

A Poor Quality of "Equality" Assured By the Constitution.

Senator Bailey told the Elon graduating class that the constitution is a guarantee of their equality. Equality in what? It is the same old constitution that permitted human slavery until anything but respect for the document forced the inclusion of the prohibition of slavery. Today the worthiest citizen may starve to death while his neighbor who has monopolized natural resources or industrial opportunities rolls in wealth. While half the nation has been upon the point of starvation a small group of citizens have had the banks choked with money that they needed neither then nor for a lifetime. If there ever was a document that needs overhauling so as to assure "equality" it is that same old constitution. Right now we see a beneficent government making ready to dispense relief work funds fixing the wage of one citizen at \$19 a month and another at \$94, practically five times as much, and that without any regard to the comparative needs of the two. A laborer, whose task may be absolutely as essential to the accomplishment of the whole work planned as that of the skilled laborer and who may have a half-dozen future citizens of the country to support may get a measly 63 cents a day for each of the 30 days of a month, while the other who may not have a child at all draws his \$3.15 for every day of the thirty.

When The Anchor Becomes A Menace.

The anchor is cast for the safety of the ship, its passengers and cargo. But one can conceive of circumstances under which the anchor, cast during fair weather, might become a menace in foul if its hauling in were a matter of even an hour.

A constitution is similar. It is an anchor cast against the foreseen threats of political and demagogic winds. The same becomes a menace when an unconceived whirlpool of economic stress threatens the ship of state and the constitution becomes a deadly barrier to escape.

Quicker means of changing a constitution which thus may prove a menace to the very life of the nation, is necessary. There is little question that revolution in some serious form would have occurred two years ago if extraordinary powers had not been bestowed upon the president by act of congress. Yet the recent decision of the supreme court pronounces the most important of those powers unconstitutional. Thus, if the country has been saved from complete economic disaster and from bloody revolution by the unusual authority bestowed upon President Roosevelt, we have the anomaly of economic and political salvation wrought by unconstitutional procedure. In other words, the constitution, if observed, might have proved, not an anchor protecting against destruction by storms, a weight pulling the ship of state to the bottom of the sea.

Certainly, no country can afford to permit itself to be helplessly bound by the anchor rope which it has woven for its safety.

Either a means of promptly changing the constitution in view of new dangers approaching should be provided, or a section should be added to the constitution itself allowing congress to bestow, in times of emergency, such powers upon the chief executive, as say, a two-thirds majority of each house should deem necessary.

A constitution that proves itself a menace is a constitution that will not forever be held inviolable.

The Cotton-Picker To Produce Other Problems.

The AAA organization is reported to be disturbed about the new cotton picker, which, it is feared, will throw thousands of hands out of employment in the fall. In addition to that effect, it is probable that the prevalence of pickers on large cotton plantations would lower the price of cotton and make the small cotton farmer's competition with the larger ones all the more difficult. The small planter has always had to compete with the cheapest labor in the United States, as a bale of cotton produced by fifty-cent negro labor would set the price for that produced by the one-horse farmer with the help of his wife and children.

The lowering of the cost of production would serve, probably for a time to make competition more difficult for other cotton-producing countries. Yet the result later would be just the opposite. Russia, for instance, with its communal capitalization of agriculture could have its machines working in vast areas. The cotton industry in Brazil, too, will probably develop along the lines of large-scale farming, as the sugar industry developed in Cuba. That would mean that the whole Brazilian crop would be picked by machines or by labor receiving wages commensurate with machine cost of picking.

Nevertheless, there is no good sense in discouraging the development of any labor-saving machine. The machine-age has already advanced to that stage where the remedy must lie in a production for a much extended consumption in a hundred directions and in the employment of vast numbers in works for the common good.

It is only a senseless people who would find the invention of a single machine that could produce all the goods that the country or the world needs, a menace to general prosperity, the average man would be at last convinced that he would have his necessities provided along, as the production advanced, without trying to lay up a living for years to come and thereby depriving others of anything to live upon at present.

That is, the easier it becomes to produce plenty for all, the more everybody should have and the more leisure, the more culture, the more recreation,—in short, the more of every good thing—everybody should have.

Yet some people are so constituted that if they had each year a rain of Smithfield hams sufficient to feed the world and were assured that the annual fall of those hams was a permanent phenomenon—as constant as the rising of the sun—they would attempt to lay them up for the future, or to sell them and lay up ham money for the future.

The first provision for a bountiful supply for all is to convince hoggish men that they will get their enough each year without their attempting to lay in store for their great grand sons, thereby so mismatching consumption and production that many must have less than enough.

Let the cotton picker come. It will be one more step toward the arrival of the time when plenty for all shall be produced and nobody shall fail to share adequately in the distribution of the utterly abundant supplies.

June tomorrow and watermelon time only five weeks off by the old-time calendars. But one can hardly believe there is a watermelon vine big enough to run in ten miles of Dunn. But maybe there is.

Beware When You Think You Stand Lest You Fall.

