

THE BLACKBIRD

Published by the Journalism Class of ROCKY MOUNT HIGH SCHOOL, Rocky Mount, North Carolina. Member of Quill and Scroll.

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Friday, February 12, 1937

EDITORIALS



FLUNKING FEES

Eight per cent of the students of Rocky Mount high school failed mid-term examinations. This percentage of failures is lower than normal, as the average for the state is nearly twelve per cent. However, the situation here could be bettered. The report of the state school commission agts the cost of education for North Carolina at \$20,160,148. The average daily attendance is 759,935 children. Juggling the numbers about, one finds that a pupil's education for the year takes \$26.52. By repeating the course, a student takes that amount again. Tough on the state treasury, eh? No—that money comes out of the pockets of tax-paying parents. In a few schools and colleges, students are required to pay a flunking fee. That is one way to cause a decrease in failures. What should be done about them here?

GREAT, GRAND, GLORIOUS GYM

Not much more must they mope; Centralites will soon have a gymnasium. Legal difficulties standing between Central High and the gymnasium have been met and smoothed. Students may now feel assured and grateful that this building will be constructed. It will stand as a tribute to the cooperation of the school board and of the city officials. Through their efforts the issue and, a year later, the necessary bill were passed. Not once did these loyal citizens stop working in behalf of the school, although prospects were dark. Gone is the gloom; coming is the great, grand, glorious gym!

IS IT HARD?

Have you ever heard a student say how hard school is? I have. I dare say not many of them here thought to compare their work with that of twenty years ago. In 1918 there were only eighty freshmen in high school. Think of studying they had to do, for these pupils were called upon several times in each class. Today our classes are so large that each pupil seldom gets a chance to recite each day. Also pupils had to attend seven classes and prepare their homework, whereas our eighth grade girls and boys have only five subjects. The high school student of today has a choice of subjects; he can take what he wants and has only a few required courses. Our teachers, when they were back in their school days had no choice; English, Latin, Ancient History, algebra, arithmetic, science, writing and spelling had to be taken. That was for a college preparatory course or as it was called in "the good ole days"—a classical course. The next time you hear a student complain, remind him of the fact that he is by far better off than our teachers were when they were in high school, for then they did not have a large library, student government, various clubs, student dances and all the delightful side dishes that you get.

student opinion



Dear Editor: During the recent election of student government officers for the second semester, the student body gave me their vote of confidence by re-electing me as President of the Student Body, and it is toward the end of making the student government as near the point of efficiency and perfection as possible, which is my ultimate goal.

We students have invested the authority in our student assembly to act as the legislative branch of our student organization, which means that the practicability and the soundness of our student rules and regulations depends upon the wisdom our student assembly therefore, if in any way we can aid our assembly toward greater wisdom and judgment, then it is a matter which affects the general welfare of the students and should be considered seriously in such a light.

There is a matter being discussed, which in the course of events is very probable will add to the wisdom of our student assembly. The general idea is this:

That the size of the student assembly shall be doubled of its present enrollment; thereby giving each home room two representatives in the student assembly. That the term of office for a student assembly representative shall also be doubled; thereby making it for two semesters instead of the present one semester. After the changes have been done, there shall be instituted what is commonly known as the "staggering system", that is to arrange the elections so that one half of the student assembly representatives will be completing their term of office, and the other half shall be in the next semester's student assembly.

The purpose of the "staggering system" is always to keep some of the last semester representatives in the assembly. Such a system will eliminate the tedious work, and the amount of time wasted in breaking in a new assembly every few months.

This plan is by no means new or original in practice, because it is used in the Congress of the United States today. Mr. Senate highly approves the idea as well as both of the student assembly advisors, Miss Kitchin and Mr. Justice.

For all the students who are the least interested in the management and the policies pursued by the student government, the foregoing plan should be discussed at length with other students so that at the opportune time the student body can make an intelligent decision on the matter. BILL WILLIAMS.

Dear Editor: The board of trustees of the Rocky Mount graded schools has been generous enough to donate money for the purchase of new books for our school library. It certainly seems that the students could cooperate with the board to the extent that they do not harm the books or take them dishonestly.

A large amount of the appropriation last year goes to replace books which have been stolen or badly damaged. This seems to show that the students do not have the proper appreciation for the efforts being made in their behalf. Many books which the library really needs could be bought instead of those which have to be replaced.

The few students who take the books in this manner do not realize that they are depriving the entire school of the use of them; they do not realize how selfish they really are.

The majority of the students do appreciate the efforts being made by the school to build up the library. I hope that this letter will reach the few selfish ones who seem to have a lack of interest in the well being of the school. ELIZABETH LOW.

NEW CENTRALITES

With each new semester we find among us strange pupils—The Blackbird wants to take this opportunity to welcome our newcomers, all of whom are from our state—Many, too, are students that have at one time been enrolled here and have now re-entered.

Welcome!

Lillian Bass, of Nashville; Emma Bryant, of Elm City; Grace Noble, of Kinston; Eleese Pullen, of Nashville; Joseph Bass, of Nashville; Bill George, of Greensboro; Erle Griffin, of Nashville; Herbert Griffin, of Nashville; Jasper Harper, of West Edgemont; Charles Mulwee, of Charlotte; and James Smith, of Kelford—and to all the re-entered students welcome back.

AMBASSADOR



JOSEPHUS DANIELS

Josephus Daniels, Ambassador to Mexico and president of the News and Observer, has consented to lend his name to the local chapter of Quill and Scroll.

