

MARION PROGRESS

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER DEVOTED TO THE BEST INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE OF McDOWELL COUNTY.

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PEOPLE'S FORUM.

[This department is reserved for letters from the people on various topics. THE PROGRESS is not responsible for the views of its correspondents. All communications must be originally signed for our protection though the name may be withheld in publication.]

A REPLY TO "OBSERVER."

To the Editor of THE PROGRESS:

May I have space in your columns to answer an article published in the last issue of your paper which occupied the first two columns in the front page? I mean the article entitled "Citizens of Marion Ought to Consider, Etc." and signed anonymously or "An Observer." I do not know since the author writes from ambush under the guise of "An Observer." The whole tenor and substance of the publication was little and malicious, calculated and intended to do injury to a business institution created under the laws of the United States to do and which is doing a banking business, the First National Bank of Marion, and as cashier of that Bank, I do not propose to let the people remain in ignorance of the true situation nor to let that institution suffer by reason of the acts of any individual connected or not connected with it. It is with this in view that I wish space in your paper to give to the public a true statement of the situation which brought forth the utterance of the anonymous writer. The charge was that the First National Bank of Marion was dictating the policies of the town and naming the men who should be mayor and aldermen. Now, I propose to state the facts which no one will deny and leave it to the readers of your paper.

The First National Bank has nothing to do with the policies of the town and has never sought to dictate what the people shall do nor to name the candidates for any municipal office. It is a business institution doing a banking business, and as such does not figure in politics. What its officers and stockholders do as individuals is a matter for the individual and not for the institution. Because a man is an officer, a stockholder or a depositor of that institution does not put any strings around his neck, but leaves each one free to do as he wills. What I do, or any one else who is either an officer, stockholder or depositor does as a private citizen is the business of each one, and the First National Bank has nothing to do with it.

But for the sake of the argument, let us say that in the recent town election there was a bank fight. If so, was the First National Bank trying to dictate the policies of the town and name its candidates? A great many citizens went to Dr. Guy S. Kirby and Mr. John Decker, both of whom are officers of the Merchants & Farmers Bank, and sought to get these two men to run for aldermen and not have any contest but both of them refused to run, stated that they didn't want the office and would not serve if elected. The writer further approached Dr. Kirby, vice-president of the Merchants & Farmers Bank, and asked that there be no fight and for the purpose of avoiding a fight offered that two aldermen be selected from each bank and the fifth be a man who was not affiliated with either banking institution, and further offered to recommend to the aldermen so elected that the town's bank

account be divided equally between the two banks. Dr. Kirby again stated that he did not want to run or to have anything to do with it. After this, according to the custom which has prevailed in the town for years and years, the retiring mayor called a mass meeting for the purpose of nominating candidates. That meeting was attended by nearly two hundred people, a great majority of the voters of the town, and the ticket was nominated which was elected on Monday by a large majority. There was no opposition to the ticket in the mass meeting. But later, a secret meeting was held by a few individuals, as I am informed, and a ticket named and on that ticket Dr. Kirby and Mr. Decker were named without their consent which placed them in a false attitude before the people. There was no objection to either of these gentlemen and, in fact, practically everybody wanted them on the board of aldermen, but they didn't want to run and both of them could have been elected without any opposition if they had been willing to run. But after they had refused to run and a ticket was named in a public mass meeting by a large majority of the voters of the town, the men who participated in that meeting, with one or two exceptions, felt honor bound to stand by the nominees of the meeting and did so.

Now, did the First National Bank dictate the policies and name the candidates? It is true that the candidates named and elected are patrons and one a director of the First National Bank, but they were nominated in a public mass meeting held in the public's court house by the people consisting of a large majority of the voters, and they were nominated without the least bit of opposition. No man's voice was restrained; the freedom of no man was taken from him; and to every man the right to vote as he pleased was accorded without exception. Then, is it fair to say that the First National Bank named the ticket?

Again, the writer of the article was unfair when writing of what he termed "that petition", a term which was given by the Marion Progress to the published recommendation of a large number of citizens of the candidates who were nominated and elected, when he picked out a few signers of the recommendation who happened to be officers and stockholders of the First National Bank, and utterly and wilfully failed to say that more than SIXTY others signed the recommendation who were not interested in either bank.

