

THE CHOWANIAN

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PARAGRAPHS

Just to say it in a different way—"Happy Christmas" and a "Merry New Year!"

Come on, dumb Freshmen, Peanuts are not to eat but to feed.

Everything that comes down the chimney is not Santa Claus. You should have seen Martha Yates Seymour's hands on Friday.

The college fire-chief is calm, cool, and composed, and a real girl scout. When Maxine Hudgin's dress caught on fire at Woodland in the religious pageant, Spud Johnson calmly reached over and smothered it with her hands.

Really White Christmas is not a big snow or tons of sugar on the ground, but a chance to give something to those in need without getting anything material in return.

Every boom is followed by a depression; so equally as sad is that Christmas is followed by exams.

A woman is not an old maid when she is 25, but when she is too young to die and too old to have any fun.

The law of economics is that when a man sees another fellow wearing a hat like his he feels that his own good taste is proved; a woman under similar circumstances rushes home and gives her hat to the cook.

Answer this riddle:  
Murfreeboro is said to be the easiest place to get into and the hardest place to get out of in North Carolina. Could Chowan College be the reason?

SINGING IN THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

The Christmas season is always a season of music. It is the season of thankfulness and joy and these can be expressed in music better than any other way.

Through the years people have expressed their various emotions in music. Sorrow, despair, joy, and many other things have caused people to compose musical selections expressing their feelings. At the Christmas season, many have expressed their thankfulness for the Great Gift and their joy in the season itself. So it is that there are many selections

of Christmas music.

Many of us are not gifted so that we can express our emotions by composing so we have to resort to singing those things composed by others. Everyone likes to express his joy in the Christmas season and, as a result, much music is heard at that time.

There are still others of us who cannot express our joy in song because of musical ability is lacking. Since this is so, those who have musical ability are glad to give of their talent to others. So it is that at the Christmas season those who have musical ability give programs for the enjoyment of others.

Members of the college family and people of Murfreeboro are especially generous with their talents. At the college, the Glee Club gives a Christmas Vesper Service on the Sunday before the holidays. As a general rule, the choir of the Baptist Church gives a cantata on the Sunday before the holidays. In addition to these special programs, the glee club usually goes out carolling on the night before leaving for the holidays.

Happiness, thankfulness, and generosity make up the Christmas spirit. Happiness and thankfulness are best expressed in music of various types. Generosity is shown in many ways during the Christmas season. A very outstanding means of expressing generosity is the gift of their talent by those who have it for the benefit of those who have it not. Music is one of the best means of expressing the true spirit of Christmas and those of us who can not sing are grateful to those who can and do.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS HAVE BEEN SUNG SINCE 13TH CENTURY

Christmas comes again, and with it the singing of many old and familiar Christmas carols. We seldom pause long enough in the exultant and joyful spirit of the season to question the origin and meaning of the carols we sing so familiarly. The carols and Christmas go together because they were brought into the world at the same time, at least the carols as we know them today.

The word "Carol" is derived from the two words, "cantare", meaning "to sing", and "rola", an interjection of joy. Caroling means to sing joyfully. Being a species of folk art, the carol comes to us known in some countries as folk songs, in England as Carols and

in France as Noels.

Though in the early beginning the carol was secular and was in reality a song accompanied with dancing, having been danced by many performers by taking hands, forming a ring and singing as they went round, we have good authority for believing that the oldest carol was that sung by the heavenly host when the birth of the Christ was announced to the Shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem. The practice of singing carols at Christmas time likely came about as an imitation of this, particularly since the majority of the carols declare the good tidings of great joy.

The oldest known carol is that one written by Aurelius Prudentius of the fourth century, but it was Francis of Assisi who started the custom of singing Christmas carols. It was back in the time of the Manichean heresy—a denial of the Virgin Birth of Christ—that Francis began to focus the attention of the people upon the birth of Christ. In order to do this, he constructed a crib in the church near Assisi and placed around it an ox and a donkey, thus trying to represent the Holy Night at Bethlehem. People crowded into the church, and while the torches flared, they sang hymns,—spontaneous outbursts of joy. That was in 1223. In this way Francis of Assisi succeeded in reminding the people of Christ's Virgin birth.

