

The Gaston Progress

GASTONIA, N. C., THURSDAY, JULY 4th, 1912.

GREATER GASTONIA NUMBER

PART TWO

GASTONIA

CITY of Magic Energy, Chief Cotton Center of the great and growing Southland, County seat of Gaston, in which is located 65 Cotton Mills. A Young and Hustling Community that is rapidly making a name for itself in the world of Commerce, Finances and Art, Delightful Climate, Moral and Cultured Citizenship. Ideal Center for both the Home Seeker and the Money Maker. A City of Opportunity that Grows Greater Every Day.

Eureka! I have found the sylvan vale—
The sunny clime—the home of buoyant health—
The teeming soil—the virtuous commonwealth.

THE CITY OF GASTONIA.

Gastonia has well been called the "City of Opportunity," for there is no place in this or any other country that offers to men in all the various walks of life a better chance to win out if they are industrious, capable and have a determination to succeed than this city. In the past few years has been nothing short of magical. She has no ancient history, does not live in the shadows of the past, with its narrow confines, and more distinctly than almost any other North Carolina city belongs to the present and the future. And it is an entirely legitimate and pardonable source of local

pride that its phenomenal growth and progress has been due to the efforts almost entirely of men born right here on the soil of old Gaston and the surrounding country. Glance over the brief biographical sketches given elsewhere in this special issue of The Progress, and it will be found that 90 per cent. of the men who are responsible for the making of the town have been North Carolinians, the descendants of those same game fighters who won the famous battle at King's Mountain during the Revolution, and changed the fate of the nation, and of the men who signed the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, before Thomas Jefferson wrote his famous document. But it must not be thought that the men of this new generation are in any way clannish, for they are not. As a matter of fact no warmer hearted or more generous people ever lived and they heartily welcome the stranger within their gates be he from

the north, west, east or south, and give him the heartiest of handclaps if he is the proper kind of a man. There is enough for all and plenty of room to grow.

Location of Gastonia

No better location for the site of a city whose chief industry is and always will be the manufacture of textiles, could be found. Situated as it is in the center of the famous Piedmont region, one of the healthiest and most fertile spots of the country, the climate is all that could be desired. It is entirely free from the malaria of the low country, and the cold and fogs of the high altitudes, and the deathly winds of the mountains. The soil is rich and fertile, to a degree possessed by but few sections, farm-

pursuits. There was not an industry worth mentioning except a grist mill, for miles around, and not even the most optimistic of men ever dreamed that in the site of the old Davis farm a flourishing and thriving modern manufacturing city would ever spring into life. The town grew gradually, however, for the surrounding country was rich and a number of retired planters made their homes here. In 1888 it claimed a population of 800, but still slumbered a typical Southern village of the cotton belt. Then suddenly something happened. In this epochal year of 1888 a few progressive gentlemen by some means conceived the idea of building a cotton mill. An organization was affected and the Gastonia Cotton Manufacturing Company was incorporated, the officers of the enterprise being Messrs. R. C. G. Love, John H. Craig, James D. Moore and George A. Gray. The little town seemed to have been touched with a magic wand when the wheels of the machinery began to turn, and

city. The mills are equipped with 160,000 spindles and 2,500 looms, and an enormous output of yarns in skeins, warps, cones and tubes, combed and carded, sheetings, shirtings, outings, and print goods is shipped from here to all parts of the world. It is estimated that no less than 40,000 bales of cotton are consumed annually, and some statisticians place the number at a much higher figure. While on the subject of cotton it may be well to state that in Gaston county in the country tributary to this city, there are about 63 cotton mills, and more than in any county of the south. All of this has been accomplished since 1888, and is but a beginning, for no place ever had a more prosperous present, or a future that is brighter than has Gastonia. Her inhabitants are the most optimistic of people. They hear "the good old times before the war" mentioned except by a few old croakers such as is to be found in every community, and the city itself partakes of the nature of those who built it.

A Modern City.

There is nothing that partakes of the country town about Gastonia. Nearly all of the old frame structures have been dismantled and their places taken by modern brick, cement and iron building that would be a credit to any city in the land. Few places of the size of this has so many or more substantial stores, warehouses, and factories, handsome public buildings, and churches and more beautiful homes. Gastonia is at the same time a busy manufacturing city, and a beautiful one, a combination rarely to be found. The principal thoroughfare is paved with bitulitic, a composition somewhat similar to asphalt, the sidewalks are of cement and in the near future it is proposed to pave the entire city with improved roadways. Everything cannot be done in a day, but the progress is up this road. The city is a modern building during the city's history. The city's major shade trees, many of them spared back to ante-bellum times.

Public Utilities.