As to the bank account of the town, no one who is at all familiar with the town's affairs would have the affrontery to say that any particular benefit could be derived by having that account. Everybody knows that neither of the banks in Marion pay interest on a checking account, and that is all the town of Marion keeps in any bank.

I wish to say that I, as a private citizen, am deeply interested in the progress and welfare of Marion and so long as I remain a citizen of the town, I shall continue to be interested in her development along all lines.

GEO. I. WHITE.

Mr. S. Lipinsky, proprietor of the Bon Marche, has leased the Berkeley Hotel building in Asheville and will transform the hotel into a great department store. Mr. Lipinsky plans to make of this property one of the finest department stores in the state. The space to be utilized covers over 25,000 square feet, or nearly five times the space of the two stores he now occupies.

Wealth is a bubble that some men try to enlarge by blowing.

FARMERS' FREE LIST BILL

From Best Analysis it Looks Like a Mighty Good Thing to Consumers.

By H. E. C. Bryant to Asheville Citizen.

Washington, May 1.—There is considerable speculation concerning the farmer's free list bill. Chairman Underwood of the ways and means committee, thinks it is a good thing. He believes that it will help the farmer. Mr. Prince, of Illinois, declared on the floor of the house last week that it was a fake, a fraud, made to catch rural votes. Others say that it is a political measure which will pass the house and die. Mr. Underwood announced that it would pass both houses of congress and be signed by the president. Very few people believe that the bill will ever pass the senate.

But, it is said, what if it did pass the senate, and receive the president's signature? What then? How much would the consumer of the articles on the free list gain? What revenue be remitted?

The exemption from duty of all articles affected by the bill would reduce the tariff revenues by 10,028,689, based on importations for last year. Included in this are the duties to be remitted under the reciprocity treaty with Canada, amounting to \$1,653,313, which deducted would leave \$8,375,676.

There is no way to reach an absolutely reliable conclusion about what will be saved by consumers. The imports in some instances are very very small, for the duties are prohibitive, and we have monopolies. If other countries build factories and compete with us on farm implements and other things prices may be affected.

But, reduced to the final analysis, to which there is very little prospect of it ever being, the saving would be tremendous. Here are the figures: The consumption, measured by the net supply, in values of the articles on the free list follows:

Salt, consumption \$9,540,824; saved \$4,862,005.9104.

Farm implements, \$90,637,110, against \$13,876,541.54.

Bagging for cotton, sacks, burlaps, etc., \$26,031,644 against \$6,992,099.57.

Cotton, ties hoop or band iron, \$12,639,953, against \$2,017,336.49.

Leather, boots and shoes, harness and saddles, \$493,005,263, against \$37,483,788.40.

Barbed wire, rods, baling wire, etc., \$118,027,206, against \$32,861,066.36.

Fresh and preserved meats, \$614,895,219, against \$133,493,763.04.

Flour, grist, etc., \$665,041,533, against \$18,355,146.31.

Lumber, laths and shingles, \$699,599,293, against \$59,955,659.41.

Sewing machines, \$8,497,464, against \$2,549,239.20.

Of course there are many ifs in this. If the farmers' free list bill becomes a law and prices drop as some of the advocates of the bill say they will in time these figures may pan out.

The total amounts above \$300,000,000.

W. R. Bryson, of Old Fort, was in town yesterday.

GRADED SCHOOL CLOSING

Medal Contests of High Order—Forty-two Children Receive Rewards.

The eighth months term of the Marion Graded School came to a close on last Wednesday. The contests in elocution and declamation held at night were of a high order reflecting on the school and all concerned great credit. Every selection was a gem in its class and showed that care and discretion had been exercised in this direction. As to the training, all appeared to have been taught by experienced teachers of elocution and oratory. As a matter of fact this was not the case altogether. The results were made possible by downright hard work on the part of pupils and teachers. There were thirteen contestants, six girls and seven boys and only two of these, one girl and one boy had ever contested before. There is a high compliment in the fact that the entire program was executed without a flaw.

