

DURHAM CHRONICLE

W IRWIN, Editor and Proprietor

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THE PRICE OF GASOLINE

Vendors of gasoline in Listowel, though claiming the fault is not theirs since the price to them has not been reduced, are getting "in wrong" with the motorists for charging 40 cents a gallon for gasoline, while in Stratford, London, Goderich, Woodstock and many other places the price has dropped to at least 35 cents and in some places still lower.

The above from the Listowel Banner is interesting from the fact that in Durham the price is 42 cents a gallon, though we understand that this will be reduced to 40 cents. To be fair to the garagemen, however, we must say that, no matter what other towns are paying, or what dealer is willing to sacrifice his profit for the benefit of his customers, the 42-cent rate is fair enough considering the cost to the retailer.

Gasoline to-day is costing wholesale 37 cents from the tank truck. The garageman buys this gas when it is warm and, after storing it in his tank, sells it cold. The heat, as everyone knows, expands the fluid, and when the customer comes for his supply, he actually gets more for his gallon than the garageman who bought it in the first place. This may not appear to amount to much in the individual gallon lots, but spread over the large quantities handled daily by the average garage, it is one more cost added to the mysterious "overhead" charges that the retailer has to face. Add to this the evaporation, and the profit to the garageman gets another bump.

Roughly speaking, the garageman makes about fifteen per cent, and for this has to supply a premises in which to do business, a tank to measure the gasoline, and a man to run it. He is the servant of his customers every minute of the working day of possibly eighteen hours, and no matter what other work he is engaged in when his patrons call, he has to stop and attend to their wants for gasoline. Any garageman will tell you that he makes very little out of his gasoline sales, and we are of the opinion that the most of them would as soon stick to the repair end of the game and turn the gasoline sales over to some single individual if such a person could be found. But, like any other business, the man in the garage has to do many things for the benefit of his customers at little or no profit, and for which he gets no thanks as well.

The Chronicle holds no brief for the garagemen of Durham. If they are charging too much, they deserve censure and should abide by the consequences of lost business and public confidence. We have, however, been shown the bills of the oil companies supplying the gasoline, and, from our experience in overhead and other expenses incidental to running a business, we can't see where the people of Durham, or Listowel either, are paying too much for gasoline, from a garageman's point of view. If too much is being charged here, we can assure the public that it is not the fault of the local dealers. If any fault is to be found it is with the oil companies, and it is not likely that they will pay much attention to a public outcry. The point with them is that no matter what the price, the public will buy it anyway, and so, what are you going to do about it.

Possibly The Chronicle is a little out of its latitude in dealing with this subject, but under the circumstances we could do little else. We have heard complaints locally about the high prices charged here as compared with other nearby towns, and took the matter up with a couple of our local dealers. They were of the opinion, and with them we fully agree, that because some other retailer chose to lose money, it was not up to them to do the same. No man should begrudge a businessman a legitimate profit, and from the bills we saw, we are of the opinion that even at 42 cents, the Durham garagemen were working at a lower percentage of profit than is possible in most businesses, that is, if that business is going to stand on its feet and prosper.

COAL SITUATION NOT BRIGHT

Owing to the miners' strike in the United States nearly every city, town and hamlet in North America is feeling the pinch of the coal shortage, or will feel it before winter sets in. Durham coal dealers, usually able to fill local demands, are like the rest, and none is arriving. During the summer months, not much inconvenience is experienced, but as winter will come just as sure as taxes and death, unless a big change takes place shortly we

are bound to feel the pinch in the next six months. From newspaper reports, coal, both steam and anthracite, is already on the way here from Wales and England, over a score of vessels being reported in the trade.

The coal situation in the United States is unique. Some years ago, coal mining in America was carried on mostly by the native-born. Operators in those days were not so solicitous for the welfare of their employees as they are to-day, and in order to protect themselves and secure something like justice in their dealings with their employers, the miners started what is now the American miners' union. To break up this union of their employees in its beginning, the employers scoured Europe for help with which to run the mines, and thus was started the great influx of foreigners into the United States.

But the mine owners in their one great desire to break up the union of the American miners overlooked one little thing. To-day the mines of the United States are worked nearly one hundred per cent, by foreigners, and these same foreigners, who, at the beginning knew nothing of unions and standing together, are to-day the backbone of the strikes and labor troubles in the coal regions. They are the men who are to-day demanding something that the American laborer would never think of asking; they think of nobody but themselves, and, so far as the United States is concerned, care little whether she prospers or goes bankrupt so long as they can get their big pay for the smallest amount of work performed. And the great American and Canadian public has to pay for it.

BOY WANTED

Boy Wanted—a good reliable boy, one you can recommend to a responsible position; only a fair education needed. Boys of this class are always in demand and inquiries are often made. The suggestion sets us thinking.

Is there any one we can rake up in the recesses of our mind that will fill the bill exactly? The question seems easy, but to give an unqualified testimonial of the boy who will fit in every particular is quite another matter. They are to be found, but they are not so common as a person might suppose. Lack in one of the qualifications unfits many a boy from the better openings that will ultimately spell success. The boy with a bad habit will be set aside for the one with a better record. Boys, your conduct is being watched and if you fail to land the job you would like there is often a reason for the failure.

There are hundreds and thousands of good boys who are shutting themselves out of good positions by carelessness of conduct and foolishness of action. No employer wants a boy who loiters listlessly in questionable places and in questionable company. Some of these boys may scorn the thought of dishonesty but their associations are a barrier between them and the men who would otherwise give them employment.

Even to-day there are many boys, and we speak from personal knowledge and observation there are far too many frittering away their time, wasting their opportunities, impairing their chances of future usefulness and useful greatness because of their associations with the Smart-Alicks who long ago came to be recognized as useless adjuncts to all kinds of respectable society.

