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BEASLEY BROTHERS

Phone No. 80

Next to Franklin Times

Louisburg, N. C.

THE CIVIC DUTY OF BUYING AND SELLING AT HOME

The following essay was written by Miss Mary Malone Best, of the Mills High School and was the winning essay in the 1929 Jambes Post Essay Contest.

A desirable citizen possesses the characteristics of loving his own community and is willing and anxious if necessary to make personal sacrifices for the good of the same. Many years ago a man who made his living in my town made this statement which impressed itself indelibly on my mind. "I can hardly wait for the eight months that I am staying in this place to pass by. I have no interest here except the salary I am drawing at the end of the month." This statement pictures the type of person that he was. To my mind nothing is more despicable than to injure by word or act the bridge that furnishes you opportunity to cross the turbulent stream. There is a civic duty, and to a good citizen should be deemed a privilege, that every individual owes to his community, the practice of buying and selling at home. There are many ways in which this is of vital importance to the best interest of any community. I shall attempt to point out these ways.

The prosperity in any community and therefore its economic independence is largely determined by the amount of patronage, business enterprises receive from its inhabitants. Every hundred dollars that we spend at home makes it possible for our community to be that much more independent and prosperous. Every hundred dollars we spend away from our communities weakens our economic prosperity. We can readily see how this affects each individual either directly or indirectly because no one will deny that the prosperity and happiness of an individual depends upon the prosperity and possibility of happiness in the home community. If we spend our money at home it therefore comes back to us directly or indirectly in making our homes more prosperous and happy. Let us then add strength to our home centers by doing our trading and shopping at home and not build up some other community at the sacrifice of our own. Recently there has been started in my home town a new enterprise as a bakery, and yet I have heard it said that this enterprise is having trouble in attempting to exist because of the fact that so many of our people will not take the trouble to call for the Louisburg bread altho it is just as good as the bread that is made elsewhere and brought in every day by trucks. We also have organized in our community a creamery which is struggling along for existence because of the fact that so many of our citizens insist on using butter that is made in some other place, when as a matter of fact if all the consumers in our community would use the butter manufactured here it would increase the volume of business to that extent that the price of this article could be reduced at least one-third.

Good roads have meant a great deal to our county and state but they have tended to make us forget some of the civic duties that we owe to our home community as citizens. Let us estimate what it would mean in dollars and cents to our community if all the money that was spent for shoes and clothing was spent at home instead of abroad. As suggested above this increase in volume of business at home would enable all business concerns to give a lower sale price and arrange a situation in which they could be of more real service to the individual and community as a whole. There is also a responsibility that the business firms have in this economic prosperity as well as the purchaser or buyer. He must be satisfied with a legitimate profit and make it impossible for the buyer to feel or know that he is paying more for his goods at home than he could elsewhere. He must realize the fact that a satisfied customer is one of the greatest assets to his business and he must always put forth every effort to keep alive within him the thought that he is willing "to live and let live". If we could thus arouse a cooperative and community spirit between the buyer and the seller our community would grow and develop by leaps and bounds not only in a financial or economic way but in the deep and more spiritual things which after all is the greatest secret of all happiness and joy.

One of the greatest setbacks to the progress of a community is the chain store. Some people confuse the chain store and the cooperative store altho they are entirely different. A cooperative store is controlled by a body of men from the community who have gone into business together. All that they make stays in the community and benefits it. The chain store is owned and controlled by outside firm. The money taken in each day does not remain in the local bank any longer than it takes a check to go to the central bank in some distant city. I heard a woman make this remark not long ago concerning a chain store, "I buy all my groceries there because it is so much cheaper". I asked myself this question, "Does that hold true in the long run?" and "No" was my answer. Of course we may save five cents or more on a can of beans by buying from a chain store, but the money that we pay for that can of beans goes not in our community but elsewhere to help some other town prosper. When we buy from one of these stores we cannot say "charge it" or "send this up". We pay cash and probably sometimes our goods may be carried out to our car if we are fortunate enough to have one, but if not the burden is on us to carry the packages home. On the other hand if we trade with our local merchants our accounts are carried certainly to the end of the month and the goods delivered to our pantry doors. And last but not most important the money we pay the home merchants stays in the home community and thereby helps it prosper. There.

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