

THE PILOT

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News! News!

Sometimes it seems as if ignorance were the evil spirit in the world, taking "ignorance" in its widest sense.

We have all seen how people respond to a reality that they can understand, and that strikes their imagination. Always around Christmas-time, stories appear of neglected children, such as the little boy who can live only a few more weeks and this is to be his last Christmas. Immediately, the day after the story is published, he receives a cartful of presents.

The last such tale is of a child whose mother wrote the local paper that her daughter always hoped to get a Christmas card, but day after day the mail man passed their door and did not stop. The post-office, in that town, it is now reported, has had to install a bin to receive the thousands of cards this child is getting daily.

The Christmas story is a story of news. "News! News!" the old carol goes. "Jesus Christ was born today! Ox and ass before Him bow and He is in the manger now. Christ was born today!"

At Christmas-time the story of Christ's coming into the world is dramatized and the effect on man is an awakening to the significance of Reality. With minds crowded with the cares of the day, bowed under the weight of world events that seem beyond their comprehension or control; men drift and struggle on and then, at Christmas, the good tidings come again. The Reality is there and men see the Star and what might be; and even non-Christians feel the power of a new hope in their hearts.

The story of Christmas is a tale of the awakening of men's minds to what they can be. It is a symbolic tale, also, partly; Christ's own words were to give something of its inner meaning. "Except ye become as a little child ye shall not enter in. . . ." Except men wipe the slate clean and with fresh minds and creative imagination, make a new start, we shall never be able to attain that maturity of mind and spirit which alone would enable us truly to respond to those incredible commands: "Love thy neighbor as thyself: Love thine enemies: Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you."

Our hearts are touched and it is easy to send cards to the little girl, or toys to the boy who will see no more Christmases, but to think of all the lonely people or the sick ones, especially if their story is not there for us to read, that is another matter. We close our minds to them.

In the same way, the dramatic tidings of the birth of Christ strike on our listening ears with joy: we welcome His coming into the world on Christmas night, but to keep on thinking about Him and, above all, to try to do those terribly difficult things that He demanded: that is another story.

Yet the Christmas news comes again and yet again and, as we welcome its coming, hope is renewed. Hope that some day, some time, men will hear the good tidings and have the courage and the strength of spirit, not only to hear, but to do.

At Holiday Time

The wreath is a traditional symbol of Christmas. In windows and on front doors of homes all over America, the bright red and green of holly will signify the joyous festivities of the holiday season.

For Christmas-time should be a time of happiness. Every family looks forward to the joy and celebration that the holiday period should bring. But every year thousands of families in our country see Christmas joy turned into suffering and tragedy because of needless and preventable accidents.

The National Safety Council points out that hundreds of persons are killed and thousands more injured by accidents during the Christmas-New Year's holiday season—the year's peak accident period. The No. 1 killer is traffic, and its death toll on Christmas Day is two or three times the annual daily average.

To keep death from taking your holiday—or the holiday of your loved ones—is a simple thing. It costs nothing, takes no time and requires only a little effort. It only means being aware of the extra holiday hazards and of the extra caution, common sense and courtesy needed to overcome them.

Refuse to drink if you are driving. Wait for the light to change. Yield the right-of-way. Discard a string of Christmas tree lights with worn insulation. Throw away gift wrappings as soon as presents are opened.

These are little things—but they pay off. They will go a long way toward keeping the lights on in your home and the red and green holly wreath on your door.

They will preserve for you and your loved ones the joy and delight that is America at Christmas.

The Crop Plan

The magnitude of world events is so great that sometimes it is overwhelming. We feel like giving up. Those 25,000 miles of problems, as Senator Graham spoke of them, leaning up against all the problems that we already have right here, seem just too much. There is the human temptation to say: "What on earth can I, one little person, do about them?" and quit,

then and there.

