

Is Honesty Becoming A Forgotten Virtue?

It is grievous to realize that one out of every hundred adults in North Carolina has been in prison the past year. If the figures dealt only with people from 18 to 30 years of age it is probable that they would show that one out of every fifty has been imprisoned. And if they dealt only with males between the ages of 18 and 30 they would probably show that one out of every thirty has been in prison. This is a situation that calls for character building in the homes and in the schools and upright examples on the streets, in business houses, and in the fields, by all people of sound sense and any idea of morality.

Take, for example, the attempt of that man Parker up in Wilson county to grow fifty acres more tobacco than his contract calls for and one can see how far-reaching example may go. He had been a commissioner of the county and is a man who should be an example to all his neighbors. Yet his tenants and their families see him openly trying to cheat all other tobacco growers. For the prices of tobacco are what they are because of the reduction of acreage. His poor neighbor might be glad to have the chance to plant one more acre of tobacco, but is forbidden to do so. Yet the man who should be the greatest moral force in the community would have set all such men an example which they would, in many cases, have followed if he had gotten by with his wholesale roguery.

It is to be hoped that the number of North Carolinians going to prison will be increased by one, and that this man who would by his example lead all his neighbors astray and who by his chicanery would make a pile of money at the expense of other tobacco growers will be that one.

With a continued progressive increase in the number of rascals in the state, it seems that the time will come only too soon when honor is a forgotten virtue in North Carolina.

Another of the Pages Answers Final Summons.

Walter Hines Page, scholar and statesman, was first of the five stalwart brothers who have played so important roles in North Carolina and in national and international affairs, to answer the eternal summons. Robert N., business man and congressman for several terms, laid down his life's burdens less than two years ago. Frank Page departed only a few months ago. And now Henry A. Page, possibly the most intellectually vigorous of them all, though never aspiring to nor attaining any exalted public position, lies as I write at his home in Aberdeen, awaiting the funeral service and burial which are to follow within two hours. Only J. R. Page of the five notable brothers now survives.

It was the writer's privilege to serve as county food administrator under Mr. Henry A. Page, state administrator, during the war period, and thus I first met the man whose vigorous course as a member of the legislature for three terms I had not known because of my absence from the state. As food administrator Mr. Page took his orders from Mr. Hoover and ordered them executed without quibble, and thus they went through. As stated sometime ago when Mr. Hoover had expressed fear that Americans would lose their liberty under the new deal, there was never a more unnecessary or more autocratic decree than that cotton ginner should double or treble their ginning prices; but Mr. Page ordered the prices raised as decreed by Mr. Hoover and we

county dictators put the order through. And I recall that O. M. Vanstory, who died only ten or twelve days ago, was one of the 100 county food administrators, and at the general meeting in Raleigh I first met that stalwart also. That was probably in the fall or winter of 1917.

The intervening period has served to turn the hundred-and-one of the most vigorous men, men in the very vigor of full mental as well as physical maturity into an aging group from which one after another is being plucked by old Father Time. While those two of the hundred-and-one were fighting their losing battle with angina pectoris, the writer was fighting his own battles with the hag, but feels that the odds are still on his side for the time-being.

I should like to see a list of the hundred county food administrators who met Henry A. Page at Raleigh that day for instructions, for I can name very few of them. I know Attorney Stacy of Lumberton was one, but I do not recall who was the administrator in Harnett county. It would be interesting to see how many of the hundred-and-one have already passed and are on the other side where there are no worries about food. Those jobs were the one-dollar a year kind of jobs, and even the dollar was not forthcoming. Accordingly, Henry Page assumed a considerable responsibility and spent much time during the war without cost to the government.

North Carolina has lost one of its strongest and most energetic characters in the death of Henry A. Page. His body will lie in the cemetery at old Bethesda church, where the bodies of so many of the makers of North Carolina lie. *Quiescat in pace.*

The Blood Suckers Should Be Destroyed.

Developments in the investigation of the expenditures of holding companies in the recent fight to eliminate them by 1942 reveal conditions that, uncorrected, will do more to produce a revolution in this country than all the 30,000 communists reported by a Soviet agent to dwell in the United States. The death decree, it will be recalled, was beaten in the house by a very large vote. The difference in the house bill and the senate bill lies chiefly in the placing of the burden of proof. The senate bill decrees the death of all holding companies that do not prove their necessity; the house bill allows the elimination of those companies that are proved to be unnecessary. The revelation of recent days indicate that the surest way to kill the bad ones is to pass the senate bill. Such companies as have a real reason for existence and are not mere parasites should be able to prove such status, and live. The testimony thus far revealed by the congressional investigation of expenditures in the campaign against the passage of the administration measure, requiring elimination of all unnecessary holding companies by 1942, is sufficient to prove that some of the holding companies are outright blood-suckers and have had no quibbles about the means used to defeat the administration measure. Thousands of fake telegrams were sent congressmen as one means of fighting the bill. And now it is revealed that the rake-offs by some of the companies are going by the millions into the accounts of a few higher-ups in the organizations. Yet there are doubtless necessary and honest holding companies; but it begins to appear that they will have to be prepared to prove themselves such in order to survive. Under the revelations of the last

fortnight it is difficult to see our own congressman voting again against placing the burden of proof upon the holding company that would survive as a necessary institution.

