

A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE F. A. WOODARD

(By F. D. Swindell and read by him at a meeting of the Wilson Bar held June 26.)

It was not my pleasure to know Hon. F. A. Woodard until 1905. Since that time and until his death, I have been closely associated with him both professionally and socially. By reason of this intimacy I learned to know him and appreciate him almost as well as if we had come up from boyhood together.

Since his death my mental picture of him is chiefly as I saw him in the days of his health and activity, sitting at his desk, his comfortable office chair tilted slightly backward and facing the window that looked out over the courthouse square; neatly dressed in a black Prince Albert, wearing a white tie and white vest, a plain gold ring on his left hand, a small well-shaped hand, his blue-gray eyes half closed in the contentment of the moment's relaxation from business. I can hear the slow measured tones of his voice and see the look of friendly interest on his face as it was when he advised, admonished, and encouraged me. This picture is not unfamiliar to others, especially the latter part of it, for I know of no man who so constantly manifested deep and continued interest in the welfare of young people or more delicately contributed of his wisdom, his influence and his goods for their advancement and their pleasure.

Underneath this memory picture of him I feel should be inscribed in fadeless letters:

"Where every god did seem to set his seal
To give the world assurance of a man."

Mr. Woodard was gifted in his qualities and fortunes in the endowments of manhood. His faculties were harmoniously expanded; his abilities systematically developed, and all his powers co-ordinated to a high efficiency.

My regard for this man was so deep that I have hesitated to attempt the tribute I wished to pay him, realizing my inability to express my appreciation of his splendid worth as a man, a gentleman, a Christian, and a friend.

F. A. Woodard was preeminently a gentleman. In full truth it can be said that the coarse, the common, or the vulgar was impossible for him. By blood a patrician; by instinct and habit courteous, kind, and generous, he rose serenely above the raw blasts of everyday earthiness, the bickerings, the squabbles, the trickeries which enrage dislike and distrust and make men less brotherly.

Much of his strength was attributable to the mastery he maintained over his emotions and passions. He constantly preserved a serenity of attitude, an imperturbableness which yielded neither to anger, fear, hate or other mind disturbing excitements. Inexorable in his purpose when he conceived that purpose to be wise and proper, he neither balked at laborious effort nor yielded an inch to opposition to his fulfillment.

Mr. Woodard was habituated with a natural dignity, a poise in thought, manner and conduct that was admirable; there was about him an instant suggestion of intellectual power, wisdom broadened by imagination and kept pure by reverence.

He felt that only through the subordination of self was it possible to devote self along the lines of greatest value, and always he held personal pride, the desire of personal gain, and personal ambition vassal to his life purpose of being useful to the causes he espoused and to the good of his generation. In his execution of his duty to God and his fellows, in his exploitation of movements for righteousness he avoided the ostentation of the market place and the claptrap of the Pharisee.

Dr. Bradshaw in his exquisite tribute to Mr. Woodard at the funeral of the latter, remarked upon his capacity for friendship as a distinctive characteristic of the man. This capacity for friendship was built upon those splendid and kindly qualities in the man which signally empowered him to love and be loved. He was exceptional in his power of bestowing friendship and of compelling it, and in his friendships he was consistent, loyal, sincere, and above all, tender.

F. A. Woodard was one of the ablest lawyers in the State. He was possessed with all the attributes requisite to make him a leader in his profession, but especially was he gifted in his comprehension of the basic principles of law and the application of law to case. His accurate recollection of reported cases enabled him to render instant judgment when delay for investigation would have been injurious to his cause. He was always prepared, always sure of his forces, always conscious of his limitations,

always deliberate and always as efficient as circumstances would allow. He was never known to become panicky, sullen or fretful under fire, but as the tension increased, he became more keenly alert and more obviously master of himself and the merits of his case.

It has for years been a current saying among his associates at the bar that the near he was brought to defeat the more resourceful, vigilant and capable he became.

Looking back over ten years of practice at the same bar and having been intimately thrown with him all the while I can say that I never knew F. A. Woodard to blunder in a matter of law. In all his battles in the courtroom, in all his arguments in chambers, in all his conferences with other lawyers I have never seen him exhibit weakness, yield to anger or approach discourtesy.

Mr. Woodard was a man of cultivated taste and appreciation; his habits of life and thought were elegant without being dandy; he read constantly and with discrimination. He loved the wholesome and clean things; he found joy in nature and the free air of the out-of-doors; he, like the Wuke of the Forest of Arden found:

"Tongues in trees, books in running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything."

