

THE PILOT

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THE BRIGHTER FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

All signs point to a brighter financial outlook. Money is easier, factories are taking on more hands, the government projects for stimulation of business are having an effect, and a general air of hopefulness, which is the main thing, all work together to clear the skies. As the clouds roll back probably we will realize that the scare has been greater than the real danger. While many men have been out of work, no doubt some have not been as wild about getting in work as might have been desirable, and another class has preferred to be out of work rather than to work for the wages that might have been obtained. Possibly before things are in general motion wage adjustments will have to be made, for it is doubtful if we are to return to the plane on which we soared to disaster. This thing had been coming for a long time. Now that it has come, and that we are seemingly starting to recover from its bad effect it is easy to believe that we will get on a better basis, and that we will have a more substantial prosperity although not so profligate a one.

Probably the farmer is to be the man who will come out of the storm in the best shape, for he has his ground and the means of making a livelihood even though he doesn't sell as much stuff at as high prices as he had been doing when the high wave rolled. We will all discover that we can live right well on smaller expenditure of money and on the contraction of less debt than has been the recent habit. Another thing we will learn and profit by is to pay as we go. Still another is that money is plentiful enough and that if we pay as we buy we will have much less need for money that we do not have. It has not been a lack of money in the past, but the inability to get credit to the limit of our notions after we spent the money we had. We were passing credit around regardless until one day the settlement was called for and the house of cards tumbled. The same old money still exists, and the man who is not entangled with debt will be ready to go, and is going now, when the skies grow brighter. The dollar he gets will be available to buy something for his needs instead of paying debts. Gradually we are going to climb out of our present Slough of Despond. The common impression is that we are past the low spot, and heading upward, but we are going to walk part of the way upward. We will not slide as we did in coming down. If we will adjust ourselves to the roads as we climb, and don't get into our heads that we have to insist on everything in sight, the traveling will not be bad.

The bottom has been reached if we have the nerve to buckle down and work like thunder to go upward. But no one is coming after us with gold-plated flying machines to take us there. We will have to saw some wood and squeeze the nickle on the way up, and work our elbow joints and our legs on the road.

LIKE THE INDIAN'S GUN

During the week Jesse Page of Bensalem, was in Aberdeen, and naturally, as he is the head of the committee of nine of the Moore County Tax Payers' League, he was confronted with some questions, and likewise shown that the twenty-five per cent tax reduction asked could not be accomplished. But Mr. Page has been around a good many years and heard it thunder pretty often, so he merely answered to the wise ones that

his committee is making some inquiry into the situation, and that he is not much concerned with what can't be done, for there is not much of that kind of thing in existence. It appears to be his notion that if the people of Moore county are in earnest about wanting to do almost any reasonable thing a way to do it will be found, and certainly it is more likely to be found, and certainly it is more likely to be found by looking for it than merely saying it can't be done. One thing Mr. Page remarked that may be worth remembering. "These Bensalem people, who started this thing, are not emotionalists," he said. "They move deliberately, but only when they think they have a reason, and country folks don't as a rule go off half-cocked. So far they have only started something. Now we were looking into their proposition. May be it can't be done, but lots of things that folks have said couldn't be done have caught the eye of some rattle-headed fellow who whirled in and did the impossible. Our committee has been instructed to show the commissioners how to make the reduction. May be it can't be done, but we are going to know it can't be done before we say it can't. And to tell you the truth some of us are foolish enough to believe that may be it can be done. We have not got far enough into the matter yet as a committee to see any serious obstacles, and we have a rather convincing stimulus in the belief that intelligent people can find a way to do almost anything that deserves to be done."

That seems to be the temper of the Tax League. And inasmuch as the principal thing is the ability of the people to pay the taxes now bearing down on them in every quarter it is well to remember that the big force is that old proverb that says you can't get blood out of a turnip. Mr. Page's committee intimates that people can't pay seventy-five, or twenty-five or any other five per cent if they lack the money, and a thing that can that way automatically settle itself can be settled in other ways if the people choose. Moore county taxes, North Carolina taxes and United States taxes can be reduced twenty-five per cent any day the people so elect, and in orderly and honest manner. The only thing required is to find out how, which is what Mr. Page's committee is undertaking now.

