

THE WEEKLY PILOT

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THE COST OF LIVING

In the continuous kick about the cost of living people overlook the one big factor, and that is the burden of war taxation. We have a debt of about twenty-five billion dollars, which is so great that nobody comprehends what it means. But if we figure that it is twenty-five billions to be paid by a hundred millions we can see by simple division that it is \$250 for every man, woman and child in the country, or about a thousand dollars for the average family. With the debt we have the interest to pay, and with that the running expenses of the state and general governments.

This country has to pay off that big debt, which it is doing right now, and it has to pay the interest on it right along. It also has a big expense of army, navy and other costly functions to pay. As we are all afraid to pay our tax outright we sugar-coat it by various round-about methods and every time it takes a new round it adds to the amount. We put a tax, let us say, on sales, which congress is discussing now. The man who makes the sale at the factory pays the tax, and he charges the cost in the goods the distributor buys. He also makes the price a little higher to cover the cost of collecting the tax from the jobber. The jobber passes it along and he adds his profit on his goods he adds a same amount on the tax, for he does not carry tax and costs separate. The wholesaler counts on say five per cent profit on his sales. He gets five per cent profit on the taxes also, for he merely adds his profit on what his stuff cost him. The merchant figures on fifteen to thirty per cent profit on what he paid, so by the time the tax reaches the buyer it has had half dozen profits added and we who buy pay the tax and the profits.

Or if the tax is laid on something else it all gets around to the final buyer, for no one else will take up the costs and lose the money. And thus it is that on everything we buy we are paying a big added cost because of taxes. That added cost increases every time an additional man is added to the chain, and the only way to stop the increase of cost is to stop the collection of taxes that way. But people will not pay direct taxes, so taxes are laid on every conceivable thing that will disguise the collection. We protest against the high cost of living, and go on paying the bills, but we kick directly and forcefully at the taxes that we pay the state and county direct, although that is insignificant beside what we pay in taxes and collection fees on what we pay through the indirect methods.

Lots of people have paid more taxes on soda water than they have paid on direct collections to the community tax collector, but on the soda water never a protest has gone up. We can materially reduce our taxes if we cut down the amount of the useless things we buy, but if we reduce those things enough to affect the taxes that go to the government a levy will be put on something else. If we had the courage to pay our taxes direct we would see the cost of living take a quick tumble, but we have not the courage to do that. We insist on paying nothing that we can see, so we compel the government to put on us a pile of taxes that are in effect filched from our pockets without our knowledge, and we let it go with a kick against the high cost of living.

High cost of living is going to stay with us as long as the debt of the country calls for about a billion a year to pay off the principal and another billion or more a year to pay the interest, and another billion or more for general government expense including the tremendous cost of army and navy. Some further adjustments of prices are yet to come, but we are not going to see prices where they were eight years ago until the war debt is paid off, and it makes no difference what party is in power in the government nor in the state. The people have the big debt to pay and the interest on the big debt and it runs for many years before it is completed. We may think we can shift our taxes to the rich, or the rich may think they can shift the taxes to the poor, but it can't be done. The burden of taxation rests on production and consumption, and the only man who can dodge his share of taxes is the man who neither produces nor consumes, for if he produces he must pay his taxes in the expense of production and if he consumes he must pay his taxes in the final cost of what he buys. The rich pass the tax along in what they produce and sell, and the poor pass the tax along in what they produce and sell, and the rich pay the tax in what they buy, and the poor pay it in the same way, and the distribution is general. But in the long run the buyer settles the entire bill, rich man, poor man, beggar or thief. We can lessen the taxes we pay by buying less, and we can lower the cost of living by buying less, and there are the only ways we can have the slightest effect. But if the people generally do that some other plan for taxation will be laid, for we cannot escape paying the big debt and the big interest charge, and that means a burden of cost no matter where we turn. It is just as well to understand some of these things.

THE FLOODED RIVER BOTTOM

Last week the river bottom between Vass and Lakeview was about as high with water as it often gets, but there was this difference in getting through the water. In the past every man depended on his own efforts to get through. Last week the

state forces had mules at the river, and cars were towed through the water by men who were familiar with the road, and no charge was made. The mules pulled one car one way and then turned and pulled another the other way, and thus kept the traffic moving, and with but little inconvenience to the people.

It is worth noting that the present highway system of the state is working in a way that makes the state road a factor of convenience and not simply a passage way for those to get through who can get through. This has been one of the most trying winters known in this section for a long time, but the road department of the state has kept traffic going forward, and not only in Moore county, but in all the state. It has given the people a new idea of the use of roads, and a different conception of what they get in return for the money they are spending in taxes. If we compare the present manner of handling the roads with the method prevalent here twenty years ago when every fellow took a shovel and went out and dawdled a few hours on the road and called it road work we can see where we were a mighty easy suited people in that time. Now we see that roads must be built and handled in a systematic manner, and that such a method makes roads real arteries of travel instead of just a right of way.

