THE CONCORD TIMES

PUBLISHED MONDAYS AND THURSDAYS

Entered as second class mail matter at the post-office at Concord, N. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

One of the most thought-provoking editorials we have read in recent months appeared in The Charlotte Observer several days ago, dealing with modern conditions, habits and customs. The editorial dealt with conditions that confront the young man and young woman of today, and at the same time discussed ably and sensibly the obligations that face the parents because of the conditions which the young people must meet.

The editorial is so worth-while that we give it in full to our readers, with the hope ethat parents will read it to their children:

The greatest menace to the American Nation today is not any sort of "yellow peril" or possible war. It is not the possibility of the repeal of the Volstead law or an amendment to prohibit the manufacture and use of tobacco. It is not the possibility of a "wet" President or a Catholic President, nor even the power of the Ku Klux Klan.

The greatest menace to the Nation, to its institutions and to the freedom of a liberty-yoving people is the growing disrespect for all that our fathers held sacred or regarded with veneration—lack of respect for all authority and law. The Bible, the Constitutions of the Nation and the States, the moral code and the principles of good citizenship, including honesty and clean personal habits, taught the children by the fathers and mothers a generation ago—all are being not only disregarded but even sneered at by an ever-growing element of our people.

It has already reached the point that a man who had a pious mother who taught him as a child the fundamentals of Christianity and good citizenship and instilled in his young mind the highest moral code would be ridiculed in many quarters today were he to admit that he still believed in the principles she taught him. He would be regarded by many as in same same class with grown-ups who still believed literally in the child's interpretation of the story of Santa Claus. And those who would point the finger of ridicule at him would not be those alone who are regarded as criminal or 'low brows" or "rough necks," but also and more particularly a large section of the perfectly respectable element of the population—those who have enjoyed educational advantages, had plenty of books, magazines and newspapers to read and been reared within the sound of many church bells.

There is abroad in the land something of a mania, for tearing down the landmarks, for wiping the halo from about the heads of the heroes of the past and for ridiculing all that men of former years and decades venerated and held sacred. There are those who stand ready to applaud those who undertake to cast reproach upon the name of George Washington and other patriots who laid the foundations of the peace and freedom and prosperity we enjoy today. There are those who are ever ready to enjoy a good laugh when some one will ridicule anything that men for generations have revered. With an ever-increasing multitude of respectable people even the institution of marriage is a funny joke and conspicuous violators of the marriage relation are regarded as deserving of honor for the courage they display in smashing the conventions.

Let some intellectual pervert write a book portraying a libertine as a hero or a harlot as a heroine and an ever-increasing number of perfectly respectable people will rush to spend their own money and that of their creditors to swell the royalties of the author. Let some blasphemer write a book making a vicious attack upon the Bible or the Church, or portraying the ministry as entirely composed of hypocrites, adulterers and money grabbers, and it becomes immedeiately a "best seller." Let a minister speak an unfavorable word about such a book and immediately there goes up a chorus of denunciation of him.

Suppose the number of those who have no respect for the Bible, the Church, the Constitution, the law or any constituted authority continues to grow until they constitute a decisive majority of our population, as a large element of the respectable people seem to desire. Suppose the tribe of the worshippers and followers of the Sinclair Lewises and the Rupert Hughes and the Earl Carrolls should continue to increase as it has during the last five or ten years until they become powerful enough to do away with the Constitutions and laws, churches, ministers and Bibles? What then? What have they to offer to take the places of these civilizing influences? Nothing. Back to barbarism and anarchy and chaos—every man a law unto himself. Such would be the logical result.

That is why thoughtful people—people who look ahead and think of the future and are concerned about the welfare of their children and grand-children—sometimes are distressed by the tendency of the times.

It is encouraging, however, to believe that the pendulum has about reached its extreme and that it is about to swing back the other way. Far-seeing ones already claim to discern a tendency to halt the reckless drift. Possibly the present situation is but the afterwath of the World-disrupting War. It must get better—or worst.

MUNICIPAL BUDGET INCREASES.

How municipal budgets are advancing in America is revealed in a survey made recently by the National Municipal League which tells us that there was an increasee in the tax rate in 1926 over 1925 of 54 cents on the thousand dollars which may not seem very much but in a city like New York that insignificant increase would amount to $7,000,000. In Charlotte it would amount to $54,000.

In the ten-year period from 1904 to 1913, the average bond issues of State and local governments amounted to 302 million dollars, whereas from 1913 to 1920, the same bond issues aggregated 507 million dollars.

In the last seven years such borrowings as are represented by bond issues have totaled $7,455,000,000, an annual average of around $1,260,000,000.

