

EDITORIAL PAGE

THE ADVANCE
Herbert Peale
EDITOR

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The Advance is glad to give space in this issue to special news notes from the Elizabeth City High School. We are interested in all the schools in the section, but we are especially interested in the school here, and we hope that this is the beginning of a regular Elizabeth City High School Department in The Advance. At the head of such a department we should be glad to place the names of six editors; a boy and a girl from the high school, a boy and a girl from the grammar school and a boy and a girl from the primary school. If this suggestion meets with favor, we shall be glad to begin this department with Friday's issue of this week.

Over at Creswell, in Washington county, there is either a good teacher or a bright boy. In last week's issue of the Roanoke Beacon is a composition on Creswell, written by one of the school boys of the town which "tells more about the town," quoting a prominent resident, "than I knew myself." If every school boy will keep his eyes open and, when asked to write a composition, tell about things near at hand, he is putting himself in the way to really learn how to write with originality and style. On the other hand, he will never make much progress in this direction as long as he works on subjects which he knows little or nothing about at first hand.

According to reports which we have gathered from various communities of this section, the farmers have kept up better with their work this year than ever they remember to have done. It is said that one explanation for this lies in the fact that labor has been easier to get on the farm this year than in any year with in recent times. It strikes us that this abundance of labor is the result of the small cotton acreage. This year, with cotton prices high, there has been no cry even about any difficulty of securing cotton pickers. And this experience should impress upon the farmers of this section the advantage of continuing to keep the cotton acreage low.

With everybody talking about a short cotton crop, Gilbert Brickhouse down in Tyrrell county, says that he will get seven bales from five acres this year. At present prices for cotton and cotton seed the income from that five acres will be over five hundred dollars. And in Tyrrell county cotton money is spending money, for the farmers have enough horse and hominy to pay the running expenses of the farm.

The Advance would like to ask the powers that be why it is that Stumpy Point alone of the parishes in Dare county, receives mail only twice a week. With the vast increase in convenience of mail facilities reaching every nook and corner of the land these good people have seen their mail cut down from six to three times a week apparently without any reason whatever, if we understand the case aright. To make the situation more demoralizing, these people have no other means of communication with the outside world except their mails, as they can not be reached by phone or telegraph. The department should give them some relief.

It was the pleasure of the editor while at Manteo last week to visit

the Manteo High school and to observe the students and faculty at work in the splendid new high school building. This building marks a big step forward for education in Dare county and the Advance is deeply gratified at the assurance which comes from those who would assure us to secure this building for the county. That this paper is in the credit for the building is a pleasure to the editor.

The Manteo school this year has an enrollment of 114 which is a gain of 10 over the enrollment at the same time last year and within two thirds of the enrollment for the entire session last year. Moreover, the establishment of this high school and the growing interest in it has added to the interest in education throughout Dare county. Hatteras has an enrollment of 128 this year as compared with 112 for the first month last year; and an average attendance for the first month of above ninety one per cent as compared with an average attendance for the first month last year of seventy four per cent. Dare county already stands among those counties of the state in which the percentage of illiteracy is lowest. With its present school facilities another generation will see in Dare county a citizenship trained in the schools beyond the fundamentals of the three R's.

AN UNUSUAL TRIBUTE

The Advance was more or less acquainted with the facts set forth in the subjoined editorial from last week's issue of the State Journal, but we had not expected to see them in print during the lifetime of the man who is the subject of the eulogium:

"Last we forget, it may not be out of place to record here what is a simple fact worthy to be handed down to all future generations. It is that W. J. Peale, a practicing attorney at law of this city, is one of the most useful men that the State has ever had. Modest, retiring, unassuming, he has seemed willing to inaugurate great movements and then drop out of sight in pursuit of his private and professional affairs. He inaugurated, and as long as necessary, led the movement for the establishment of the North Carolina College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts. To him is due the chief credit for this great institution, which is proving such a blessing to the people of the State. He conceived and organized the State Library and Historical Association, which has become such a useful and elevating institution in the life of our people. He originated and carried to successful accomplishment the State Historical Commission, which is doing so much to perpetuate the noble deeds of this and former generations. In his brain was born the idea of the rural school library, and his tireless efforts are responsible for its adoption as a part of the educational system of the State. Other things he has done, but these four are sufficient to entitle him to the gratitude of his people for all time. The usefulness and far reaching influence of these institutions are inestimable and it is merely an act of justice to make this humble record of that fact that they owe their existence to his patriotic foresight and intelligent effort. At some convenient season we wish to publish with some detail and elaboration the history of the inception and growth of these movements. There are North Carolinians whose memory is perpetuated in marble and bronze, who have not accomplished half so much for the common welfare as has been done in the four movements above mentioned.

