

THE PILOT

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WHO DOES THE KILLING?

A statement of fatalities at railroad crossings tells that automobile collisions with trains result in a large proportion of the deaths and injuries that highway travel has added to human dangers. While the railroads are sued and usually made to pay damages for such accidents any man who thinks twice about the subject knows that nobody was ever killed at a crossing who used even ordinary precaution in looking to see if a train approached. No automobile is in danger of accident at a crossing if the automobile does not go on the track when a train is coming, and any man can discover when a train is coming if he will take the trouble to find out. If he prefers to take the chance of death rather than to make sure the way is clear he is entirely at fault for his negligence or indifference. Every driver on the roads knows that he will encounter railroads and trains. He knows the danger of trains. He knows that if he stops to make sure no train is coming he is safe, and that if he does not make sure he is in danger.

There is the point of responsibility. The cocksure individual who goes ahead with the conceit that he will have an open road invites all that he gets. No excuse can possibly be found for his carelessness. The only time a railroad crossing is safe for the automobile is when no train is moving over the crossing, or at such distance that it can not reach the crossing before a car can drive across. Nothing justifies driving on the track until it is certain no train is near enough to hit the car. No excuse of negligence on the part of the railroad is of the slightest help, for all the railroad precautions that could ever be devised cannot offset the negligence of the driver who goes on the track without knowing that he has a clear passage with perfect safety.

The railroad crossing can be made absolutely safe for car drivers by every driver knowing that he has a clear track before he tries to go across. If the drivers will do their share the railroad will kill no more people at the crossings.

THE EUREKA COUNTY STUDY

Now that the elections are past it is to be hoped that the study of county government as taken up a few weeks ago by the people of the Eureka neighborhood will go forward, for there at that farming center a movement was inaugurated that is important enough to carry on until the people of the whole county are far more familiar with their community affairs than most of us are now. In the work the meetings have done so far they have dug up some lines on government not suspected and they have given new slants to some things. But only a beginning has been made. Those fellows over at Eureka are in earnest in their study. Their gatherings are worth attending by more people, and by neighbors from other districts. If a permanent community study club can be built up on the start that has been made no better job could be undertaken, for this whole big world is undergoing all the time fresh transformations, and the more men group together to study those things the sooner we will hold our gait along with modern progress.

The Pilot will be glad to lend any hand it can to any of these gatherings. If the secretary will a few days in advance of meetings send an announcement to the office at Aberdeen it will be printed in the paper that more folks may be apprised of the

gathering, and if the subjects are made public and the names if possible of persons who will take part in the discussion of the themes, it may help to attract a larger attendance. But a thing has been started that should not be permitted to stop now. We should not get it into our heads that politics end with elections, or that politics can be separated from economics or social relations. The Eureka farmers started to talk about methods of local government, and that runs at once into politics, but that is one of the uses of politics, and politics must always be the servant of the people. Taxation has not been threshed out to the chaff yet. The fact is that only a commencement has been made. No place so suitable for these community affairs to be discussed as among neighbors who are sincere in their desire to know the truth concerning the economic laws that govern men in their relation and contact with each other. Then candid discussion of any subject is enlightening and stimulating to new thought and wider knowledge. Eureka has started a good work, and should go ahead on it vigorously.

SURVEYING THE POLITICAL FIELD

With the political engagement concluded and the results tabulated it is time to take stock of the situation. Moore county seems to have surprised itself by giving to the Democratic ticket a majority that is well up among the big ones, and while the general impression seemed to be that the election would be close it was rather the other way. Yet out of the conflict has come the satisfaction that the campaign was one of decency, study of the situation, effort to secure the best possible in the way of government, and mighty little acrimony has been engendered. As a big group of neighbors we have no funerals to attend, and no serious wounds to heal. It is doubtful if ever a campaign saw more appreciation of the integrity of purpose of all the campaigners on either side than this one. Few dead and wounded remain to gather up. We are nearly a harmonious community than is usually the case after a fall election.

Now we go forward to days of work and appreciation. The Pilot has always been an advocate of the administration. When we elect men to office the first thing to do is to remember that the best results are to be obtained by standing by them. It is folly to hire a man to carry on a responsible job and then begin by complaining of everything he does. To profit by his administration he must be given the utmost of help and encouragement every day of his management of the job. So let us join with the men we have set in high place. Stand by to the limit. Then we can expect results. The county has had a good government. It will have a good government. The men who have been selected are in most cases men of experience, men of integrity, and they are entitled to our commendation now and not to a course of complaint.

And, on the other hand, they have a task on their shoulders, for the people are becoming better informed as to county administration, and will be more positive in asking for wise policies. The people will check up more closely on government from now on, as they have found themselves taking more interest in the detail of county government, which is a wise attitude. They will be more vigorously with the administration in the future than in the past. For the people have not taken the interest in county government that they should. But they should to have arrived at a new point in this matter, and henceforth they may be expected to look into affairs and to know more about what is going on, and intelligently.