Members of the club voted to call their organization the Josephus Daniels chapter in honor of the veteran newspaper editor. The fact that he is an honorary founder of the journalistic society made them feel that he is interested in its work and would endorse its program here.

Ambassador Daniels has sent his picture, which was requested by the school, and members of the Quill and Scroll were proud to receive it along with his good wishes.

Ambassador Daniels is one of the first leaders in the newspaper profession of North Carolina. He has written: "I cannot remember the day when it was not my desire to become an editor."

The first recitation he delivered at school was in line with this early ambition and as nearly as he can remember was in these words:

"I want to be an editor, I really do indeed. It seems to me that editors Get everything they need."

"They get the biggest and the best Of everything that goes And get in free to circuses And other kinds of shows."

While yet a school boy, he concluded to go into journalism on his own account. He and twenty-five amateur editors from different towns met at Goldsboro and organized the North Carolina Press association. Ambassador Daniels says, "We thought we were 'some pumpkins'."

The secretary of the State Press Association invited the boy editors, all about fifteen years old, to go to Charlotte Springs to attend the convention of the editors. He furnished passes there, but the youthful editors feared they would end the night by counting crows home. However, the older men finally arranged the transportation, after keeping the youthful editors worried all day.

The ambassador in 1889 became local editor of "The Wilson Advance." With his brother he soon established the Kinston Free Press and was half owner and editor of a weekly paper at Rocky Mount. In 1885 he made his home in Raleigh, obtained his license to practice law on Tuesday, and on Wednesday became editor of the State Chronicle.

Daniels was elected and re-elected State Printer several times. Not long after his election The Chronicle acquired the Raleigh Call, and he helped publish The Daily Chronicle. He sold his interest in that and personally paid every dollar of indebtedness incurred.

Later, Josephus Daniels gave up a monthly salary of \$5,000 by resigning the position of chief clerk in the Interior Department for the uncertain income from the News and Observer, which was losing money every day.

His early struggles ended in success. The News and Observer is today the most widely read newspaper in North Carolina.

Daniels was Secretary of the Navy in the cabinet of President Wilson. He has held other high positions in the United States and is the author of several historical books.

Ambassador Daniels is still actively connected with The News and Observer.

Rocky Mount high school may feel sure that no other name would reflect more credit on its chapter of Quill and Scroll than that of Josephus Daniels.

WE NOTE

THEATRIANS MEET

The National Theatpian meeting was held recently at the home of Nell Speight. It was decided that the old pledges, Sarah Bruce McAfee, Annie Braswell, Thomas Easterling, O. D. Andrews, and Carl Atkins, would be inducted into the club as soon as possible and the new pledges were to be elected.

Nell Speight, president of the local organization, suggested that a program be given in the auditorium in the near future to better acquaint the students with the work and aims of the National Theatpians.

A successful play now on Broadway, was interestingly reviewed by Frances Walker, chairman of the program committee.

After the business a delicious salad course was served and the meeting adjourned.

The National Theatpian is an organization found in all the prominent high schools and colleges in the United States. The requirements for membership are for a student to have been in at least one play and to possess high standards of character, leadership, and scholarship.

HOOKER PLANS MORE MUSIC

Mr. Hooker has announced that a campaign, started a few weeks ago, in which he is planning to have one hundred or more students to participate is bringing good results. The student can rent instruments by the month and when the student comes advanced enough he can buy his instrument. This really is a practical undertaking for anyone who is interested in playing an instrument. Students will be taken from the 8, 9, and 10 grades of the high school, and some will also come from the grammar schools.

Anyone wishing to take part in this class is asked to see Mr. Hooker as soon as possible. He will be glad to inform one of anything concerning the band.

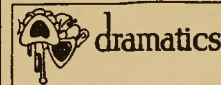
NEW COURSES THIS SEMESTER

Two new courses are being offered to the Central High students for the first time this semester.

Beginning with the second term a class of knitting and one of third year Latin were added to the lists of elective subjects. Along with knitting, Miss Gladys Rodgers is instructing her class in crocheting, weaving, hemstitching and embroidering. The students are allowed to make something for their home or their personal use, such as napkins, tablecloths, handkerchiefs. 67 interested students are enrolled in this class of handicrafts.

Miss Cornelia Ferrell has begun a class in third year Latin. The students who are outstanding in scholarships are the only ones allowed to take this course in Virgil. Every pupil takes part in the discussion daily.

This is the first time in four years that on advanced Latin course has been offered. Both the needlecraft and Latin courses will certainly be an addition to the present curriculum.



The main interest in dramatics now is the preparation for the state dramatics contest to be held in Chapel Hill the last weekend in March. In the contest Central High School will be represented in the play production contest with "The Devil Comes to Alcares", and by two original productions, "There's Always Reno" by Tom Avera, and "The Road to Hell Valley", by Reece Thomas. The cast for "The Devil Comes to Alcares" has been selected, and those playing will be: Frances Walker, Joyce Powell, Martha Longest, Ellen Burnett, Frank Lee Greathouse, Joseph Jones, Carrol Gardner, Carl Atkins, Tom Avera.

Since there are so many students taking dramatics this year a "School Theatre" has been organized in order to give the beginning students a chance to act, and to give the advanced students experience in directing. This will be worked by giving plays, and selecting the beginning students to take the parts in the plays and allowing the advanced students to direct these plays.

The class is also working on several one act plays to be given for a program in chapel, and for other occasions. Some of these will be given at the annual dramatics festival, which is given every spring by the dramatics class of the Rocky Mount High School.