It is not expected that we will soon again see such high water as flooded the river bottom last week, yet that flood is all the more argument for the new road that is to be built, and for the road to be located on the east side of the railroad. The water could not draw off from the road last week partly because the vent through the railroad does not allow it to flow freely, and it backed up over the road. Had it been possible for the water to draw off faster through the railroad opening it is not believed so much water would have dammed back over the highway. With the highway on the lower side of the railroad the highway would not be drowned out by backwater from the railroad. Probably before another big flood comes the new road may be built and ready for use. But if it is not it is a satisfaction to know that the road department of the state keeps the roads in shape to get through even if that getting through requires supplementary power on the part of mule teams.

CHEAP EGGS

Eggs are down in price and a good many are coming into the markets all over the county. This may seem to the farmer a hardship, but it is not costing very much to produce eggs just now if it is done intelligently. The hens forage for a good deal of their keep, and their feed should be made as nearly as possible on the farm. The farm that sells eggs to a profit will not sell the high priced eggs in limited numbers and get out on that basis. The eggs that are produced at the lowest cost and sold in the largest numbers will

be the money-makers of the poultry department.

The town folks and the mill folks can profit by the price of eggs when they are low. No food is better than eggs in liberal supply, and nothing is cheaper. We do not eat eggs and milk enough in North Carolina, and the appearance of the people shows it. Communities that eat liberally of eggs and milk do not see the girls with drug store complexions, but with native color that health gives, and which beats the powdered and painted face to the limit. Neither is there any come-back to an egg and milk complexion, none of that ghastly, cracked and sallow color that follows too long indulgence in those things the girls think are necessary to decorate their faces. Now that eggs are plentiful they should be made and kept a frequent article of table supply in every home.

And by the same token the farm can use eggs in great quantities just as profitably as to sell the eggs. Old Omar Khayyam, writing once about wine, said that, "I often wonder what the vinters buy, one-half so precious as the stuff they sell." The expression might be applied to eggs. If the people of North Carolina would make use of eggs on the table, in cooking, in pies, puddings, etc., like the people of some sections do, we would not have to worry so much about paying store bills for other eatables that are not so useful. One day a right prosperous farmer said to *The Pilot*, "I live at home, and in doing that I live. I raise on my farm stuff to eat, and don't think I eat at the second table. I feed my family on the best we make, and if any is left that is what I sell, but I feed my family first." The man who does that does not need to sell as much as the man who sells to pay a grocery bill.

If they cut out the standing army too much it may become too weak to stand.

Some motorists seem to think the roads in this section are a fine place to run across people.

Princess Theatre

SOUTHERN PINES, N. C.

Thursday, March 16th.

NORMA TALMADGE

in a Drama of Thrills and Mystery

DE LUXE ANNIE

Saturday, March 18th.

EUGENE O'BRIEN

THE PROPHET'S PARADISE

An Adventure Story of the Orient

Tuesday, March 21st.

CLARA KIMBALL YOUNG

—in—

EYES OF YOUTH

TWO PERFORMANCES—Commencing
at 7.30 and 9.00 p.m.

Southland Orchestra

Admission:—Orchestra, 30c. Balcony,
45c. Children, 15c. Plus war tax.

PERSONALS AND

Mr. T. J. Brooks, of G
passed the week-end in V

Mr. W. F. Thompson
week-end at his home in Tr

Mr. A. M. Cameron spe
of last week in Charlotte.

Miss Bertha Cameron c
from Oak Level for the w

Mr. J. C. Thompson, of
in Vass last Monday.

Mr. Stacy Brewer was in
last Tuesday.

Have you been into the
store yet?

Mr. R. L. Burns, of Car
in Vass on Tuesday.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Sta
on March 9th—a daughter

Mr. Reid W. Pleasants, of
was a caller at The P
Wednesday.

Mrs. Anna Gschwind and
Gschwind went to Sanford
day.

Mr. J. B. Muse has moved
ly from is home on Cam
one to Mr. W. T. Cox's pla

Miss Flora McQueen wa
at the Vass graded schoo
day.

Dr. and Mrs. Earl Hunte
ford, visited at the home
sie Thompson Sunday aft

Mr. D. C. McGill came
Wendell last Friday for a
home folks.

Messrs. W. B. Graham a
Brewer made a trip to Gol
week.

Mrs. J. M. Tyson and
John McLeod, visited re
Raleigh last week.

Mr. W. B. Graham retu
day night from a trip to S
lina.

Mr. H. R. Ihrie, receiv
Vass Milling Co., sold th
property of the company o

Mrs. Annie Fry, of Carth
ed Mrs. Stacy Brewer the
week.

McKeithen & Company
a warehouse built on the
rear of their store.

Prof. A. B. Cameron an
shaw were in Vass Wedne
Kershaw made an interest
the graded school in the a

Mr. Theo Berg, a mem
Peoples' Realty and Insura
Aberdeen, was a visitor in
terday.

If you don't make a
reading our ads, begin nov
much new information in
week.

Mr. G. E. Brewer, of B
was in Vass last Monday.
er is a candidate for the
of register of deeds in the
primary this year.

Mr. L. Weber, of New
has been visiting relatives
Wednesday for Reidsville
nied by his mother, Mrs. H
who will return to New
him.