This rare power of discerning the beauty the virtue the charm in the world about him enabled him to interpret and illumine much of life and nature that was obscure to the casual passerby.

In conversation he was always entertaining, for, as I have remarked, having seen with a clear vision, having caught all tones and colors and meanings of the things he saw, whether an autumn sunset beneath a bank of clouds, moonlight on the English lakes or the glint of sunrise on the ice peaked mountains of Switzerland, with the eye of an artist and in chaste English, he delineated the scenes until the glory of them became your own.

Mr. Woodard had an abundant fund of anecdote and humorous reminiscence. Alert and agile of wit, his humor was always kindly and refined. I never knew him to descend to the boisterous, the immodest or the profane, either in the jolly banter he sometimes indulged in with his more intimate friends, or in the narration of a story.

Mr. Woodard was liberal in his views and charitable in his regard of the conduct of others. Singularly free from weakness himself he was patient with the weakness of others and forgiving of wrong. In one respect he was stern—he could never understand or tolerate the frivolous or the affected.

To those of us who knew him best one of his greatest charms was the innate modesty of him. This coupled with his gentleness and a half perceptible shyness at times, added a loveableness to him which many of us felt. During the last year of his life Mr. Woodard endured without breaking, as fearful a test as man can be called upon to face. For over a year he felt the fearful hand of dissolution tearing from him the vigor of life. He knew that medical science was impotent to cure his disease or to check it; he knew that each day as it passed his strength and virility lack.

left him a little less of the strength and power of life. Many men become insane under like circumstances, or loathing the lingering horror of slow death, kill themselves. It was a situation to break the heart and to wreck the reason, and yet F. A. Woodard met each day with a smile, and bravely oblivious of himself and his affliction, lived calmly and sweetly, happy in the love of his family and friends, thinking of others, interested in others, doing for others, cheerful and unafraid. Even when the end was near and the shadow of the twilight had settled upon him, with a sublime and lofty courage he waited trustfully for the touch of the finger of God.

I shall never forget him as I saw him last—lying very still, handsome as always, his soft silvery hair falling back from his broad forehead, the light of understanding still in his eyes though the power of speech had forsaken him and his strength was almost gone; he knew me as I stood before him, and feebly reaching out his hand he pressed mine tenderly in a friend's farewell to friend.

I leave it to the older men, the life long friends of Mr. Woodard, to pay tribute to him as a statesman, a citizen and philanthropist, in all of which provinces he took high rank. I am merely trying to say something of F. A. Woodard which I feel should be said of a man whose memory, influence and example will be an honor to his community, his state and to all who knew him.

STANLY COUNTY DEDICATES ITS COMMUNITY BUILDING

Exercises Attended by Large Crowd From All Parts of The County—Many Were There Also From the Adjoining Counties.

(A. C. HUNEYCUTT.)

Albemarle, July 3.—Last Wednesday was a red letter day for Stanly county. An exceedingly large crowd was here from all parts of the county, and many from Rowan, Cabarrus, Union, Anson, Montgomery and a few from Moore to be present at the dedication of the Stanly County Community Building, which took place at 10 o'clock. The crowd was possibly swelled by and on account of this being the third day of the Albemarle Chautauqua, the New York Marine Band having been booked for a concert in the afternoon, but the greater number came to be present at the formal opening of the Community Building. The exercises were given at the big chautauqua tent, which is located near the new building, and it was packed to its utmost capacity. W. L. Mann, president of the Piedmont Commercial Club, acted as master of ceremonies, and opened up with an appropriate talk, introducing Mr. R. L. Smith, who formally turned over the building to the women of Stanly county. In his address Mr. Smith briefly touched upon the history of the county, showing its unparalleled growth and development during the past twenty years. Mr. Smith stated that twenty years ago there was possibly only one man in Stanly county, the late Hon. Samuel J. Pemberton, who had the nerve to look the world square in the face and say he was from Stanly, but that in this day of her growth and progress every man, woman and child takes an early advantage of the opportunity when away from home to say he is from Stanly, the best county in North Carolina. His address, as well as Mr. Mann's, sounded a note of progress along industrial, educational and religious lines. The building was formally received by Mrs. E. C. Bost on behalf of the country women with a brief address, which was a beautiful line of thought clothed in perfect English. Mrs. Bost said among other things that she trusted the wave of progress and the spirit of good fellowship would not stop until it had permeated the remotest country districts of this good county, and closed with the statement that she hoped God would bless the Stanly County Community Building to the good of the womanhood of Stanly county. Dr. S. R. Belk, platform manager for the Albemarle Chautauqua, was then introduced and for thirty minutes held the large crowd profoundly interested. After Dr. Belk's address the large crowd went across the street to the newly dedicated building and took possession, where the women's clubs were serving punch and other light refreshments in the large assembly hall up stairs.