It is needless to say that this is written without the knowledge or consent of Mr. Peale. We are sure that he would prize it as one of the most precious things of his own life. It is a record of the things which he has done, and we are enjoying the fruits of his genius and know not to whom the credit is due; and our own idea of justice prompts us to make this record."

During the recent session of Federal court here a jurist whose name is known beyond the borders of his state said to the editor of this newspaper: "I am a lawyer and a member of the bar association of this State and America, but I want to tell you that the ordinary lawyer is little better than a cumberer of the ground. If North Carolina had less than half its present number of lawyers and if two thirds of

the young men in college who are preparing to practice law could be persuaded to turn their efforts into more useful fields of endeavor, the state would be infinitely better off. The Advance has no doubt that there is a great deal of truth in what the jurist said, but W. J. Peale is not a lawyer of the ordinary kind. When we hear men of his kind in general our ears turn to him and we know that he has some gifts of mind which will not be lost. He is a man who has done his professional work for the benefit of the people and he has done it without sacrifice of all of it in the effort. Standing among the best lawyers in the State and able to command at all times for his services a compensation common-urate with that standing, to one much in his once he seems to have deliberately chosen to build up his practice among farmers of only moderate circumstances.

But it is outside of his profession as is intimated in the editorial which we have quoted, that W. J. Peale has done greatest service. An indication of the extent of this service is to be found in the fact that he has found time for occasional contributions to this newspaper—contributions which, by the way, we have no doubt, deserved more attention than they received. When the question of the choice of the route for the inland waterway, as between the Albemarle and Chesapeake and the Dismal Swamp Canal, was being discussed he became interested, studied the reports of the engineers and of once went to the bottom of the question in a way that made the editor of this newspaper feel ashamed. That it had the better effect, however, we have never had any evidence.

NOT IN ITS OWN COUNTRY

It strikes the Advance that it would not be amiss again at this time to call the attention of its readers to what W. J. Peale had to say about this newspaper about three years ago.

"I want to congratulate you on the improvement of your paper. It is the best weekly I see, and one reason is you give in it your own views upon every subject upon which you write—and your views are disinterested. I mean unpurchased by fear, favor, or attraction, reward or the hope of reward, so far as I am able to see. The position you took on the parcels post will immediately cause every right minded man in your community to sit up and take notice; if indeed he had not already taken notice of you before, and whether he agrees with you or not. The point he will note is that you took your position contrary to the expressed opinion of the merchants, in meeting assembled, and contrary to a certain narrow view of their immediate interests. The onlooker has already observed that it is from the merchants you must get most of your advertising and that in spite of that fact you advise what you think is to their ultimate interests, and if not, then certainly to the interests of the people at large. At first blush it looks easier to crook the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift may follow fawning; but in the long run it is a hard road that the flatterer travels and the Hook of Books has said that the way of the transgressor is hard. Touching your position I desire to add that you are abreast with the best thought of this country, and of Europe where the scheme has been long tried and worked well. If you take your position regardless of your pecuniary interests in all matters of principle you will have splendid success for there is need of such a paper every where; and there will be demand for it too as you have established in the minds of all good men your reputation upon that point. I do not mean that your success will be measured entirely by dollars and cents; these will come along in due course and will not corrupt unless they come too fast and close unearned; but I trust you will make a successful newspaper and that it will be a credit to the intelligence and integrity of your community, and it will help to enlighten and strengthen your own character and reputation. What does it profit a man if he gains the whole newspaper world and loses his own character—his self respect, his sense of brotherhood, to his fellow-man, whom he was put there to serve, his citizenship or the poor whom he was put there to defend?"

"A newspaper is not all news. The good people of your community want to know where you stand on living

questions, and even when you are wrong, as you often must be, they want to know whether you will give the truth fair chance in your columns. They want a decent newspaper, one that can go in their homes and will not have to be censored at the doorsteps to see whether it contains matter too scandalous for decent people to read. Such a newspaper has a good friend in every eye countant in North Carolina. The presence will be your friends because they know if they are wise, that you are a paper for righteousness for a powerful thing there."

"I thought I would say this much about I doubt not that many independent persons have said in their hearts. I heard someone say as Dr. Curry once throw away his modesty, pro hac vice and say to his audience at the State University 'I am sorry you did not applaud this sentiment.' He went back and took a running start and a little ripple of applause followed his exordium. Then he gathered himself up in his vehemence he brought forth all his strength by land and sea and wave after wave of applause shook his mighty audience. I hope some things will not fall still born among the placid waters of Eastern North Carolina. If they do we have need of a new newspaper here in Raleigh and above all a newspaper editor. We had only eighteen newspapers here the last time I took the census. They have largely made Raleigh what it is but there is not one of them that could not be improved by the addition of another live virile editor who can call his soul his own.

"But it is a hard thing to pull a young man away from Eastern North Carolina and I will not tempt you, too much though we need men more than we need money here and we have not a few in your business."

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CONTENTMENT