

"The Greatest Idea in the World"

Mr. Editor:

In your paper The State's Voice, "A Paper For Thinking People," issue January 1, 1934, under the title head of "Beasley Has the Idea," you wrote.

"We actually believe that we have stumbled upon just about the biggest idea in the world—that attempting to draft upon the future is the stumbling block of the ages." Further along you quote Mr. Beasley as saying: "We can't use in a war this year that which is going to be produced ten years hence."

Just what you mean by "Thinking People" I don't know, seeing that it takes this writer a long time to get an idea. Now if you have "about the biggest idea in the world," I as one of the dumb-heads would like to get more fully the idea and its implications.

Do you mean to say that if our part in the World War cost billions of dollars it was all paid for at the moment the war stopped, except the future care of the disabled soldiers? Do you mean that just as no unborn babe could be drafted to fight in the World War, no dollar could likewise be employed except the one then actually in existence? If so the idea begins to take form in my befogged night-mare sort of understanding.

It seems as though, when men were needed to fight the war authorities went out and got them, the living material and did not wait for babies to be born and grow up. Likewise they used cotton, wool and iron that was rather than that that was to be at some future time, and that even dollars, the most precious commodity of all, were actually present, and actually used by the billions. Now, it has been my blunder all the time to think that somehow those dollars were future dollars. But as a small gleam of light breaks in, I begin to see that from the standpoint of the whole, the dollars then used were actual dollars or they couldn't have been used, while from the standpoint of the particular and the individual citizens these were future dollars and would be till particular individuals paid them back and paid them to other particular individuals with interest.

You and Mr. Beasley seem to have the idea as a deduction from the foregoing that as the whole pays as it goes the whole ought to get a clear receipt and not be forever mortgaged to the future which never arrives, which is to say, there will be more wars and more future dollars to be paid by the many to the few.

As I see it in my blunder-headed fashion, you and Mr. Beasley are talking the foolishness of something like a real democracy, which state of things would put humanity and human justice and middling comfort, security, and culture for all ahead of the future dollars for the few shysters.

What these old fellows will have to say about your "Biggest Idea," I don't know. Some of them, I imagine, are just as pig-headed as I've been as to the actuality of the future dollars. When they see what a power they hold over the present and future life of the nation, mostly for evil consequences even to themselves, they no doubt will get busy in the task of removing this "Stumbling block of the ages."

Hope you can fully clear this matter up for us fellows who really wish to become numbered among the THINKING PEOPLE. Go right ahead with your great work of enlightenment.

A VOICE READER.

Goldston, N. C.

Treatment For Gangsters

The objection is frequently raised that capital punishment doesn't prevent crime. The answer is we don't know, because we never have tried it. Most states provide for capital punishment for murder, but they don't execute the murderers impartially and implacably. Now and then some poor fool is bumped off for bashing in the head of his wife in a jealous passion, but we cling to the idea that gangland can be reformed by pious prison workers.

Whether or not capital punishment would deter the neophyte of gangland from graduating into full-fledged criminality, one thing is certain; every gangster dangling at a rope's end or with a jolt of electric juice through his body is one who has been permanently discouraged from committing farther crime. Every one undergoing a course in prison reform is a candidate for pardon, parole or a jail break, and a further career of criminal preying on society.

At liberty or in jail every one is a menacing nuisance to society which society doesn't have to tolerate and wouldn't tolerate if it were able to get rid of the sentimental notion that a rattlesnake ought to be treated with deference when it happens to wear pants.—Omaha World-Herald.

Varser for Senate.

His neighbors in Lumberton were much gratified to find Judge Varsar suggested as a candidate for the U. S. senate in 1936. Senator Bailey seems likely to have a deal of opposition.

FARMER WHO WON'T FALL IN LINE NEEDS A GUARDIAN

It will pay the growers of tobacco in actual dollars and cents to sign the tobacco acreage reduction contracts, for the reason they will have \$11,300,000 divided between them if they do sign.

The plan of the agricultural department is to reduce the acreage thirty per cent which means a decrease of 165,000 acres and 115,000,000 pounds of tobacco, in order to cut the surplus to this extent in line with the promise of the department to the manufacturers if they would pay the parity price of seven cents for the last years crop it would cause the farmers to decrease their crop to this extent, and thus reduce the surplus, and the manufacturers could take the money they have been paying for the large crop and divide it up among the farmers for the smaller crop.

For this reduction the AAA has pledged itself to pay the farmers approximately \$11,300,000 which will be divided as follows: Rental payments \$2,800,000; benefit payments \$6,500,000, equalization payments, \$2,000,000.

Thus it will be seen that the farmers who participate in the acreage reduction will make money by so doing.

Contracts signed since the drive, which started early in December, involve 550,000 acres with an average production of 392,400,000 pounds per year. This would make an average production of 715 pounds to the acre. A \$17.63 per hundred pounds paid last year that would be \$126.12 per acre. The same tobacco would have brought in 1932 an average of \$11.64, or \$93.22 per acre, a difference of \$32.90 per acre. In addition to that the \$11,300,000 of benefits to be divided among the farmers who sign, would mean an additional \$20.50 per acre or a total \$146.62 per acre.

This beats \$93.22 per acre, and eleven cents per pound. Now if the government had not taken a hand in the matter the price of tobacco in this section would not have been as much as eleven cents, that is if the demand had continued at even the present rate, for there has been a falling off in the consumption of cigarettes for the past year.

Only a reduction of the acreage and a consequent reduction in the yield could have saved the farmers and the sections dependent on them. Note the low price of burley tobacco which has been overproduced until the price has fallen where it is. It strikes us that the farmer fails to cooperate in this acreage reduction is light in the upper story and needs a guardian.—Wilson Times.