Carols were not always strictly religious. One writer has said that among the carols we may find "secular tunes sanctified and the sacred tunes popularized". At first they were sung between the acts of the mystery plays. Many of them are based on old legends and may be classed as story-telling carols. There are tree carols, nature carols, dealing with birds and flowers, and carols built around the childhood of Christ. Of the latter there are a great majority emphasizing both the human life of Jesus and the prominence of his Virgin Mother. The appearance of the angels and the Wise Men and carols which welcome and bid farewell to Christmas prove popular themes.

It is well to distinguish between the carol and the hymn. A hymn is a more elaborate composition with particular attention given to the music and the words and is sung in a more subdued manner than the carol, which is meant to be pictorial and employs simple and concrete language. Facts and first hand knowledge rather than reason and deduction is a distinguishing feature between the hymn and the carol.

During the Reformation Christmas carols, festivities, and even Christmas itself were suppressed. The spirit of joy and happiness was looked upon unfavorably as being pagan. The Pilgrims abhorred the thought of joy on Christmas. For them it was a day of hard work at their usual secular tasks.

As practiced in England, carolers would go from house to house, and frequently were invited inside for refreshments. This custom is growing to be more popular in America. Many groups in various churches gather together on Christmas Eve and in one large group go from one home to another, singing the good tidings of peace and great joy.

Many are saying that we have lost the true spirit of Christmas and that Christmas has become too commercialized. If this is true, we may well consider the carol as a means of bringing back the true Christmas spirit—that of good cheer, neighborliness, good-will among men. "The first Christmas morning," says an old writer, "was a time of rejoicing. In the heavens the angels sang the first Christmas carol, heralding the birth of the Savior!"

Miss Jeannette Valentine was the week-end guest of November 28 with Miss Florine Farless in Colerain.

Misses Mattie Gray Hoggard, Virgie Cowan, and Margaret Miller were the Thanksgiving dinner guests of Miss Elizabeth Brett, of Murfreeboro of the class of 1936.

SCIENCE NOTES

With "Truth" as its motto, Harvard University fittingly closed its tercentenary celebration with the historic pledge to continue the search for truth. The renewal of this pledge is fitting for other reasons. The parade of painstakingly acquired knowledge which featured the tercentenary could not have failed to open the eyes of the savants to the vastness of the physical, mental, and spiritual worlds still unconquered. For them to fail to dedicate themselves to further effort in the search for truth would have been to manifest a sense of smugness—resting on the accomplishments of the past—or of indifference.

The president of Harvard, Dr. James B. Conant, chemist, quoted Ralph Waldo Emerson, who speaking of the American scholar almost one hundred years ago, declared that the scholar is that man who must take up unto himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. As this specification with the passing of time becomes increasingly difficult, and with this "unquiet modern world which inventions have compressed to the size of Emerson's America", Dr. Conant pleads that the burden be borne not by one individual or group, but by those who live in many lands.

Truth as an abstract force and freedom of inquiry is now as ever before and ever will be, a crying need of the hour. It is undeniably significant that the decline of the by-products of ignorance—prejudice and intolerance—has accelerated with the growth of knowledge and freedom of inquiry. They fade in the light of truth.

B. S. U. COLUMN

A meeting of the general B. S. U. was held at the regular time Thursday morning, December 3, during the chapel hour. After a devotional led by Lowell Sodeman and Mattie Gray Hoggard, Madeline Modlin, who was presiding, announced a plan of socials for week-ends at the college. Ruby Caudle, Y. W. A. leader, announced the purpose and the plans of Lottie Moon Christmas offering this year. The main feature of the program was a talk based on personal experiences by Norman L. Blythe.

At the regular B. S. U. Council meeting Thursday night, December 3, plans were made to encourage attendance at the various organizations through the membership committee, the leaders of the organizations, and the B. S. U. president.