It is safe to judge a boy by the company he keeps, and we know some who would remain a long time unemployed before we could conscientiously recommend them for positions of responsibility.

Boys are being watched more closely than they have any idea of and we have known boys who lost their chances of good positions because they were too smart in public places.

If a boy's actions in life are to go unchallenged he must keep a strict watch over his conduct. As a passport to the responsible positions there is nothing in a boy's life that counts more than good behavior.

Honesty in the handling of money is not the only qualification to constitute honesty in the boy or young

man setting out to make his mark in the world. This is, in fact, one of the cardinal virtues to be possessed by the boy whose services will be sought after. There are many little details, often not considered, that form just as important a feature as the one to which we have just referred and without going into a sermon on the subject we'll leave the matter to the thoughtful boy to think it out for himself. Boys are wanted, but only boys with the qualifications to make them trustworthy and reliable.

WEEKLY NEWSPAPER HAS PLACE

The proper function of a local newspaper is to tell of local happenings. With metropolitan dailies on all sides it is beyond the scope of a small country weekly to enter largely into the field of world news. The advent of the railways years ago and the establishment of rural mail routes have brought the concession lines and sideroads in close touch with the big centres of population and the readers of the daily papers have the great events of the world served up within a few hours of the time they happen. Thus with the dailies handling the great events as they occur, the field to be properly covered by the local paper is narrowed down to a much smaller area.

This leads to an inquiry as to the legitimate work of the small weekly publications and a survey of the situation to ascertain how closely we follow our legitimate duties.

While the little local papers may touch the fringe of the big events of the world it is impossible to do more, and unreasonable to expect that the big events should be given in detail. The big papers have a wider field and touch on the bigger things, leaving the country weeklies to handle in detail the smaller happenings in their own community. This, so far, relates only to the function of the local weekly as a distributor of news.

The expression of editorial opinion is not narrowed in the same way. The publisher carrying editorials has a wider range of subjects on which he may endeavor to educate his readers by an intelligent expression of his views on almost any subject of interest. In this connection, too, it isn't well for the weekly publisher to go too far afield. He would do well to discuss the local topics in which the bulk of his readers have a more direct interest. The news should be local and the editorials should be localized or of such character as to be of general interest in his own field.

The small talk that the metropolitan jokers make fun of are not out of place in the small weekly. If John Jones planted a row of maples along the front of his farm the readers who know John Jones would be glad to hear he was adding to the appearance of his farm and in a few years the shade would give comfort to the traveller who might go that way. Surely there would be no wrong in telling of John Jones's doings for his own benefit and the comfort of those who come after. Suppose John decided a few weeks later to put a tie-post in front of his gate and paint the post red it would show further enterprise but the fool joker on the city paper would take a fit on reading it. It may be small talk, but it's news and just as important in the rural community as the silly, sickening write-ups of some of the city's social functions.

The country editor gets just as sick on reading some of these things as the city chap does on reading about the red tie-post.

The function of the local paper is to give local news and in giving editorial opinion to deal, preferably, with topics of local interest. The city chap who pokes fun at the country weekly may find himself a lightweight if he goes to the trouble of making a search.

It is much easier to impress the neighbors than to impress the man who makes the loans at the bank.

When in Western Ontario a man says: "I run things at my house," he usually means the lawn mower and the washing machine.

The average man never feels truly important unless he is spending more than he can afford;

A LITTLE OF THIS AND THAT

It may be that golf is less popular with bachelors because they haven't a home to get away from.

If coffee keeps people awake the Ladies' Aid should serve it just before the sermon.

Some of the movie stars are remarkably pretty, and some can act.

We don't mind men being cheerful, but it gets on our nerves to hear a dentist whistle and sing at his work.

The most helpless thing in this world is a chap of twenty besieged by a widow.

The reason Methuselah, Noah and those other patriarchs died in their infancy was because they didn't use vitamins.

Dempsey and Wills are going to fight if they can get enough money to make them mad.

Many a man counts the costs who has no intention of paying them.

When a man is mad he curses. When a woman is mad she cries. Cussing doesn't get a man much.

The fighting in Ireland is merely a continuation of the Battle of the Boyne, which started in 1690.

They laugh at scare who never had a wage cut.

When a spinster at last gives up hope, she has at least one consolation—she is free to eat onions.

Executive: Anyone who is free to think the weather is too hot for office work and seek the cooling hall park.

The chap who enjoys beating a train to a crossing early in the seas-

on is now happily rocking a canoe somewhere.

The strawberry season is over, but oh, you corn on the cob!

A motorist should never confess the accident was wholly the result of his own carelessness. The Judge might die of shock.

Anyway, it's pretty hard for a girl to look intellectual while she's chewing gum.

It has been discovered that the slowest thing on earth is a barefoot

boy going round to the wash his feet.

These barbers are all taking something off for

"Knowing where you are half the battle." Not tells you where you are

If it is true that joke Ford a success, they make something for prohibition.

What you must do at first force of character you will be able to do through force of

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The hard water toilet soap, will remove tan and sunburn. 2 large cakes for 25c.

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plus half a cent a mile from starting point to Winnipeg

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August 11th and 21st—Toronto, Caledon East, Beeton, Meaford, Collingwood, Penetang, Midland, Parry Sound, Sudbury, Capreol and east thereof in Ontario.

August 14th and 23rd—Toronto, Inglewood and all stations south and west thereof in Ontario.

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August 14---12.30 noon, 6.00 p.m., 10.30 p.m.

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"Fare Going"—\$15 to WINNIPEG. 1/2 cent per mile Winnipeg to destination.

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GOING DATES

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AUGUST 14 and AUGUST 23

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