WHEN THE EDITOR WROTE A BOOK

(Continued from page six.)

the quality of their service to the community has been determined at the close of their term, when a committee composed of leading workers in the various industries and some of the oldest and most honored scholars, discuss the record of the councillors and reward them with varying additional awards of hour-units, up to the full individual quota of units. Moreover, the same committee acts as an auditing committee, guarding against the misuse of the state's stores by the council. (The councillor, it seems, was limited to twice the income of an ordinary worker and had to prove his worth to get that.—Editor.)

Thus it is made possible for any citizen to amass a considerable credit or amount of property, and, as his assigned home is his for his life-time, and his son's after him, if he has one, the citizen may safely improve the premises, beautify his residence, and add as many comforts as he pleases, and as will be found later has other ways of individualizing his life.

Then men assigned to the very humblest jobs, as well as others, may use their time above the required five hours in any kind of service they please, with the restriction already mentioned, and these men frequently engage themselves as servants to the more prosperous for a portion of their time.

LUMBERTON THEN AND NOW.

(Continued From Page Three)

Sheriff George McLeod, Clerk of Court W. H. Humphrey, who still survives, though he is inactive, and Joe Bule as register of deeds. Joe has been recorder over at Red Springs for many years.

Charlie Skipper succeeded Mr. Humphrey as clerk, and is still on the job, looking as if he might be good for another score years. Charlie doesn't claim all the credit, by far, for the successful administration of the office for more than twenty years. With him all those years has been Miss Patterson, who he claims is just the most efficient assistant clerk in the state. As I didn't take notes of his laudation, it is difficult to transmit the high degree of praise he did give this fine lady.

Across in the register's office is Mrs. Eva Floyd. As Eva Williams she was one of my school girls of

1901. Later she married Marcus Floyd and was a near neighbor, succeeding him as register of deeds after his untimely death. Assisting her are Miss Irma Whitfield and her own grown son. I know four lady registers of deeds in the state. The number is likely to increase. It is a job well fitted for capable women, and there are two such in the Robeson registry.

Robeson has a county manager, whose duties are many and great. E. K. Butler, son of that fine citizen John S. Butler of St. Paul, is the county manager and a most capable young man. Just across the hall is H. B. Ashley, son of another old friend, as tax collector and performer of a variety of other duties.

A Veteran County Superintendent.

I first met J. R. Pool when he became principal of Barker's school, ten miles northeast of Lumberton. He was chosen county superintendent some thirty years ago and is still on the job. The school system of Robeson county has had a wonderful development during his term of service and J. R. Pool has been in no small measure the director and inspirer of that progress.

There is a new-comer in the Sheriff's office—Sheriff Kornegay, who is, as those who know eastern North Carolina names can readily guess, a native of Duplin county. He has been a resident of Robeson for quite a period, but seems a new-comer to me.

Now up the stairs and let's meet the Sampson folk. Dr. Harden, former health officer of Sampson, is the efficient county health officer. Mrs. Sloan, widow of Dr. Sloan of Ingold, by the way, an uncle of President Frank Graham, is the county nurse—and one could find none better. Dr. Harden's wife is that former most gracious Miss Ruby Goode, once one of Clinton's most popular teachers.

There are some others in the court house whose names I cannot recall at this writing.

The present court house was erected a year after my departure in 1906, at a cost of only about \$75,000, I believe. It is good enough for even the great county of Robeson. Compare that outlay with that of Johnston or Wilson.

My allotment of space for this issue is about consumed. But I want to introduce you to one of Lumberton's best citizens and most religious men—L. M. Whaley. Mr. Whaley is a Virginian by birth and for a generation represented the Whaley Lumber Company in Robeson. He is a most consecrated Christian, as can be indicated by the fact that he has scarcely missed one of the early morning court house prayer meetings in ten years. His oldest son is the well known Greensboro engraver, W. W. Whaley, who married a sister of Editor Godbey of the Greensboro News. Elwood is the strapping second son. Both were pupils of mine.

(To be concluded in Next Issue)

"What Is The Matter With North Carolina?"

(Continued from page one)

hogs and the selling price of the hogs, is all profit—not counting the labor. I have seen such estimates time and again.

There is the chief trouble with North Carolina and with all agricultural sections—farm product prices are not sufficient to pay incomes on a par with those of the people from whom the farmer has to buy. That condition in the farm industry determines the income level in other occupations and the professions in the area.

Trouble Number Two.—The second trouble is that, despite all North Carolina's advantages, the agricultural lands that may be profitably cultivated are spotted. The long seacoast may look fine, but along its border are sand lands and marshes that serve little purpose in making a state prosperous. The fine farm lands about Dunn, for example, look fine, but a large part of the coastal belt can never be made agriculturally profitable. The hill country fertility, whatever it is, is too much at the mercy of the rains. The mountain scenery is grand, but that area furnishes only patches, not large areas, of arable soil. Besides, there are whole counties over there without railroad facilities.

The nature of the crops of the state and the smallness of level lying areas of good soil together make it unfeasible to farm upon a modern scale. Accordingly, the farm income must be based almost entirely upon the wage basis and not upon a capital basis. That means that the cotton farmer, even if the machine farming was adopted to that crop, must remain in connection with the cheap labor of Asia and the producer of corn and wheat must, with a one or two-horse team, compete with the tractor farmers of the west.

And until these several handicaps are overcome, the farmers' income must remain so low that it limits the income of all other groups in the state, except those who are profited by this very condition, and North Carolina's average family income must remain near the bottom of the list.