The Four Billions Will Be Spent.

Wages of ordinary laborers under the WPA program in Harnett and 65 other counties without a town of 5,000 inhabitants will be at the rate of \$19 a month. If Dunn had had a hundred or two more inhabitants in 1930 it would have meant higher wages for every WPA worker in the county during the spending of the four million work-relief fund.

Well, hardly that, for the spending is going on, while no \$19 a month job has been given out in the county. The money will be spent and you may be sure of that. First, up at Washington there had to be a big boss with big salary. He must have a young army of helpers on the spot. Then, there must be about fifty state and colonial superintendents appointed at big salaries. Each of these must have his assistant with salary running into the thousands, and a little army of office helpers at good salaries. There come next the district superintendents with salaries of \$4,000 to \$5,000. There are eight of these in North Carolina, probably 600 or 700 in the whole country. Each of these must have his assistant with a salary still running into the thousands, and each must have a contingent of helpers in the office and in the field. The little bosses for the various jobs must be appointed. Up to now nobody has been taken from the relief roll for a \$19 job. The big salaries are rolling along; the relief roll is feeding from the free public trough or not feeding at all.

But by the time frost falls perhaps the \$19 men will be getting on the job. But the four billion will be spent, you bet. But wasn't that what it was appropriated for? What matters it if those who are rich or had other paying jobs get the cream of it? Aren't they the folk? What difference does it make if the 75-cent a day men never get to work—they are only poor trash—none of them fit for the salaried jobs!

A Milepost in American Banking

Adoption by the Senate of an altered version of the omnibus banking bill passed May 9 by the House of Representatives presages practically certain enactment at this session of a law which will mark a turning point in American finance.

Just as the establishment of the Federal Reserve System was a major event in the development of a national banking system, this act will be significant as giving it a more unified command and more definite direction. Where the existence of the reserve system operated to keep the banking world on a more even keel during storms and "money panics" which had occasionally occurred before, the legislation now making is expected in some degree even to prevent these storms and to set up an authority which can exert some influence toward smoothing out business cycles.

Thus it concerns the welfare of everyone in the United States, however humble, for all are affected more or less by the sweep of depressions and booms, whose force, it is hoped, may now be somewhat checked.

How effective this restraint will be must depend on the wisdom and courage of the Federal Reserve Board that is to be newly constituted under this bill. Just how it is to be constituted depends on whether Congress ultimately adopts the Senate or the House version of the measure. In this and a few other respects the extensive changes made by the Senate, largely at the instance of Senator Carter Glass, are important.

WON'T TOOT OWN HORN



Tom Proctor

Who as president of Proctor-Barbour Co., of Fuquay Springs, is due much credit for the remarkable record of his firm in the last few years. He finds time for a lot of other pursuits, too.

By either draft the bill would centralize the monetary authority of the United States in Washington in a much greater degree than heretofore and to that degree remove it from New York. But the Senate measure would give the reserve board a great deal more independence than the Administration bill voted in the House. It would provide for bipartisan representation, longer terms, higher salaries, require that at least two members "be persons of tested banking experience," and would omit the Secretary of the Treasury and the Comptroller of the Currency from the board.

All of this is significant, particularly the last item, from the fact that if the Federal Reserve Board is really to be a kind of economic supreme court worthy to wield a tremendous power over the business activities of the country it should be as fully emancipated from the political interests of whatever Administration may be in power as it is from the financial interests of privately owned banks.

In one or two other respects the Senate bill safeguards against abuse of the reserve system by the Treasury, one section requiring that reserve banks shall purchase Government securities "only in the open market," so that they may not be forced to finance a federal deficit by direct purchase of bonds.

The very important "open market policy"—the question of whether reserve banks shall buy securities and so expand credit, or shall sell them and so deflate it—would be placed in the hands of a special committee of the seven members of the Federal Reserve Board plus five representatives from the twelve Federal Reserve banks. This and the reserve board's proposed power of requiring smaller or larger reserves to be maintained by member banks constitute the main weapons for control of credit. It is vital that they be exercised in the interest of the whole country and not in that of a political or a financial group.

Yet it is also essential that these powers should be exercised and not be allowed to lie dormant. With a larger gold supply in the United States than in any other nation—approximately 40 per cent of the world's total—and with an unprecedented volume of Government bonds extant as a basis for bank credit, the credit inflation possibilities latent in the American situation once recovery gets under way are simply stupendous.

In these circumstances strong authority is going to be necessary to prevent a repetition of the 1929 bubble on perhaps even a more tragic scale. Either the House or the Senate bill provides some such authority, but the latter provides it in a much more desirable form, and it is to be hoped that the report of the conference committee between the two houses will follow the Senate form.—Christian Science Monitor.

Lord, grant us grace to love Thee so
That glad of heart and glad of face.
At last we may sit high or low.
Each in his place.