SOAKING THE RICH

We are finally noticing some action on that good old battle cry of soaking the rich. Julius Rosenwald, a rich business man left a large legacy for schools in the South, something like a million dollars coming to help education annually. But Julius Rosenwald's estate has been properly soaked by the depression, and the contribution this year is practically nothing. The soaking has been effective. The Duke endowment is exposed to shrinkage from the same source, which will no doubt cheer all those who like to see the rich soaked, for if soaked enough it would knock the hope out of hospitals, asylums and a lot of things that Duke provided for. All along the line of the rich it is the same way. The income taxes that were to be soaked out of the predatory wealthy have not been soaked, for when put in the soaking pit it seems that their incomes have played tag. "They ain't no income."

The stock markets have got plenty of soaking. Once was a time when if a man wanted to borrow a little money he could put up some stocks of a good concern for security and get the money, because the stocks could be sold if he failed to meet his payments. But with the depression dividends were failing, and the good stocks ceased to be regarded as good security, for with no dividends nobody wanted to buy stocks that were sold as securities for debts. That meant nobody would lend money on stocks as security, which also meant that stocks held as security were offered presently for rapidly lowering prices in hopes of realizing something from them before they got too low, and stocks went into the dump along with dividends. So the rich were soaked some more, and along with them the little folks who had held some stocks and bonds in what were looked on as good securities. You can't

soak the rich without soaking the poor a little and everytime a factory shut down some of the poor folks who work there get a crack in the eye. It is a lively matter, this soaking the rich, and it seems they are pretty well soaked. They are so well soaked that taxes, instead of bringing in tons of revenue, are getting soaked themselves.

The job has been the most beautiful success that could have been asked. Now, if we will get to work and dry out some of this soaking, business will gradually pick up again, but while the picking up goes on we are going to eat corn bread and molasses and help the commissioners find how to cut that 25 per cent in taxes, which can be done as soon as we know we have to do it. We are beginning now to soak the spenders, and you can make up your mind that will do the job.

THE FATE OF THE NORFOLK SOUTHERN

The announcement that the Norfolk Southern railroad has gone into receivership is not surprising. Railroads all over the country have been stood up with their backs to the wall, their traffic taken by vehicle moving over roads built by public funds, their hands tied in every way to prevent them from doing business in a business way, their incomes restricted by government limit, and their taxes piled up to the breaking point. Both the principal roads of Moore county are now in the hands of receivers, and what is to be their fate is a problem. But what will be the fate of Moore county if the roads are throttled is easy to guess. The question concerns the roads, but it concerns the whole county even more.

The railroads are not guileless in the matter. They have been operating at an expense that is too high, which has been forced on them by political influences by high labor costs, by high prices of materials and by high price of everything they use, and with no power to maintain prices of transportation that will pay the high costs. No business concern on earth can successfully operate under the restrictions that have hog-tied the railroads, and they can not hope to recover unless they are granted some sensible concessions as a right to live and do business like business has to be carried on to thrive. Were the railroads a strictly private business it might be another matter, but as their service is wholly a public one it is the public whose knuckles are skinned in this matter. The railroads have to be given an honest chance to live and operate, and the energetic backing of the people or they are headed for state ownership and operation, and that is about as near hell as can be imagined in a republic. This is purely a matter for the people, with only one way out, and that is to demand that things be made such that the roads can live and thrive, not for the railroad workers, nor for the railroad security holders, but for the people, who are served.

THE MOORE COUNTY TAX LEAGUE

The executive committee of the Moore County Tax League held a meeting Monday in the court house to hear a preliminary report from its subcommittee appointed to gather some information as to possible tax reduction. Preliminary suggestions were offered, which will be considered at a meeting next Monday after the township committees have conferred with the people in meetings recommended this week. The sentiment of the committee at Carthage was that a twenty-five per cent is not only possible, but highly probable before the matter is dropped. Many unsuspected phrases of procedure were discussed, one especially appealing being that of a county manager and a reduction of the functions of government in county, state and nation as now practiced. The statement of the purposes of the League, printed elsewhere, shows the set of the wind in this affair. "To make a steady and faithful endeavor to eliminate all unnecessary and paternal functions of government, all forms of graft, privilege, subsidies, and free distribution of money to any business, groups or individuals and to be taxed the minimum for the legitimate functions of government, and to contribute no money for the

benefit of any section, business or person. To organize the citizens to enforce the immediate reduction of the expenses of county and state and to exercise the utmost vigilance to keep these expenses within the means of the people."

Every citizen is eligible to membership and every tax payer. No strings are attached, no politics, no favoritism, no object

GRAINS OF SAND

One of the bold members of the Tax League committee at Carthage last Monday said he could take the county government and run it completely for \$30,000 a year, or at a reduction of far more than 25 per cent, but when another asked him if he was making a proposition that he wanted considered he hedged by saying he would look into matters a little farther.