The gross bonded debt of State and local governments at the end of 1925 was $13,462,000,000, which less the cash applied to sinking funds, would net a debt of $11,443,000,000 and this costs the taxpayers of these governments in interest charges alone annually $500,000,000.

Hubert Malkus writing on this theme in the Business Magazine says that at present, allowing for the new borrowings in 1926 and the comparatively small amount of bonds retired during the year, the total net debt is something more than twelve billion dollars, and the interest charges this year will be more than $525,000,000.

At the end of 1923 the net debt of State and local governments was $8,689,740,000, and bonds floated in 1924 and 1924 increased this amount by $2,753,260,000. These figures do not take into account short term loans and special assessment bonds, which also are a burden on the taxpayers and a drain on the public treasuries.

In 1923, when the total net bonded debt was more than eight billion, State and local governments spent, in interest and retirement of bonds as they came due, $1,072,000,000. By 1925 the net debt had increasede to nearly eleven and a half billion dollars, an accumulation of 32 per cent. Presumably, the outlaw on the debt account increased proportionately and in 1923 was slightly under a million and a half, the estimated amount that will be necessary to maintain our credit this year.

NEW ROUTE FOR P. & N.

Increase in land values, or rather an increase in prices demanded for land lying between Charlotte and Winston-Salem, is said to have caused the Piedmont and Northern Railway officials to withdraw from the Interstate Commerce Commission their request to continue the lines of the company from Charlotte to Winston-Salem.

Several weeks ago officials of the interurban line made inquiry from the commission about the extension, being in doubt as to whether permission had to be secured from the commission before the extension could be made. Before the federal body had opportunity to rule in the matter the interurban officials withdrew the request, explaining that rights of way were costing so much along the proposed line that a new route might be chosen, going from Charlotte to Durham, via Stanly county.

No doubt a cheaper right of way can be secured along that route for that county is not built up like that from Charlotte to Winston-Salem. Property owners along the proposed new route should offer their land cheaper because it would bring less at sale than land on the upper route, extending through Concord, Salisbury and Lexington.

Too, the Piedmont and Northern could not get half as much business along the lower route. Part of the section is without rail facilities, it is true, but no doubt this is due to the fact that there is no urgent need for such facilities. If that country had been rich in resources or manufacturring plants some rail line would have traversed it long ago.

We do not think the P. & N. should be "held up" by land owners, but at the same time these officials should understand local conditions when they compare the prices asked for land on the two proposed routes. The difference in accessible business along the two routes easily explains in one way, at least, the difference in the land values.

Representative men from Concord, Salisbury, Lexington and Winston-Salem are to meet early next week to go into the matter, in the hope that a satisfactory scale of land values can be reached whereby the upper route can be followed. It should be borne in mind by the land owners that their property will materially increase in value with the coming of the railroad and that while they are not affered as much as they would like to have, the property purchased by the interurban will make their other land so valuable that in the long run they will be benefitted.

OUR PRISONS GROWING IN NUMBER.

From February 1st to March 31st, 1927—two months—the state's prison received 141 prisoners, 52 of these were negroes, 86 white, and 3 Indians. All these were males except 3. Women are in the majority at church, but the prisons tell another story. Of these 141 prisoners, 38 whites and 13 negroes were under 20 years of age and all of them except 32 were under 30 years of age. Among the crimes for which these prisoners were sentenced there were 16 for second degree murder, 13 for manslaughter, 14 house-breaking, 55 larceny and receiving, and 13 highway robbery. These five crimes include 111 of the 141. The two months brought a 5 per cent. gain in the State's prison population and we may safely assume that there was a like gain in the prison population of the County jails and chaingangs. These figures which have been gathered from The Prison News present a serious if not alarming state of affairs. White boys and young men under 30 years of age number 70, practically one-half of the entire group. The negroes seem to be doing better while the whites grow worse. This appears to be true of the boys especially when we recall that of the 52 boys under 20 years of age 39 were white boys and 13 colored boys, a ratio of three to one. These figures indicate that a crime wave of youth, and of white boys in particular is more than a product of the imagination. It is a reality.—N. C. Christian Advocate.

Surely this is one of the perplexing problems confronting not only North Carolina but all other States as well. Visit any court house during trial of criminal cases and no doubt you will be struck by the number of white prisoners. Time was, and it has not been so long ago, when most of the prisoners at the bar were negroes. Times have changed. Especially is this true with certain cases, such as larceny, store-breaking and auto stealing. It is a rare thing that a negro is arrested in North Carolina charged with the theft of a car, yet every day scores of white persons are arrested on supch a charge. Most of the persons guilty of this crime are young white men, many of them too lazy to work and many of them bootleggers who find it more profitable to transport their contraband in someone else's car.