If we lump them all together, like that, there probably isn't much that can be done about them. Something like the UN is the only thing that can handle such a situation. But we don't need to face them all together and then we find that, divided up, there are ways in which they can be tackled. One way is through the CROP program. CROP stands for "Christian Rural Overseas Program," and it would seem as if this time, at Christmas, when we are all thinking of the heavy "crop" that is going to weigh down our festive boards, this is a very appropriate time to take thought for this Christian service to our less lucky neighbors.

CROP is sponsored by the Church World Service, Catholic Rural Life and Lutheran World Relief. The food goes overseas to the refugee groups in many countries and to the old and sick and the homeless. Typical of those who receive it is this case, "a family consisting of a grandmother, grandfather, and five grandchildren, from two to 14. The mother is dead and the father in a labor camp in Siberia. With the grandmother very ill, the family is living in a dilapidated grape-arbor which the grandfather and oldest children are trying to close in against the winter weather." CROP will help to feed them.

Here, it would seem, is a project that should appeal at Christmas time and to Moore County people. North Carolina is making up a CROP train. It is, so far, 15 cars long and is loaded with the 800,000 pounds of grain and the canned milk and other foods which our people have collected in 29 of the 100 counties of the state.

Moore County is not included in the past week's report, a cause for disappointment but also an opportunity. It is not too late to add a CROP plate to the Christmas table. . . not too late to send canned food, farm produce or cash to buy it to the local committee. The Rev. T. J. Whitehead, of Aberdeen is in charge.

Piedmont Airmail Service

It is a definitely encouraging sign of Piedmont Airlines' status with the government that CAB has upped its mail subsidy, to assure its continued servicing of the east-west routes. In almost two years of operation Piedmont has proved itself a valuable and dependable carrier, as far as we have been able to see from here, and we hope very much it will be allowed to keep its routes and to enjoy the progress it surely will render.

The service rendered Southern Pines and vicinity by the fact that Knollwood airport is a stop on the Wilmington-Charlotte route is a valuable one, more valuable to the Sandhills than to Piedmont. It is a fact, also, that we rate a stop solely for fortuitous circumstance. We are surely the smallest station on the route, and have the benefit of this service only by virtue of our location between big-city stops. It is being given us at a pecuniary loss to Piedmont. While few in proportion are yet using it, we hope very much the business will grow, and that Sandhills people will learn to avail themselves of all its services, passenger, mail and freight, so that the airline will some day be repaid for establishing a station here.

Evidence that it is not fully appreciated is the removal of the morning airmail service, as so few letters were sent by it, according to Postmaster A. Garland Pierce, that use of a mail messenger was not justified. Yet for these few, it was very important. With the train mail service as poor as it is, it was the only way mail sent from here at night could reach Charlotte and points west for the next day's business. The afternoon airmail service, getting letters to Charlotte about 4 p. m., does not accomplish the same thing and, in fact, does little better for the local mailer than the train.

This paper was among those who used the morning service and it is regrettable that others who could have benefited by it failed to use it in sufficient numbers to justify its retention. We hope the demand will grow, and that it will be reestablished, so that this splendid air service we have by such lucky chance can do its best for all in the Sandhills.

Southeast Libraries and Waste

"In nothing else are the Southern states more closely bound together, more completely merged, than in the waste of their resources, economic and human; and as the waste is a unit, so must the effort to check it be unified, if it is to be effective."

So wrote Gerald Johnson in "Wasted Land" some years ago. It is still true. Part of this waste can be traced to the lack of library facilities. At least such is the contention of Louis R. Wilson and the other editors and compilers of "Libraries of the Southeast," and they make out a convincing case.

This report of a library survey of the Southeastern region asks the question: How are its public libraries serving the Southeast? It answers as follows:

There are 24,000,000 people in the nine Southeastern states. Their public libraries contain 8,500,000 books—about one-third of a book apiece. In 1947 they spent \$4,500,000, or 18 cents each, for public library support; and they borrowed 30,000,000 library books for home use.