Norfolk Southern railroad goes into the hands of receivers this week. We seem to have soaked another of the biggest taxpayers of the county, and apparently are finding another reason why tax reduction is threatening to work out its own solution.

Rains came along in time to chirk up the peach crop, and the weather man will probably earn his salary on this job.

The farmers around here could tell the Bonus army that 200 acres of timber land will not look like a very big source of maintenance for an army of several thousand men at the present price of farm stuff and lumber.

The office cat has been casting the horoscope and notes on August 31 the most interesting eclipse of the sun seen in this section in a long time. To tell the truth the cat has been sleeping on the table where the Nautical Almanac lies, and probably that is where she gets her information. But her forecast is that about half past two in the afternoon, (actual standard time says 2:13, but we are seventeen and a half minutes slow, being west of the 75th meridian that much) the sun will begin to drop behind the moon. The movement will continue until 4.40, when the face of

the sun will appear to be covered to about 85 per cent of its diameter, making almost a total eclipse. The cat says the effect will be to darken the sky to a deep twilight, with the grotesque coloring that follows the separation of some of the light colors of the spectrum and the weirdness that comes from the fading light which is no longer governed by the influence of the sun's fierce brilliance. The cat says to smoke a piece of glass, and by no means try to nearly total to be seen in this section. This will be the last eclipse so long in a long time and if the rain holds off it will be worth watching from start to finish.

"We have taken the State number, 50 from United States Route No. 1, because the public was already familiar with that marking, but we have decided to retain dual marking on other routes for about one year longer in order that there may be complete familiarity with the Federal numbers," declared E. B. Jeffress, chairman of the North Carolina Highway Commission.

"But when people learn that they can go clear across the entire United States on a highway with a single number they will prefer the Federal numbers. Incidentally, there are three Federal highways, each more than 2,000 miles long, converging in Raleigh and two of the three begin in North Carolina. Most people know about U. S. No. 1 which begins at the Canadian border in Maine and extends to Miami, Fla., but there is less known about U. S. No. 64, running from Lake Landing, N. C., to Sante Fe, N. M., of which N. C. 90 is a part; and about U. S. No. 70, which begins at Atlantic and follows N. C. No. 10 across this State and goes on to El Paso, Tex."

Let us operate a universal state-wide six months school. Pay our teachers a living wage on a twelve month basis; and require them to show results or step aside. Discontinue all special tax district. Discontinue all athletics during school hours. Discontinue the teaching of music, expression or dramatics during school hours. Discontinue home economic courses. Discontinue business courses. Discontinue chapel or other exercises during school hours. Devote at least five and a half hours each day to actual study or recitation. Encourage and require home study. Discontinue holidays except those observed by the Government forces. Elect our State, County and Local school boards by popular vote. In short, cut out the frills and furbelows—the unessentials, in this time of want, and operate on the theory that our children will not pass this way again; that their time for schooling is limited, and that our schools are primarily for the purpose of giving them a book learning. These extras; as desirable as they may be in other times, shall not interfere as they have in the past with the acquisition of the bed-rock of all knowledge—the ability to read, with understanding, write with legibility, to figure with accuracy, and the yearning for further knowledge.

—R. E. WICKER.

Pinehurst, N. C.,
July 28, 1932.

(Editor's Note—Mr. Wicker writes to say that his letter may be regarded as a copy for Will Rogers' article in last Sunday's papers. Mr. Wicker's article was in type in The Pilot office before Will's article was published.)

Press Comment

FROM NORTH CAROLINA

An editorial published recently in a little North Carolina weekly paper, The Pilot, of Aberdeen and Southern Pines, is a good, fresh example of the change which has come over rural sections of that state in the last few years. We nit was mainly agriculture was common. Hostility to capitalism its outlook was narrow. Radicalism was pronounced. Its financial affairs were in a bad mess. It was regarded generally as a rather weak sister.

Now it is largely industrialized. Its financial system has been brought up to date. It has invited investments from the North. In 1928 it startled the country by giving Hoover a majority, and the Republicans look for another victory there this year. It is gaining a reputation as a highly progressive commonwealth. Essentially southern, it has acquired a northern and more liberal outlook.

Attacks by Mr. Garner on capitalism and "pet Republican interests," and Gov. Roosevelt's comments on "the forgotten man" are not likely to win many votes there. As The Pilot says, employed capital means employed men. Idle capital or a lack of capital means a return to those conditions under which North Carolina lagged in the rear with other backward states. North Carolina is discovering the truth of what Calvin Coolidge said in a speech some years ago, when he remarked:

There is just one condition on which men can secure employment and a living nourishing, profitable wage for whatever they contribute to the enterprise, be it labor or capital, and that condition is that some one make a profit by it.