Altogether it looks like a good job, this selection of a county administration, and both people and officials will be responsible if it should turn out otherwise, for never yet was government a failure unless the people primarily made poor government possibly by their indifference.

COMMON SENSE AND THE RAILROADS

Last week the papers told of a conference of business men in New York to plan some scheme that would help the Seaboard

Air Line road to improve its finances. Since the Florida flare the Seaboard has been skating on thin ice, and the recent financial condition over the country have helped none to improve the situation. It transpires that the road has been unable to meet its interest payments and a considerable funded debt is due next year with the road's income dropping, and without much prospect of favorable change.

In consultation were the representatives of some big insurance companies and banks which hold the road's securities. Quick action is essential to meet some millions due in February, and other problems for keeping the road's head above water had to be discussed, and positive plans offered for finding money.

With these things big men must deal. But we in the Sandhills can look at the problem long enough to see that the Seaboard Air Line Railroad is one of the vital agencies in the life of this neighborhood. Suppose the Seaboard should find its financial condition such that it would be obliged to lessen its passenger service, or to limit its freight service, or to offer service of an inferior type! Suppose that the road should fail to keep up the high efficiency it has maintained here for years in steadily increasing degree! Suppose the road should not be able next

summer to move the peach crop expeditiously, or that in any way it should fail its territory!

What would this community be without it? It is a cheap and easy way to attract public attention for the demagogue to berate the railroads, and to talk about watered stock and big salaries for the officials. But when the income of a road is not big enough to pay interest on its bonds or meet its maturing securities it is immaterial if its stock is watered until it is a thousand times the value of the property, for if the company earns nothing for its stockholders it certainly takes no more from its patrons than if it had no stock whatever. And as for the salaries of the officials no road in the world that does any business pays its officials as much in salaries as one or two day's income would amount to. The plight of the railroad that serves any community is the plight of the railroad that serves any community. The Seaboard needs a little business more than it needs the gratuitous damnation of the people along its line. It needs more business and less demands on its treasury for taxes, street assessments, or outlays of any kind that do not increase its traffic and its income, and we might as well recognize that, for it is our salvation.

GRAINS OF SAND

The people of North Carolina spend \$1.40 for certain luxuries—tobacco, soft drinks, ice cream, candy, chewing gum, theatres and movies, jewelry, perfumes, cosmetics, sporting goods and toys—to every \$1.00 spent for public schools, according to a recent study made by the Research Division of the National Education Association, it is learned today from the State Department of Public Instruction.

The annual bill for certain luxuries for this State in 1928 was, according to the result of this investigation, \$65,936,995, while the cost of public elementary and secondary schools and colleges was \$47,047,191. This luxury bill is divided as follows: For tobacco, \$22,054,566; for soft drinks, ice cream, candy, and chewing gum, \$19,057,472; for theatres, movies, and similar amusement, \$11,152,737; for jewelry, perfumes and cosmetics, \$8,525,722; and for sporting goods, toys, etc., \$5,146,498.

North Carolina spend 4.38 per cent of the annual income of its citizens for schools, according to the bulletin issued by the National Education Association. The \$65,936,995 spent for certain luxuries, on the other hand, represents 6.14 per cent of the annual estimated income of \$1,073,028,000 for 1928.

In the nation, as a whole, \$2.61 is spent for candy, chewing gum, theatres, and similar items, for every \$1.00 spent for schools. We expend \$6,401,650,000 for the limited list of articles and amusements given above, while all the public schools are allotted \$2,448,633,561.

We gather from speeches at the Kiwanis luncheon on Wednesday that there is only one thing the matter with the Kiwanis Club of Aberdeen. It hasn't enough golfers. Richard Tufts alone had to carry the load of representation in the golf tournament held during the convention at Raleigh. It isn't quality the local Kiwanians lack, for Richard won the medal in the tournament, but the club here was supposed to have a whole team in the field.

These Kiwanians are honest folk. The Rev. Murdoch McLeod displayed a handsome overcoat at the meeting, found in the old Community House at Pinehurst after a Kiwanis meeting some time ago. Despite the hard times and the oncoming winter, no one claimed it. "Thanks," said the Rev. Murdoch.

Frances Folley is the pilot of The Pilot's little Austin automobile you've seen dashing about the Sandhills. We discovered a dent in the car the other day and she said she had run into a bird. It almost stopped the car, but the bird flew away.

The story goes that one of these cars completely disappeared in an open manhole in Washington the other day, but we don't believe it.

If your life is pestered by young women pounding you for subscriptions to The Pilot the next few weeks, take it gracefully. It's all in a good cause. The more readers we have the better we can serve the community.

Meanwhile don't forget to join the Red Cross.

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