

THE STATE'S VOICE

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Friends Saved the Day.

Without the contributions of some of my friends I could not have got out the paper this week. As it is, it is nearly a week late. I wish to thank those friends and particularly Mr. Snider, whose wife has been sick three months and in the hospital two weeks. Yet he took a few minutes to write his pointed article. But let me say that the editing of these articles and the proof-reading have been rather poor. A fellow who is in and out of bed is in no shape to do even the small amount of work the editor has done on this issue.

No Paper April 15.

As this issue is nearly a week late because of the illness of the editor and as he is not yet strong enough to do much work, it is deemed better to skip the April 15 issue of the *Voice*. The next issue will appear, if Providence permits, May 1.

Kindness Appreciated

The editor much appreciates the various kindnesses shown him during his illness. You can imagine how I appreciated Dr. Ernest Branch of the State Health Department coming clear by Dunn in going from Kinston to Raleigh to say howdy. Ernest is one of my old school boys. But visits, dainties, flowers, and messages from friends far and near have been all appreciated.

The Chicago Daily News states editorially that less than half of the 14,710 liquor dealers licensed by the federal government to sell liquor in Chicago hold license in that city. So it appears that the government lends its support to the debauchery of the people and the robbing of the city of its due revenue.—Christian Science Monitor.

A COSTLY INCONSISTENCY

Hands were raised in horror when Representative Kelly introduced a bill to restore the old-time whipping post. Yet that very week was revealed the tragedy of the Mecklenburg prison camp, wherein two Negroes imprisoned on minor charges lost their feet as a result of disciplinary measures—necessary or unnecessary. And since that time investigations of the disciplinary needs of a prison camp have suggested to legislators and others the "return of the lash" as a disciplinary means.

For fifty years there have been intermittent charges of cruelty in the convict camps. Finally, the privilege of whipping convicts for disciplinary purposes was denied prison keepers and guards. Yet anybody with a grain of commonsense knew that some real disciplinary measures are necessary in controlling any bunch of prisoners—and not mere "standing in the corner," one of the futile schemes teachers used to adopt in punishing misbehaving lads.

Even in schools, times come when real disciplinary measures are necessary. Without such measures, one or two boys may destroy the morale of a whole school. It is, in such cases, necessary to get rid of the boys or to punish them in a measure adequate to the occasion.

But the bad boys in the convict camp cannot be expelled! They must be disciplined. And thus it happens that punishments at which the laws frowned as cruel and barbarous are applied time after time as disciplinary measures while the prisoners are serving the sentences legally imposed.

Within fifty years the lash has been applied hundreds of times upon prisoners, too good to receive it as a sentence, while they were serving the mercifully imposed prison term at the cost of the law-abiding element of the people. Not only that—dozens of men who should have been given a good lashing and set free with the understanding that if they returned they would get a more vigorous one have instead been sent to prison for a few months and been shot down like dogs when trying to escape. Scarcely a week goes by without the report of the death of a prisoner attempting to escape. Yet the man may have been guilty of only a misdemeanor. He was too good when before the bar of justice to be sentenced to the whipping post; but when he has become a prisoner he is not too good to be shot down! And even such shootings are sometime necessary, else the whole bunch of prisoners would deliberately walk off.

One in every four hundred of the people of

HOW YOU MAY HELP A HANDICAPPED FELLOW

Don't I manage to get myself into bad fixes?—But many of my present subscribers probably do not know of the series of years of harassment through which I went before launching *The State's Voice*.

I had put what little of cash I had accumulated in thirty-two years of teaching and newspaper work in the *Chatham Record* when it was actually making money. Immediately, an unprecedented series of bad crop years came to Chatham, lapping over into the depression years. Fire swept the platter clean, leaving me still in debt on the plant. In short, I worked there trying to get even till January 1, 1933.

I had announced that I would launch *The State's Voice* in Raleigh on January 15, 1933, but as the time drew near it was evident that the depression was getting worse instead of better. *The Dunn Dispatch*, as if by providential arrangement, when I was in a quandary as to what to do, offered to print *The State's Voice* for my services as editorial writer for that twice-a-week paper.

A start was made. Two months later the "bottom fell clear out," and it seemed I could hardly turn loose or go on. But there was nothing to do but go on—that is, run a new paper in 1933 when a third of the folk were on relief, and run it without a cent of capital. Well, it was done.

I at that time began a course that was probably too much for my strength. Within those past two years, I have written about six long columns a week for *The Dunn Dispatch*, have written what would make several large volumes for the 54 issues of *The State's Voice*, have traveled in about fifty counties of the state introducing the paper to the leading citizens of those counties and renewing subscriptions.

I had recently reached the point where it seemed possible to make a fair living, and more. Not a dollar was owed on the paper and not one for living expenses I could not immediately pay. It seemed, with health, that I had at last reached a point where I could look not only to a fairly secure old age for myself and family but to a useful one. It was then the blow fell.

The Blow Falls.