At the same time the nation as a whole had more than 132,000,000 people, with 131,000,000 books. They spent 52 cents a person for public library support, and they borrowed almost three books each.

In our region a typical population unit which has one library has 26 filling stations, 21 grocery stores, 17 eating places six drug stores and three hardware stores.

North Carolina shows up a little better than the regional average. This state covers 93 per cent of its population with library service of one sort or another. It has nearly half a book apiece. And it spends the magnificent sum of 25 cents a year per person on its public libraries.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Before the paling of the stars,
Before the winter morn,
Before the earliest cock-crow
Jesus Christ was born;
Born in a stable,
Cradled in a manger,
In the world His hands had made,
Born a stranger.

Priest and king lay fast asleep
In Jerusalem,
Young and old lay fast asleep
Saint and angel, ox and ass,
In crowded Bethlehem;
Kept a watch together,
Before the Christmas daybreak
In the winter weather.

Spotless Lamb of God was he,
Shepherd of the fold;
Let us kneel with Mary Maid
With Joseph bent and hoary,
With saint and angel, ox and ass,
To hail the King of Glory.

—Christina Rossetti.

Grains of Sand

The Sandhills hunting country is having a welcome pre-Christmas guest in the person of our Governor, who is hunting the quail with Bill Harrington and having good luck, we hope. . . We're showing him our best hospitality by leaving him alone. . . No story, no pix! . . . He's here for a rest from all that sort of thing. . . And we do want him to have a good time.

Happy hunting, Governor Scott! . . . When you want politics, we can dish them up. . . If you feel like making a speech, we're all set to listen. . . And when you want to be ignored, to have a good time by yourself like anybody else, we'll try to see that you have it. . . Merry Christmas!

Christmas is everywhere. . . In the village streets sparkling with lights. . . The outdoor Christmas trees all a-twinkle. . . The shop windows with their snowstorms, Santa Clauses, tinsel and holly and a world of enticing gifts. . . Shoppers making their way from store to store. . . The Christmas lists should be 'most all checked off by now, with only those last-minute items left to go. . . Only two more shopping days. . . Southern Pines merchants, take note—Aberdeen stores were open quite late Saturday night, and several local folks were down there shopping. . . Not that we begrudge a dollar, or a lot of them, to our sister town—what's good for one is good for all, and most of them come right back home any way, through one channel or another! . . . It was the convenience of leisurely shopping, after ordinary work hours, which appealed. . . And it would have been nice to see the same sort of accommodation here.

One place really filled with Christmas spirit was the elementary school last week. . . And a pretty sight it's been all during the season, with the gay window decorations in each classroom. . . Candles and Christmas trees, Santas and stars! . . . The "White Christmas" of last Friday morning was a charming thing to see—and to hear! . . . The carols sung by the glee club and girls' chorus sounded sweetly over the whole school, via the PA system. . . Then came the reading of "Night Before Christmas" . . . As "Supe Weaver" read the poem, he omitted, according to old custom, each line's final word. . . And it was filled in, in a mighty shout, by his hearers in the classrooms. . . Strolling down the hall, we were vastly entertained by the delighted noises exploding on cue from each room. . . Also by the scenes glimpsed through the open doors, of classrooms gaily decorated with the children's handiwork, and crowds of excited little faces flushed with joy and wreathed in smiles.

And the happiness of the children continued as they came in line from each classroom in turn, to lay their "white gifts" at the foot of the sparkling tree in the library, until a snowy mountain arose—distributed through the Council of Social Agencies' Christmas welfare program.

The gifts themselves were small. . . A can of food from each child. . . But all together they made a real little mountain. . . And in their giving the children learned several things. . . One, that Christmas means thinking of others as well as oneself. . . And another, that small acts of kindness done in cooperation with others can amount to a great deal of good.

A welcome visitor at the school

last Thursday was Senator Frank P. Graham, who paid a call on the fourth grade classroom in company with his administrative assistant, John D. McConnell. . . Keeping a promise made to young Johnny McConnell, a member of the grade, to come and see their Santa!