During the last session of the General Assembly the proposal was made that the State purchase more land for a State Farm. Many raised objection, declaring the State needed no more land. Then it was pointed out that the number of prisoners was increasing so rapidly that the State has to have somewhere to put them. That plea more than anything else was responsible for the passage of the bill giving the State money and authority to purchase more lands for additional Prison Farms.

INDUSTRY TO SMALL TOWNS.

Industry is now looking to the small town says Public Service, commenting on the modern advantages offered by the small town as compared with a few years ago.

"There was a time," says that paper, "when industry flocked to the centers of population. That was because power, transportation and telephonic communication facilities were available only in such centers. Now power, transportation and communication are at hand in the small places and in the outskirts of the large centers, and better living conditions and lower cost of living are generally found outside the big cities.

"Long-distance telephone lines and transmission wires stretch for hundreds of miles to small towns and farms far distant.

"The electric utilities have perfected so-called 'super-power systems' through inter-connection or transmission line resources and development of great hydro-electric and steam plants. The "back to the farm" movement has become a reality and small towns can now look to the time when they will have thriving industries."

Governor McLean is a robust man and has enjoyed excellent health most of his life. Yet he finds it necessary to get away from the 'grind" at the capital. He had an attack of influenza several weeks ago and because he did not surrender to it at the time, has been forced to fight recurrences of the disease. Now he is going to the woods of the northwest in an effort to get rid of the malady and build up his reserve. This thing of being Governor is not an easy job. It's the kind of job that gets next to any reasonable man and the Chief Executive is wise to take time off to recuperate from the rigors of the work.

WHAT HAVE THEY TO CONCEAL?

The Associated Press reported Friday that counsel for the United States government, Owen Roberts and Atlee Pomerene, had sought and obtained from the District of Columbia supreme court a continuance until May 23 of the trial of the case charging criminal conspiracy against Harry F. Sinclair and Albert B. Fall in connection with the lease of the Teapot Dome oil reserve. The reason given was that the government wanted to continue its search for two important witnesses.

The missing witnesses are James E. O'Neil and H. M. Blackmer and their cases are among the most startling in connection with the oil scandals. O'Neil is or was, president of the Prairie Oil and Gas Company while Blackmer is or was chairman of the board of directors of the Midwest Refining Company. They are men of wealth, influence and prominence in the oil industry. In fact at one time they were considered among the leaders of the oil business. But here we find them missing for several years, apparently in an effort to hide something.

What has happened to them is summarized by the New York World:

"Both left the United States for Europe suddenly in January, 1924, soon after the disclosure of the Continental Trading company deal, out which the government alleges Fall received $230,000. These two men were wanted by the government as witnesses at the time of the Cheyenne suit for recovery of Teapot Dome in 1925. They refused to return from Europe. In 1926 Congress adopted the Walsh acts, giving the courts authority to summon Americans home from foreign lands through the agency of the American consuls. To this authority Congress attached a penalty of confiscation of property up to a maximum estimated value of $100,000 for those who failed to answer to subpoenas. American consuls in Europe set out at once to serve subpoenaes on Blackmer and O'Neil. The two men fled. No consular officer in Europe has been able to discover where they are hiding. Now counsel for the government in Washington throws up its hands * * and decides to ask for postponement."

The action of government counsel indicates that they hope to have these witnesses by the latter part of May. They do not disclose the information on which they base this hope and the chances are that the trial will have to be held without them. These men have been given opportunity aplenty to come forward voluntarily and since they have refused to do this and have concealed themselves so well that their arrests have not been made, there seems little likelihood that they will be on hand when the trial begins. Concerning their action The Greensboro News says:

"It is a curious spectacle which in the minds of those who view it can be interpreted in only one manner. Here are wealthy, prominent, successful, respected and nationally (even internationally) known leaders in the oil industry apparently abandoning their country to seek cover in foreign countries rather than testify in the Teapot Dome conspiracy case. They have been away, so far as the government knows, three years and four months. They will remain away, so far as anybody else can tell, as long as there is any danger that they will have to testify, even at the risk of a heavy fine, provided the subpoenas are served."

The government might successfully begin the trial without the men on the assumption that their absence will strengthen the case. Most any juror could be made to believe that something was radically wrong when men like these leave the United States and refuse to come back or allow their movements to be known.

That fact alone, it seems to us, is enough to convict Sinclair and Fall. They have something to hide apparently, or they would want the missing witnesses as badly as does the government.