My traveling through the state not only served to build up the subscription list of *The State's Voice* but also served to furnish me with much material for use in making the paper. In fact, with the subscription of the *Voice* so low, it is only by combining those two functions that one can afford to canvass the towns, cities, and rural sections of the state from a center which means hundreds of miles of travel to reach some county-seats. But the physician says that I am suffering from *angina pectoris* and must get down on low gear. I am ordered not to do the traveling I have been doing, but am assured I may write. Thus I have plenty of work to do, but a poor chance to get pay for it.

How You Can Help.

Here is where my present subscribers can help. If two-thirds of the present subscribers should send in their renewals without the cost of a visit to them—which often turns out to be three or

four before an interview is secured—the income would be sufficient to take care of my family in comfort. But will one out of ten of you do it without a string of notices and the loss of stamps and stationery and clerk help to get only a dollar? I can answer for you—not unless you read this article and make it a resolve to attend to this matter every year so long as you feel that the paper is worth the subscription price.

I am not going to ask you to write me as to that matter. But I am going to ask those readers who do not desire to be considered permanent subscribers to drop me cards stating that they would like to have their names removed from the subscription list when their subscription payments expire.

I know there are some who would not wish to continue. Some haven't read it closely enough to find its value; some couldn't see anything in it if they tried; some, like me, are having to slow up. But there are many in the list who really do value the paper and think it a big buy at \$1.00 a year.

I know most of the men on the list. It is a picked list, but of course there are some little fellows on it. I expect them to fall off, but I want to have them marked so that the paper will not continue to go to them without being appreciated and received without any expectation of paying for it. If it is only every two or three years that we collect from one of the really appreciative subscribers, it will be all right. Several subscribers not seen last year on the renewal trips have paid two years this year.

The Most Important Thing.

The main thing is to get the fellows marked who would let the paper come for years and not even take the trouble to notify us that the paper is not desired. It will cost no more to send a representative to a town once in two or three years to collect renewals than once a year—but it would be mighty expensive if the subscribers declined to pay. Let's avoid that by all who will not wish to be continued as subscribers simply sending cards to that effect. *And let it be taken for granted that those who do not send postal cards to that effect may be counted upon as permanent subscribers till further developments.*—And let each of such subscribers resolve that he will send in his dollar with as few notices as his convenience will allow him.—It has become a habit with most people not to pay newspaper subscriptions till somebody comes after it. And just that is what I am trying to avoid here.

It is easy to help in many ways. The other day I received a subscription from Bishop Hafey at the suggestion of my old friend Father Irwin. Supt. Reid Thompson, whom I missed when in Pittsboro, sent his dollar by mail. Just the day before this is written my friend Dr. Ernest Branch comes by Dunn in going from Kinston to Raleigh to see me and send his date up two years. It will be easy enough if appreciative subscribers will actually remember to renew without having a big part of his dollar cost in time, stationery, and postage, and to suggest subscribing to their friends.

Thousands of men convicted of misdemeanors in North Carolina have been whipped time after time after being sent to the prison or the road gang as a merciful penalty. Why not be sensible and let the one whipping at the whipping post serve as the entire punishment? In that case, the culprit is more effectually punished; he is free to start life again immediately wherever he pleases. The expense of the tax-burdened people is ended. If one whipping, nor two, will not reform him, it will be time then to try other and more expensive means. Today the youngster who comes up for his first detected crime may be let off without any effectual penalty and thus be induced to proceed to other crimes. With the whipping post restored, such youngsters would think twice before committing the crimes which would subject them to the lash, and thus might many a criminal in the making be halted in his career before it is really begun.

It will probably require a constitutional amendment to restore the whipping post. Let it come. It seems unnecessary, however, for the constitution to be changed to permit whippings, loss of feet, and other penalties as disciplinary means. A funny old world is this.

There is no sound sense in the law-abiding people of North Carolina maintaining a prison brigade of over eight thousand in the name of mercy and permitting perhaps a dozen times as many penalties as disciplinary measures as the one that is denied as a penalty for the misdemeanor of which he has been convicted.

North Carolina is being maintained at public expense in prison. And the average prisoner is becoming more a problem every day he is in prison. Hundreds of citizens are being gradually hardened as they guard them, oversee their work, and discipline them.

What a relief it would be to the state if it could cut the number of prisoners down by half! And there is probably no reason why it cannot be done by adopting the lash as a penalty. The world is large and if a culprit is so humiliated by the public whipping that he feels an embarrassment in remaining in the community where he received it, he can simply move on as soon as he pleases and begin life anew where he is not known. His difficulty in making a new start would not be nearly so difficult as it is for the returning prisoner. The latter is a marked man. Few, and they not desirable employers, want their services. They must herd with their kind and too often they are soon back in prison. The mercy that was so gentle as to wince at applying the lash has been so cruel as to destroy all prospects of a decent life. Else imprisonment becomes no disgrace and the culprit may serve his term in comparative ease and comfort and return home as a respected citizen. It has already come to the pass in North Carolina that ex-convicts may feel quite comfortable in their home communities—and without any adequate evidence of reform. When a potential criminal ceases to dread the ostracism that used to accompany the serving of a prison sentence half the fear of punishment has been lost.