That is the sound basis for the distribution of wealth and the only one. It cannot be done by law, it cannot be done by public ownership, it cannot be done by socialism. When you deny the right to a profit you deny the right of a reward to thrift and industry.—Boston Herald.

TRAIL LONGINGS

By William V. Carter, Jr.

To hit the trail again for days and days
And take my time along the way
in search
Of sweet content and peace of soul;
to blaze
New trails again; to make a bed
of birch;
To cook beside a running stream; to count
The stars and sink to sleep upon
the sand;
To swim a swift and roaring stream
or mount
A log and drift til dawn, or sit
and land
A catch of fish; to climb the highest
peak
And throw a rock far down the
cliff to where
A cloud is hid; to watch the moon—
to seek
In dreams a face of one I love most
dear;
To hills and streams I've known and
paths I long
To tread—to life, itself, I pen this
song.
Aberdeen, N. C.

Correspondence

ARRAIGNS SCHOOL SYSTEM

Editor The Pilot,

Sometime ago the Director of the Budget of the State of New York, in a radio address, said that the rural section of that state had all but bankrupted themselves by bond issues for unnecessarily elaborate public school buildings and equipment. He stated that the cost of education in that state had advanced from sixty-eight dollars per pupil in 1921, to one hundred and seventy eight dollars in 1931, and, that in his opinion, the youth of New York State was being stuffed with a heterogeneous collection of superficial information at the expense of a nearly destitute citizenship.

It is not popular among the intelligentsia to criticize our schools, but the writer suspects he hasn't far to fall in their estimation anyway, and it should be kept in mind that the criticism is directed, not at education, but at the schools as operated under the present system.

A workman is judged by his product, and a system of education should be valued by the same standard. Our cost of education has more than doubled, while our income has decreased to near the vanishing point. We have modern equipment; modern methods of teaching; hundred thousand dollar buildings; playground equipment and gymnasiums; athletic and dramatic coaches; business courses; home economic courses, and other courses ad infinitum.

For the past twenty years the citizens of North Carolina who raised their voices against the tremendous loans necessary to finance these things have been accused of treason, and have been ostracized by the self-styled intellectuals of the State. The day of reckoning is now at hand, and the debts which "our grandchildren" were to pay are being collected from those responsible for them.

We are operating ten thousand dollar schools in hundred thousand dollar buildings, which are turning out far too many thirty-cent "Graduates." Well grounded in basketball, dancing, modern social practices and "wise-cracks," they are being sent out; a blase, sophisticated army into a bewildering world, to sink or swim, totally unprepared for the business of living, and insufficiently advanced in the fundamentals of education to succeed in college; their years spent in

school all but wasted.

The rank and file of our citizenry have unwittingly had thrust upon them this modern educational system. Fostered by self-styled educators, this insidious scheme, shot through with half baked theories, has been advanced as the open sesame to knowledge. By the legerdemain of child psychology and complicated, abstract mental analysis, they profess to administer learning in sugar-coated doses to an unsuspecting child. The old maxim that there is no royal road to learning, along with many of the old continually discarding their theories essentials, has been relegated to oblivion. The fact that these men are for others still more hare-brained seems not to phase them in the slightest degree. Our notorious Text Book Commission; dictated to by the same forces, select text books in accordance with the prevailing theory, and by their own admission, contract for them in five year periods at a top price. Yet one member of that commission had the efficiency to make the statement that the books required for a certain grade cost only one dollar and seventy-five cents, when, as a matter of fact they cost nearer ten dollars, and I speak from experience.

This is not an indictment of the school teacher. Hedged about with the dictums of an educational oligarchy; frightened by the bugaboo of "repeaters," underpaid and overworked; forced to spend their meagre savings in summer school where; under the tutelage of these self-styled modern educators, and tact or natural ability for teaching they happen to have is submerged and obliterated by a maze of half-baked theories; they are to be commended for their faithfulness and congratulated for their occasional success.

To wreck and rebuild a machine of this magnitude is a tremendous undertaking, yet just that must be done if we are to get back to the fundamentals of education. We have made our bond that we will repay the cost of our buildings, and unless from dire poverty we are forced to repudiate it, it will be paid. But during these days of unemployment and low prices, which are going to be with us a long time, let us first destroy this domination by self-appointed leaders which so vitally affects the future of our children, and get back to the one fundamental of knowledge—STUDY.