After the decision in the Doheny case we imagine O'Neil and Blackmer will stay where they are. No doubt they would have been home before this had the Doheny case been favorable to the defendants. But with the Suprtme Court ruling in no uncertain manner in this case the missing men no doubt feel they had better stay where they are, and let Sinclair and Fall get along as best they can.

MUST LIVE WITHIN INCOME.

Dr. E. C. Brooks is telling the county commissioners just what is expected of them under the terms of the new county government act. They must either curtail expenses and live within their income, levy a higher tax, or increase the valuation.

It is plain that one of the three things must be done and it is easy to say which one ought to be done in most counties. In many counties the revaluation is not going to show much of an increase and it is out of the question to raise taxes. The only logical thing to do is to try to cut down expenses somewhere.

"There are many counties in the state that for years have been expending more for general county expenses than they have received in revenue from the 15 cents tax," explained Dr. Brooks. "In fact, they have been evading the constitution, by borrowing from time to time to meet current expenses, and then when they have piled up a big debt, have authorized bond issues in liquidating it. Thus they have really voted an additional tax for purposes which the constitution says the rate must not exceed 15 cents for each $100 valuation.

"Nor has this been confined to the counties alone. The same condition has existed in the special school tax districts. Of course there is no limit to the tax rate which may be levied to support the six months school term. But in those counties where there are special school tax districts, where an additional tax has been levied to provide for two or three months additional school besides the six months term, the tax rate is fixed by a vote of the people and cannot be changed except by popular vote. Yet, in many of these districts, much has been spent that is derived from the special tax, and in order to make up the deficit, the districts have borrowed, just as the counties have done—and then asked for a bond issue to wipe out the debt. This also, technically speaking, was unconstitutional, since it in reality imposed a heavier tax than the law allowed."

County authorities should readily fall in line with the terms of this act. Once the plan gets underway the business of government can be more easily managed and counties at least will know how they stand financially. Like it has been under the old law money was borrowed whenever needed without thought to the future, no one cared about the county debt, and business was run in a slip-shod manner. With the new law there will be a system under which county officials can tell at all times just what they have on hand.

The Cantonese refuse to accept responsibility for the Nanking outrages. They insist that the British and American ships bombarded the city, and for this reason no reparations are to be made exceept for damage to the American consulate. Eugene Chen, the Cantonese foreign minister, lays all of the blame either on the foreigners or on the defeated soldiers, indicating that his own men did nothing unlawful. There will be another note from the foreign governments, no doubt, and an effort will be made to impress upon the Cantonese the feeling that they are responsible for the deaths of the American and British subjects in the city.

LICENSE TO FISH.

Statesville Daily.

Fisherman will take notice that beginning April 1—and this is no April fool—fishermen must have authority from the State to fish. A summary of the law contained in a press dispatch says that as a perliminary to fishing in "any public fresh water streams, ponds, lakes, with reel, jointed rod, or both, or by cashing with rod of any description," a resident county license fee of $1 must be paid. Two dollars will obtain a permit to fish in any county. Non-residents of the State must pay $3. Fishermen "must wear a button showing license number."

In the language of Uncle Remus, we "gin it" as it was "gin" to us. Fishermen must make their own interpretations. The editor of the Greensboro News, who is a fisherman of class, deposes and says that the law draws a distinction between "fishing" and "angling," although he is not sure the Supreme court will draw the distinction. But as the News man understands it, one can drop a sinkered hook and worm straight down into the water for cats and the like, without paying tribute to Caesar and being labeled. But he mst beware the machinery equipment of the modern fisherman and confine himself to the straingt up and down business if he would play safe. One may be reasonably safe, it is assumed, until wardens are appointed who will go about looking for labels on fishermen. What will be premissible without the lable is for the fisherman to find out if he would avoid conflict with the law. As yet, not having seen a copy of the act, this paper can't advise with safety.

The Southern Baptist Convention will meet in the Armory, Louisville, Ky., on Wednesday, May 4, 1927, beginning at 9 a. m., and is expected to adjourn on the following Sunday evening. The preacher of the convention sermon will be Rev. Wallace Bassett, D. D., of Texas, or his alternate, Rev. J. R. Jester, D. D., of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Railroad rates will be on the basis of one and one-half fare for the round trip.—Charity and Children.

One great trouble with all the auto shows was that none of them exhibited a satisfactory parking place.—New York Tribune.

COUNTY FINANCE

Charlotte Observer.