It's a tossup as to which thrilled the children more, the Santa or the Senator! . . . Anyway, together they made a superthrill for the youngsters, and for their teacher, Miss Bess McIntyre.

The Santa, an almost lifesize specimen in a big loaded sleigh, with reindeer streaking across one whole end of the classroom, may be seen this week in the window of Tots Toggery, where it was taken following the closing of school. . . It's a remarkable piece of handiwork. You'll remember the dollhouse, with family activities going on in every room, they made last Christmas, which was also set up in Tots Toggery and won the Chamber of Commerce window display prize.

We bet Southern Pines is the only town in the state whose town Christmas tree was decorated by the Chamber of Commerce president in person. . . As, filled with admiration we watched the turning on of the lights in the great magnolia opposite Broad Street drugstore, just about dusk one evening last week, we saw a figure drop from the boughs to the ground. . . And stand rubbing its hands together, looking, we thought, a little beat up.

"Santa Claus' helper in person," we thought, rushing over for an interview. . . It was Harry Fullenwider, who had been up there scrambling from limb to limb for no telling how long. . . His knuckles were skinned, his sweater was torn and his face was sooty (those trees by the railroad track bear the grime of years) . . . The topmost lights are 60 feet high, and Harry put 'em there. . . We think there should be some sort of award for a deed like that!

Southern Pines, Pinehurst, Aberdeen and Carthage are all prettily lit. . . And all different. . . Naturally, we think Southern Pines the prettiest but have also enjoyed seeing the big, bright, beautiful Christmas trees at Pinehurst and Aberdeen. . . And the great circle of lights about the courthouse at Carthage. . . They're worth making the circuit of the towns to see. . . And they give you the real Christmas spirit.

A good start for the Christmas season—last Thursday's morning's touch of snow, with flakes descending gently for an hour or more. . . Not all of them melted as they touched the ground, either, for rooftops and car-tops showed a distinct silvery trace. . . And two days later tiny drifts were found nestled in pine needles on the north side of some pine trees. . . How long since Southern Pines had a real "white Christmas"? Anybody remember?

To the Pilot this week came a Christmas card with a message inside. . . "To all my friends in Southern Pines. . . Just want to say hello and hope you'll enjoy a wonderful Christmas! . . . Anna B. Prizer, 91 McRae Drive, Toronto, Canada". . . Thanks, Mrs. Prizer, we're glad to pass your message on. . . We miss you very much!

And to the readers of this column (all two of them). . . MERRY CHRISTMAS!

In Bygone Days

From the Pilot files:

TEN YEARS AGO

Donald Parson, of Pinehurst, well-known golfer, joins ambulance corps to serve on battle front in France. Jaycees hold Christmas song festival, with accordion accompaniment by Lloyd L. Woolley, Jr.

Christmas attraction at the Carolina theatre is The Mikado, in technicolor.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

The Carolina Peach Institute is formed, with representatives from North and South Carolina towns, to aid the struggling peach industry. George Ross is president.

Practically every bed of the newly opened Moore County hospital is taken, and plans are afoot to build a Nurses' home, at an estimated cost of around \$10,000.

Miss Ethel Jones and Mrs. Clyde Council are guests at a surprise birthday party Friday the 13th, given by a group of their friends.

Hospital Saving, the official program for prepayment of hospital and surgical bills of the Medical Society and the Hospital Association of the State, had over 7,000 North Carolina babies born under family memberships from January through November of 1949. This is an average of over 600 babies a month.



Merry Christmas

Let us give thanks together for the priceless gift of Christmas.

1949

Jones Dept. Store
Carthage, N. C.

ANGLOW TWEEDS

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Custom Tailored by Our Mr. Frank

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You will like our good work and prompt service. Broken or worn out glasses fixed in a hurry, if you bring them to us.

H. M. Smith

OPTICIAN

Southern Pines and Dunn, N. C.

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