Dr. Frank H. Leawell, executive secretary of the Southwide B. S. U., will be on Chowan campus February 11-12, 1937. Mr. Perry Crouch, secretary of Christian education in North Carolina, will come with him. Dr. Leawell will meet with the B. S. U. council on Thursday and conduct chapel Friday.

The B. S. U. Council sponsored a "Sunrise Service" in the ravine Thanksgiving morning. Eleanor Daniel presided, and after a brief devotional Miss Ivey Gravette, the Council advisor, gave a short but very impressive Thanksgiving message concerning thoughts well to be observed on Thanksgiving Day.

Florence Ward, chairman of the entertainment committee, with the B. S. U. Council has made arrangements for all college students to enjoy a social hour each Saturday night from 7:30 until 9 o'clock. This social hour is held for the benefit of those students who remain at the college during the week-ends. Both the day students and the co-eds are invited. The first social was held Saturday night, December 5, and proved to be quite a success.

The membership contest for the month of November won 25 new members. The Eunice McDowell Union, with Walter Dudley as pre-Murfreeboro of the class of 1936.

BOOK WORM

An old, musty book entitled "Letters From An American Farmer" is not one which most of us would feel an immediate urge to read; however, the date 1793 might rouse our curiosity sufficiently to cause us to look into it. Such a book is in the Chowan College library, and contains letters of J. Hector St. John, a farmer of Pennsylvania, written to the Abbe Raynal of England. After returning to England from a visit to America, and in the home of Mr. St. John, the Abbe wrote and desired him to keep up a correspondence.

To us this request, though perhaps complimentary, would not be a cause for extraordinary amazement and consternation. In the home of the St. Johns, however, it caused as much excitement as would the explosion of a bombshell in the front yard. Writing letters was not as simple a matter as it is in our day. Mr. and Mrs. St. John discussed the matter at great length, read and reread the letter to make sure of its contents, and finally called in the minister for a consultation.

We find some pithy comments during the course of their discussion. Mrs. St. Johns was astonished that her husband actually contemplated such a correspondence. "Wouldst not thee," she said, "be ashamed to write unto a man who has never in his life done a single day's work, no, not even felled a tree; who hath expended the Lord knows how many years in studying stars, geometry, stones, and flies, and in reading folio books? Who hath travelled, as he told us, to the city of Rome itself! Where is it that these English folks won't go?"

The minister, however, was encouraging: "Although he is a man of learning and taste, yet I am sure he will read your letters with pleasure; if they be not elegant, they will smell of the woods, and be a little wild; I know your turn, they will contain some matters which he never knew before."

His wife, practical soul, though relenting, was still skeptical, and warned: "If thee persistest in being such a foolhardy man, let it be kept a secret among us; if it were once known abroad that thee writest to a great and rich man over at London, there would be no end of the talk of the people; some would vow that thee art going to turn an author; some would say this, some would say that. Therefore, let it be as great a secret as if it was some heinous crime. I would not have thee, James, pass for what the world calleth a writer; no, not for a peck of gold, as the saying is." The good wife did not approve of writers.

The letters which follow well prove that the minister was correct in his conjectures. They are written with a freshness and naivete which undoubtedly delighted the Abbe Raynal, for he was moved to publish them both in England and America.

An interesting feature of the copy in the Chowan library is the signature upon the title page of W. H. Murfree, who founded Murfreeboro. Mrs. H. McD. Spiers presented the book to Chowan.

Of quite a different type is a little book called "Mental Improvement". It consists of a series of conversations among members of a family, designed to instruct the youth of 1809. It is not only instructive, but extremely remarkable to us to note the words of wisdom issuing from the children of this family.

Fancy Cecilia, aged twelve, making the following statement: "I thank you, dear mamma, in the name of my brothers and sisters, for the pleasure you have given us in allowing us to accept Farmer Dobson's invitation to his sheep-shearing. We have passed a very agreeable afternoon, both from the civility of the honest farmer and his wife, and the novelty of the scene, which was very striking to us. It reminded me of Thomson's description of a sheep-shearing, which, with your leave, I will repeat."

Her mother grants her leave. (Continued on page 3)

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