After a beautiful chorus by the girls forty-two children who had been neither absent nor tardy during the session were invited to the rostrum to receive appropriate rewards, mostly books, given by the school board. While this was a fine showing for punctuality in attendance, that number would have been doubled had it not been for the epidemic of measles in the town. Then came the girl contestants for the Houck medal, Misses Eva Keeter, Hattie Gibbs, Thelma Hicks, Mary Potest, Annie Baber and Ammie Bomar. The contestants for the Hudgins medal were, Will Pless, Harvey Atwell, Eccles Gray, Jock Lonon, Grafton Bird, Gordon Ledbetter and Pedro Lonon. There were two sets of judges and so nearly perfect was the rendering of most of the selections the task of awarding the medals was indeed a difficult one. The boy's medal was awarded Grafton Bird and the girls' medal to Annie Baber. The presentation was made by Rev. Edward Long in his characteristic happy manner, incidentally paying a high compliment to the progress of Marion and especially to the graded school which he said stood for moral as well as intellectual development. The exercises closed with a chorus.

The annual sermon will be preached Sunday, May 21, and the address and graduating exercises, Wednesday, May 24.

Election in Old Fort.

The municipal election held in Old Fort, Monday, elected the following ticket: J. F. Harmon mayor, and J. N. Nesbitt, J. M. Kanipe, P. H. Mashburn, F. M. Bradley and John White aldermen without opposition.

Nebo Election.

The town election at Nebo, Monday, was a quiet affair. J. Frank Wilson was re-elected mayor, and G. M. Annis, J. K. Stacy, J. L. Padgett, J. E. Sigmon and T. W. Alexander were elected aldermen.

It is stated that there are nine sets of twins in the small village of Faith, Rowan county, and as an evidence of good faith the names of the proud parents are recorded.

NEWS OF THE STATE

Happenings of General Interest Condensed for Busy Readers.

A. Cannon, member of the State Board of Agriculture, Horse Shoe, Henderson county, says the apple crop in his section of the State, one of the best anywhere, is by no means destroyed by the cold. Indeed, there will be very nearly a full crop, he says, unless there are damaging conditions yet to come.

W. Vance Brown, representing the Asheville Mica Company, declares that if the Canadian reciprocity bill is passed as now written, this state will lose a half million dollars worth of mica business annually. Mica is on the free list and no duty is charged. Brown says that only five states produce mica, whereas Canada is full of it.

The grand lodge of Odd Fellows meets in Winston next week and the secretary reports that the value of property of the subordinate lodges has increased from \$193,725 to \$239,148 during the past decade. In addition the orphanage property at Goldsboro is valued at \$100,000, and 160 children are cared for at an annual cost of \$15,000.

Governor Kitchin has announced the membership of the committee which is to have charge of the construction of the new state building at Raleigh, same to cost a quarter of a million dollars. The members are Ashely Horn, Julian S. Carr, J. A. Long, J. Elwood Cox, A. S. Roscoe, W. L. Parsons and W. E. Springer. Most of the men come from the eastern and central sections, none from the west.

The corporation commission exempts 58 towns of two thousand and more inhabitants from the requirements for railroad companies to maintain two windows for tickets at stations, one especially for exchanging tickets for mileage. The exemptions are subject to review and revocation at any time. The only stations left in the state where the double window act will apply are Wilmington, Fayetteville, Raleigh, Durham and Greensboro.

North Carolina Senators on Committees.

Washington Dispatch.

In the Senate committee round-up the North Carolina Senators fared well, as they have done for a number of years. Senator Simmons is chairman of engrossed bills, and Senator Overman of woman suffrage. Mr. Simmons will retain finance, commerce, coast defences, Cuban relations, examine the several branches of the civil service, expenditures in the Department of Agriculture, and inter-oceanic canals.

Senator Overman goes on rules, one of the most important committees of the Senate, and will keep judiciary, appropriations, claims, conservation of natural resources, fisheries, forest reservation and the protection of game, industrial exhibitions and the University of the United States. Finance, commerce, appropriations, and judiciary, are among the very best committees, and both Senators rank and stand well on their respective committees.