

# Seen From the Road

(The State.)  
In a grove by the side of a top soil and eight miles from the city of Lexington, far from any village or town or railroad, in Davidson county, North Carolina, a brick house is under construction, the walls of which are ten feet above ground and the ground that they inclose is as much as or more than that covered by the Logan school or any other educational building in the city of Columbia. What is it? A college? A hospital? What is the meaning of such an establishment in this rural neighborhood? The questions addressed themselves to travelers Tuesday morning, October 24, and they halted to find the answer.

"It is a school house," said one of seven or eight carpenters and masons, all white men, at work on the building.

"What, you need a school-house as big as this out here in the country?" said one of the South Carolinians. "It will accommodate 700 or 800 children?"

"We raise 'em here," a bright-eyed young artisan answered, smiling.

"Well, they are raised in South Carolina, too," rejoined the South Carolinian. "I am one of a family of 15 and nine of them lived to grow up."

"That's nothing," said the carpenter. "I had 15 brothers and sisters and they are all living but one and my half uncle has 22 and they are all living."

Davidson county is on the northern edge of the cotton Belt, the people produce cotton and tobacco and many other things besides school children. Seven or eight miles farther from the school-house under construction we see another, completed, and it explains, in part, the size of the former. It is a one story brick structure. Everywhere in the country one, from time to time, sees huge automobile 'busses, bearing the number of a public school—they bring the children to the great school houses, and everywhere in North Carolina are the school buildings, many not completed, some of them of wood and others of brick. One frame building, two stories, is in the hills near the Yadkin river and by it is a new brick building of two stories, much larger—showing that wooden construction is being abandoned for the safer and more solid material as the demand for additional room appears.

The school 'busses, carrying 30 or 40 boys and girls, could not run on bad roads.

We think we have made progress in school improvement in South Carolina the last 20 years. So we have—immense progress it has been. There are no country school houses in South Carolina of the size of those in Davidson county and driving over 100 miles of any road in North Carolina one passes two or three new school-houses to one on a corresponding road in this state. They are to be seen in counties of North Carolina not so prosperous as Davidson—no county in North Carolina seems to be too poor to have good school houses and some of the counties have, otherwise, the appearance of extreme poverty and backwardness.

About 1893 the Populists and the Republicans fused in North Carolina and the state sank low. Public affairs went to the bow-wows. In Wilmington conditions became intolerable, in 1898, and a riot followed, the black and white agitators being driven from the community. In the emergency a leader came to the front, Charles B. Aycock. The state was promptly "cleaned up" politically, but Aycock did not stop with that. As governor he had a programme, of four parts—education and good roads were two of these and, we believe, public health and reform of taxation were the other two. The descent into the ruck and filth of the Populist-Republican period probably brought North Carolina to its senses—possibly a bitter experience serves, in the reaction, to stimulate a commonwealth. We remember having heard of Governor Aycock's "campaign of education" at the time—and we did not take it seriously. There is always so much "hot air" in public speaking. But what Aycock started has kept going and the momentum of it now is irresistible. It was helped tremendously by a young state superintendent of education named McIver who died in early middle age. They have erected a monument to him in the state house park in Raleigh.

Some one, the News and Courier we believe it was, observed that unlike in other of the old southern states, the social gradations are few

in North Carolina, the people are of the same kind. In that may be something but not much—there are wide differences between east and west in North Carolina as between upper and lower country in this state. And why is North Carolina so far ahead of Georgia? Georgia has never been overburdened with "aristocracy." Over South Carolina the old north state has advantages in population. By the census of 1920 it had 2,559,123 inhabitants, of whom less than a third were negroes. We had 1,683,000 of whom a majority (rapidly decreasing) were negroes. The two party political system is natural in North Carolina, easy and good in its results—though experience has proved the peril of departure from Democratic administration.

East to west North Carolina is more than 600 miles and a cross section would reveal a hundred varieties of agricultural and mechanical industry. In the west are many Republican counties in which are found practically no negro populations, in which negroes are scarcely allowed to live. Poor and ignorant communities have been, until lately, more common in North than in South Carolina. The important fact is that in North Carolina they are vanishing. In 1920 two North Carolinians paid taxes on incomes of more than \$1,000,000. In no other southern state was a taxpayer of that class.