One of the first matters that received the attention of the people of Gastonia when the city began to grow was in 1899 when by popular vote \$105,000 in bonds was issued for the purpose of graded schools, electric lights, water works, and a sewerage system. All of these necessary utilities are owned by the city and with the exception of the schools of course, pay a handsome profit which is invariably used in betterments. Following this policy there is always a fund on hand to make necessary improvements, and all of the systems are kept in the highest state of efficiency. They are managed by trained men, who thoroughly know their business, and politics are not allowed to enter into this branch of the public service. Neither has it much to do with any branch, the people voting for the man rather than the political party to which he belongs.

The Water Supply.

Gastonia is fortunate in having a water supply that is second to that of no city of its size in the country, and will be sufficient for a number of years to come, notwithstanding its phenomenal rapid growth. It comes from Long Creek, about two miles from the city, the water shed of which has never been contaminated, and is for the most part covered with virgin pine forest. An analysis of the water is regularly made by the State chemist who has time and again given it the highest mark as to purity. There is an efficient fire department, of which B. B. Gardner is chief, composed of 15 men. It is well equipped with a modern hose wagon drawn by two horses and carrying 3,000 feet of hose. An engine is unnecessary as the pressure of water from the reservoir is 90 pounds, sufficient to send a stream over any building in the city, the exception being the Realty building. The company is composed of 15 men and the department is partially paid.

What Gastonia Has.

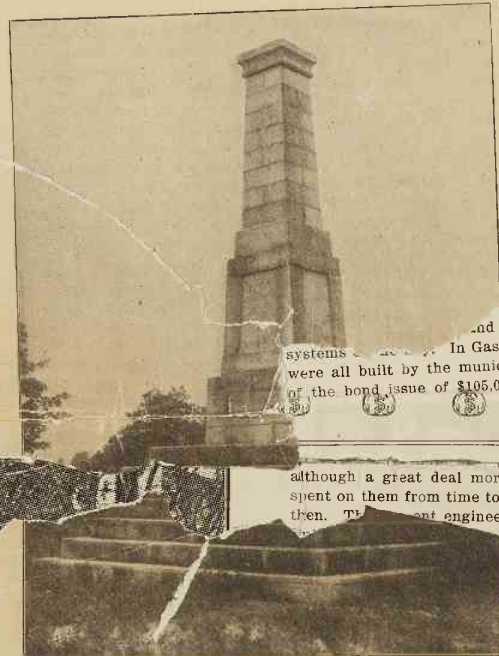
More cotton mills than any city in Gaston county which has more mills than any part of the United States of America. Their 12 modern structures, all working full time and many night and day. Over 5,000 people are employed in its mills, and the annual pay rolls reach three-quarters of a million dollars. Shipments of cloth

and yarn valued approximately at \$5,000,000.00 are shipped every year, some of it as far as China. Three strong banks which have shown a continuous increase in surplus, deposits and earnings every year. One of the best school systems in the south, 31 teachers being on the rolls. Three railroads offer splendid shipping facilities. They do a freight business of upwards of \$1,000,000 a year. There is a taxable property valuation of between \$6,000,000 and \$7,000,000. Within a few years real estate values have increased several hundred per cent. There are two good semi-weekly newspapers, The Progress and The Gazette. Two theatres furnish the people with amusement at more than reasonable prices. There are eight wholesale grocery, feed and fruit stores. It has two high-class modern hospitals, a new postoffice at a cost of \$65,000 will soon be erected in the square, the appropriation having been made. A building permit for the erection of a house is issued nearly every other day. The Piedmont Telegraph and a Telephone Company supply excellent service. It is the county seat of Gaston, one of the richest counties in North Carolina, and has a mag-

Ward, J. O. White; Second Ward, S. M. Morris; Third Ward, A. B. Elliott; Fourth Ward, C. L. Chandler; Fifth Ward, A. M. Dixon; Sixth Ward, J. H. Separk; Seventh Ward, John O. Rankin; City Clerk, John R. Rankin; Chief of Police and Tax Collector, J. W. Carroll; Chief of Fire Department and Building Inspector, B. B. Gardner; Assistant Building Inspector, Sanitary and Quarantine Officer, B. W. Craig; Superintendent Water, Light and Sewers, H. Rutter; Street Commissioner, S. M. Morris; City Physician and Health Officer, Dr. M. G. Andrews; School Board, Mayor Thomas L. Craig, Chairman ex-officio, B. F. S. Austin, E. J. Rankin, S. Settlemyer, W. V. West, S. N. Boyce, Dr. D. E. McConnell and J. P. Reid; Supt. of Schools, Joe S. Wray.

Churches Are Numerous.