One can but wonder what necessity could impel a man receiving a big salary, with countless friends holding him in honor and esteem and even proud of that friendship, to borrow a sum of money under circumstances that could but lay him under grave suspicion. When Harnett and Cumberland people were reading of the fiery investigations of Senator Nye's committee, one of us could scarcely conceive that a neighbor boy, risen to rank and considerable distinction, and possessing a gallant war record, would be enmeshed in the web of evidence that was being spun in the committee room. Alas! the Scriptural injunction to beware when you think you stand lest you fall is always timely. The writer feels a personal shock in the slip of one whom he had become to look upon as a scion of an old stock and worthy of his origin.

The Danger of Living Beyond One's Means.

One can but be surprised that many of those who seem to have incomes sufficient for comfortable and decent living so often appear to need money worse than we poor devils who have never had more than enough to provide more than the bare necessities. In another article I refer to the tragedy which has overtaken a former neighbor of Harnett people. Then, here is a list of several officials and prominent men who, having borrowed from the veterans' loan fund, seem unable to pay the money back and are having foreclosures made upon the properties hypothecated as security.

When, after ten years of misfortune after misfortune, I find myself in debt perhaps \$200, and feel oppressed thereby, it seems that I and you, all who have clung to the simple life and not given a kiddy for splurge, should account ourselves most happy. It is pretty evident that a man who cannot live on a few hundred dollars a year will not be able to live upon an income of thousands.

A sense of proportion is the most valuable possession one can have. A pity it is that so many will exchange the real dignity of life for life's shoddy trappings. A big house, a high-priced car, goings and comings on grand scales, an expensive cuisine, all these, in the long-run, count for nothing but may be the forerunners of a poverty that one has never learned how to wear with comfort and dignity.

The greatest crashes of the depression happened in the cases of men who, like Icarus, flew too high, the burning rays of the depression melting the wax which they were so thoroughly convinced would hold their wings in place and causing a most uncomfortable, if not deadly, plunge.

Already congressional leaders are talking of a constitutional amendment that will enable congress to make provisions for such schemes as those embraced in the now dead or dying NRA. Three months ago an amendment would have reached the states when most of the legislatures were in session. Now it is a different situation; it might require nearly two years to secure the ratification of even a popular amendment. Whatever mischief can be done by the killing of the blue eagle will have been done within that period. When an amendment is made it should provide for emergency action on the part of congress regardless of constitutional restrictions. That kind of action has on this occasion probably saved the country from bloodshed and far-reaching mass disturbances. If the supreme court's decision had come two years ago, a different tale might be told.

Teachers Above Almost All People Should Not Be Greedy

PWA wages are liberal, common labor securing 45 cents an hour. The relief labor will draw as low as \$19 a month. Yet two of the former jobs have been grabbed by teachers, one of them a principal, who has already made a living for the year—this according to a letter in the Greensboro News. The principal is rolling a wheelbarrow, a labor that any able-bodied relief worker could do. Of course, it means that one poor devil who has no job at all must work for poverty wages.

It was noted a week or two ago that an Asheville school principal whose salary had been gradually cut from \$5,000 down to \$1,500 was so afraid that he would perish that he went to raising truck on a considerable scale, getting up himself at daylight and working till school time and returning after school hours and working till dark. The dunce simply killed himself, dying suddenly one morning.

An attempt was made to make a martyr of the poor fellow whose salary had been so severely cut. But this writer sees nothing admirable at all in his course. I believe it legitimate for almost anyone to have a garden and maybe, to raise the family supply of chickens and eggs and a pig or two. But it is a different matter for a man supported by public funds in a time when a large part of the population is on poverty row, many actually dependent for their living upon relief funds, to go to trucking upon a commercial scale or into other business—which necessarily deprives some one else of the opportunity of making a living, or helps to produce a surplus—of truck in this instance—which reduces the income of possibly every man necessarily engaged in the business.

Teachers have not received salaries to boast greatly of, but they have known where their bread would come from and they have not had to go upon relief rolls. Accordingly, they should not, in sheer greed, grab jobs that would serve to feed and clothe some of the children whose interests they are professedly so concerned about.

Teachers, above almost any other people, should be void of a greedy spirit. When they know, or should know, that the average family income of North Carolina is scarcely a third of the salary that Asheville teacher was getting, it would seem that they should be satisfied with a fair share of the common income. As the News correspondent said, the laborer cannot, even if capable, break into the school business—a string of conditions protects the teachers in their jobs.

Each year sees an army of youth ready to take a part in life. Some of them, with apparently no superiority over many others, will fall, as if drawn by a magnet, into positions of promise and will go swimmingly through life. Others will scarcely in a life-time find a toe hold on the ladder of opportunity. Some sense, plenty of gall, and real integrity, are in the long-run, about the best assurances a youth can have. But it is largely a matter of luck. There are not enough of the best-grade jobs for all, and there is no guessing what will turn the choice in favor of the one rather than another. The young men who set out to be merely well-to-do farmers, not rich planters, will be on about the safest line they can find, unless a windfall does come their way.

Wallace would have one crowd at its strawberry festival June 3-4 if Huey Long should accept the invitation to speak down there.