One big political fact got into the heads of the North Carolinians some score years ago—how it got lodgement we do not know, but the point is got into their heads and stays. It is that progress depends on state action. These neighbors of ours do not squabble about building a road in Montgomery county lest Mecklenburg will contribute to the cost. They have recovered from the deadly disease of extreme localism that afflicts South Carolina, if they ever had it. One might discover in prosperous Anderson or York objection to taxation for the erection of a school house or building in Dorchester. The cost of the noble cement bridge that spans the Great Pee Dee as it rolls between Stanly and Montgomery could hardly have been met by those counties alone—but how would one go from Charlotte to Raleigh without it?

In South Carolina every inch gained for state improvement of roads and schools the last 15 years has been after hard fighting in the legislature against this deadening attachment to localism. The policy of state education, far from complete, had to be wedged in, slowly and painfully and even now it meets with stubborn and stupid resistance. So, the owners of motorcars in this state are not allowed to contribute their license fees in manner that would most accelerate highway extension. The wonder is that South Carolina is not forced to carry on a war of secession against every one of the 46 counties, so infatuated are the taxpayers of each that it should take care of itself and let the others flounder in their own mud or fester in their own ignorance.

No southern state is keeping step with North Carolina. Virginia is far behind her and Georgia, the "Empire state of the south," is living in the 8th century in contrast with her. Virginia and South Carolina are great states.

North Carolina is a commonwealth.

## Southward Bound.

(Aiken Journal and Review)  
Statistics in the department of commerce indicate that the cotton spinning industry is southward bound and that in course of time Southern states will have a monopoly in the production of cotton goods as well as in the production of the raw material.

The average hours per spindle in the South for September was 270; in all other states 163. The average hour per spindle in South Carolina surpassed that of any other state, 277 as against 276 for North Carolina.

Spindles in the Southern states and their average hour per spindle in September are published by the department of commerce as follows: Alabama .....1,300,031—256 Georgia .....2,687,078—267 North Carolina .....5,300,050—276 South Carolina .....5,099,616—277 Tennessee .....426,710—253 Virginia .....627,986—231 Massachusetts easily leads all states in the number of spindles, with 12,003,824.

The British authorities in Hong Kong have taken steps to abolish the system by which some 50,000 Chinese girls have been held in slavery.

Col R. M. Mixon and Ladies of Williston. Letter and Resolutions.

In last week's Williston Way, Col. R. M. Mixon has a letter, which is timely and forcible, as to the conditions alluded to, in the Protest of the Ladies of Barnwell recently published. There is also a strong editorial on the same subject in that paper.

One of the things complained of, in that Protest, was that no man seemed disposed to come forward and assist the good women, by word or deed, in the grave crisis that has come upon our county.

The ladies of Williston have also expressed sympathy with the views of that protest, and suggest that action should be taken.

In 1876, the State, after enduring about eight years of intolerable conditions, called a convention since known as the "Taxpayers' Convention;" the result of that Convention was the redemption of South Carolina.

Both Col. Mixon's letter and the Resolutions of the Williston ladies, are published elsewhere in this issue. —Barnwell Sentinel.

The open letter from a number of ladies of Barnwell anent the alleged miscarriage of justice in the Courts of South Carolina and more especially of Barnwell county, which appeared in The People a couple of weeks ago, has excited considerable comment throughout this section. The Williston Way devoted a column to a discussion of the article in its last week's issue and expresses the opinion that "there must be some improvement in Barnwell juries or it will not be safe to travel the highways of this county," and goes on to say that "if this improvement can not be brought about without a radical change in our jury system, then we say let's have this change."

In the same issue of the Way there appeared a communication from Col. R. M. Mixon, of Williston, who asks a number of pertinent questions. Among other things, he says: "The lawyer owes the same sacred duty to society as any other individual and as long as they can be hired by criminals, whom they know full well are guilty, to defend them, you may expect all kinds of crimes. Oh, for a bar with ideals so high that when a man approaches it to defend him and help him to escape the punishment he justly deserves, will say to him, 'No, I do not take such cases.'"

The writer, a short time ago, read a most interesting story of a lawyer who refused to defend a criminal case unless he was satisfied of the innocence of his client. In the course of time, the people of his county grew to have such great confidence in his integrity that when he accepted a case it was tantamount to an acquittal. They knew beforehand that the accused was innocent. On the other hand, if it became known that this lawyer had refused to accept the case, the accused was practically sure of conviction.

The People, however, does not censure a lawyer for exerting every legal means to clear his client, once he has accepted the case.—Barnwell People.

## Moves to Barnwell.

Columbia, Nov. 6.—Thomas H. Peeples, former attorney general of South Carolina, has closed his office in Columbia, and moved to Barnwell, his old home, to continue the practice of law. He served three terms as Attorney General, was president of the National Association of Attorneys General, and during the war was a major in the judge advocate general's department of the army.

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