.

BANK OF PITTSBORO

PITTSBORO, N. C.