Gastonia is well supplied with churches of the principal christian sects, and all of them have a large and growing membership. Within the city proper there are twelve buildings, many of them being more than usually handsome and substantial. The Methodist Episcopal South, has three



STATUE TO COMMEMORATE THE BATTLE OF KING'S MOUNTAIN

nificent court house. What it has in other lines of endeavor may be ascertained by reading carefully this special issue of The Gaston Progress, the leading paper of the city.

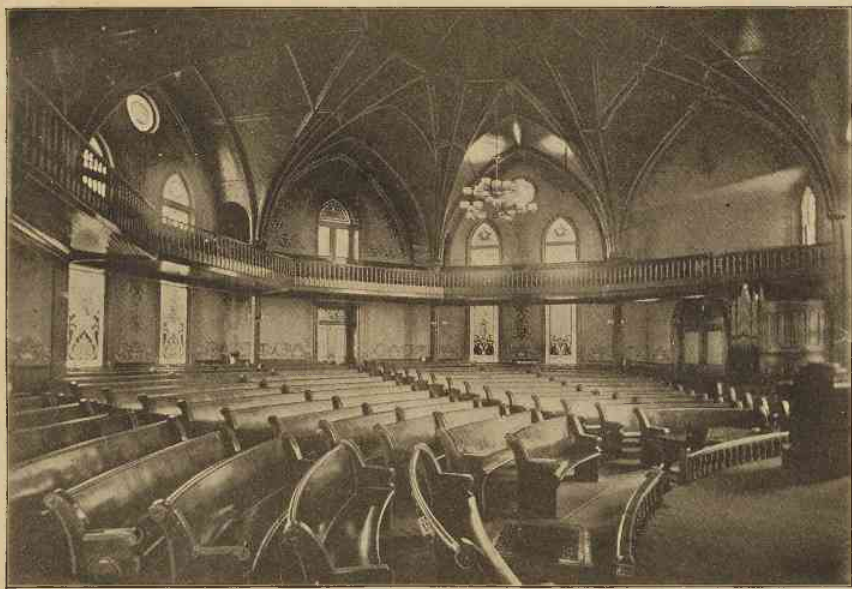
As a Wholesale Center.

Gastonia as a center of the wholesale trade is splendidly located and those who have embarked in business along this line have been most successful. Surrounded as it is with a number of small towns within a radius of 75 miles both in North and South Carolina the wholesale merchants of the city have for some years successfully competed with those of other and much larger cities for the possession of the trade of this territory which naturally belongs to Gastonia. The competition has been keen, and the commercial battle waged with vigor, but no one will deny that Gastonia has won out especially as regards the grocery, fruit, cigar and tobacco business. There is located in the city five wholesale grocery houses, two fruit importing concerns, three hay and grain houses, several who handle cigars and tobacco, and every year the volume of trade in its favor shows a healthy and steady increase. More extended reference is made to these progressive establishments in other pages of this issue.

How the City is Governed.

Gastonia has the same general municipal government as other North Carolina cities, although she is more than usually fortunate in the fact that her most prominent manufacturers, merchants and professional men do not shirk their duty as is the case in many cities, and are never so busy that they cannot find time to give their services to the public without compensation. As a consequence municipal affairs have been administered along business lines, and the people of the city has had an economical and at the same time progressive government. The present officials of the present day are: Mayor, Thomas L. Craig; Mayor protem, Jos. H. Separk; Board of Aldermen, First

although a great deal more has been spent on them from time to time, since then. The present engineer, Mr. ... most f...



INTERIOR FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ers growing with great success cotton, grain, clover, grasses and garden truck of all kinds, for which a ready market at good prices is found in this and neighboring cities. The supply is not equal to the great demand made by a rapidly growing population and as a location for the small farmer and fruit grower, the advantages offered are superb, and only await development by the industrious husbandman.

Gastonia's Phenomenal Growth.

Nothing shows the growth and population of a community so accurately as does statistics of the increase of its population. Men do not remain in a place where there is no work, there are too many opportunities always to be found. Everyone has work here, and the man and woman who is not afraid of it need never be idle. In 1877 the city was only a struggling village with a population of perhaps 250 people, who were for the most part engaged in agricultural

from that day to this the story of the city has been one of constant and substantial growth, and the development of long dominant resources. Within five years the population doubled. In 1895 it was 2,313; five years later it had reached 4,610; in 1906 it was 8,000; and conservative estimates made by those in a position to know, place the present population at about 12,000. Hardly a day passes that this is not increased by the addition of sturdy, industrious settlers who have heard of the opportunities offered here, and have come to take advantage of them.

Cotton is King.

Old King Cotton reigns supreme in Gastonia all throughout the county. There is located in the city proper a dozen textile corporations, operating 16 mills and having a capitalization of \$3,000,000 with an annual payroll of \$600,000.00, most of which is spent among the merchants of the

tax-exempt of