Recently The Observer gave ... Wager, in The University ... County Fiscal Control Law ... formation to county boards. ... law known as the County Finance ... of which is equally important to ... In the last issue of The News ... undertakes explanation of the ... law, which is designed to prevent ... going too deeply in debt, through ... of borrowing. Under Wager's ... law, a county may borrow for ... in anticipation of taxes up to 80 ... amount of uncollected taxes and ... revenue for the current fiscal year ... loan is repaid not later than 30 ... expiration of such fiscal year. ... borrow for the purpose of paying ... or interest of bonds or notes ... months, and not otherwise adequate ... and such loan shall be payable ... end of the next succeeding fiscal year.

A county may borrow money in ... the receipts of the proceeds of the ... to an amount not exceeding the ... ized amount of the bond issue. ... be paid not later than three years ... the order authorizing the bonds take ... maturing in less than six months ... of by public or private negotiation ... of public notice. Notes maturing ... months from date of issue shall be ... manner as bonds, that is, upon ... after the sale has been advertised ... days.

a tax sufficient to pay the principal ... of the bonds when due shall be ... and collected. Bonds shall mature ... time of the improvement for which ... sued. The act establishes what shall ... the maximum life of each type of ... each type of roads which may be ... The present floating indebtedness ... may be funded if such funding bonds ... before July 1, 1927; otherwise ... become an item in next year's budget ... bonds must mature within 15 years ... funding bonds within 20 years, and ... stallment become payable within two ...

After the introduction, and at ... before the final passage of an ... issuance of bonds for school purposes ... statement shall be prepared by a ... for the purpose, showing the existing ... and what percentage of the assessed ... constitutes. The total school debt ... shall not exceed five per cent of ... valuation of such county; provided, ... if any county shall assume all outstanding ... ness for school purposes of every ... limit of the net debt of such county ... purposes shall be eight per cent ... school purposes there is also established ... cent limitation, with the provision that ... debt in excess of four per cent may ... as much as two per cent. These limits ... apply when funding or refunding ... templated, for such bonds do not ... debt. They merely substitute one ... tion for another.

Bonds issued for other than necessary ... must be submitted to a vote of the people ... of a clause to that effect in the Constitution ... issued for necessary purposes do not ... sanctioned by popular vote unless ... instances the Legislature so enacts. ... for necessary purpose under the provisions ... act must be submitted to the voters ... a petition to that effect, signed by ... the voters, is filed within 30 days ... publication of the order. If a ... votes case in the election are opposed ... issue the order must be repealed. ... is necessary in order to issue funding ... bonds.

The act also contains a detailed ... processes to be followed in floating ... safeguards against the misappropriation ... proceeds, and many other pints.

VETERANS LOAN ACT LEGAL THEM GET HOMES

Raleigh Times.

The decision of the Supreme Court ... holds the constitutionality of the Veterans ... Act, under the provisions of which ... issue bonds whose proceeds will be ... making long term loans on first ... soldiers of the World War who may ... quire homes, was in the nature of a ... resulted from a test case designed ... definitely certain technical doubts as to ... of the act in contemplation of the ... State's credit. The chief of these ... that the act might be considered ... and that it was paternalistic.

How the loan fund will work in ... question open to some doubt. It ... suggestive of a bonus. Its provisions ... a real effort on the part of all ... selves of it to become bona fide ... has been unqualifiedly endorsed by the ... people. It is thus clearly designed ... policy.

The sounder construction of ... to do with discrimination in the ... class and not with extending the ... law to certain individuals who may ... its special forms. We might as well ... sions for Confederate Veterans is ... As well as legislating for a particular ... veterans, with the approval of the ... doubtless be competent and in ... policy to vote a benefit to one man ... of his service. As for paternalism, ... hour for that to be urged against ... when the principle has been carried ... the whole people.

Soon it will be up to the veterans ... to show finally whether the law was ... taken. It will be shown the one ... loans from the fund are taken up ... actually in accordance with their ... moting homesteading.

JUDGE LINDSEY'S MISTAKE

Christian Advocate.

Dr. J. M. Rowland, editor of the ... Christian Advocate, hits straight ... the following and we desire to ... "Judge Lindsey has made a fatal ... has brought about his downfall. ... what many specialists are in danger of ... they get so absorbed in one line and ... their, pet hobbies to the other ... has played the fool. He became ... the belief that religion and the ... of virtue and home are not the ... He became half crazed with ... which could he thought be reached ... did not go by the cross and take in ... mandments. He proposed for ... the redemption of the race and ... as men do the animals. He assaulted ... our standards of marriage and is ... preaching free love and the breaking ... old standard foundations of life ... our bulwark. The judge lost his ... other man will lose his seat and ... things of life who follow this ... no reforms—no social programs—no ... that can work the redemption of ... we leave out religion and the ... No man who does not exalt ... judge on the bench or to be in any ... to the people as a leader and ... tion.