What It Is.

The Stanly County Community building is a large two-story brick building, located on South Second street near the Central Hotel, in the heart of the business section of the city, where it will be of most convenience to the out of town shoppers and visitors. On the first floor adjoining the street is a large rest-room furnished with tables, wall benches and rockers, with large electrolights for lighting. Just through this room and beyond it are private rooms furnished with comfortable seats, cribs, dressers and lounges where women with children may rest and have absolute privacy from the front or main rest room. Adjoining this ladies' private rest room is a toilet room furnished with all modern conveniences. On the second floor are two rooms, one a large assembly hall where the women's clubs can meet, and a small committee room adjoining. The assembly hall is furnished throughout with chairs already in position, desks and tables. One of these, a beautiful library desk, was donated by Miss F. E. Ufford, founder of Albemarle Normal and Industrial Institute. This assembly hall is intended principally for the use of the women's clubs of the county, girls' tomato clubs and similar organizations, and will be furnished with an excellent library.

How It Was Built.

At a smoker given by the Piedmont Commercial Club early in March the proposition of building a community building in Albemarle was brought up by one of Albemarle's most ardent boosters. The members present took on to the idea and within half an hour a number of committees were appointed to take active steps towards this much needed improvement. One of these committees was to take steps at once to make a canvass throughout the town and county for the purpose of getting subscriptions to a fund for the building. Another committee was to go before the county commissioners and ask for an appropriation of the lot between the Dennings-James building and the Morrow building on which to locate the building. Another committee was to figure with an architect and report the approximate cost of the structure, and recommend designs. These committees were to re-

port at a stated meeting of the club. It was thought by some that the proposition was a mere temporary outburst of enthusiasm and that nothing further would be heard of the community building, but the club president, W. L. Mann, knew the men he was naming on these various committees, and when the set meeting was called there was a larger number present than at the one in which the idea originated. Every committee was ready to report and report definitely. The committee to confer with the county commissioners reported that the commissioners had agreed to appropriate the lot, and in addition thereto one-half the cost of such a building as might be decided upon. The committee to solicit contributions from the citizenship of the county and town reported enough pledged by good men to build the kind of building recommended by the committee on designs. That night it was decided to erect a one story building. However, the wave of enthusiasm spread and as a result good women of Albemarle organized a woman's club with Mrs. John Spinks as president and with more than 100 charter members. This woman's club immediately commenced to agitate a two-story structure. They simply demanded it, and named a committee to meet with the Piedmont Club for the purpose of enforcing that demand. When told that the cost was too great these good women pledged to pay the difference between the one-story building and a two-story building. The building was made in accordance with the demands of the good women of Albemarle and they have paid their part of the cost already. Never was there more thorough co-operation on the part of a citizenship than in the building of this community building, on the part of both men and women, and the people of this county have been taught one of their first lessons, by themselves as teachers, that there is nothing impossible or out of reach of the community which pulls hard and harmoniously together in one grand common cause.

WAR LEAVES FINE LANDS UNCULTIVATED

Fertile Fields of Serbia Given Up to a Profusion of Weeds and Wild Flowers.

(Correspondence Associated Press.)

Uskup, Serbia, June 15.—Great sections of the fine agricultural lands of southern Serbia lie uncultivated this year, owing to the departure of the laborers to the war zone farther north. As a result, these tremendously fertile fields are given up to a profusion of weeds and wild flowers which present a spectacle as brilliant as a California garden multiplied in area until it stretches over the whole Vardar Valley. Everything grows in great luxuriance and in the most vivid colors.

The more familiar wild flowers seen here are daisies, poppies, and huge thistles ten feet high. The poppies are of an intense crimson, while here and there are patches of cultivated opium poppies, in full white flowers. More riotous in coloring are flowers not easily identified by an American visitor—mossy fields of purple weed a hundred feet across, a clover-like plant with tiny blossoms of intense coral-red, tall lilac flowers, clumps of blue and silver-gray, various types of yellow and crimson blossoms. Here and there the solid tapestry of vegetation is broken by little lakes or ponds, fringed with rushes as thick as a man's arm and tall as small trees. Over the water are sprinkled masses of white water lilies.

Birds and butterflies vie in coloring with the flowers. Some of the butterflies are of great size and wonderful coloring, and the connoisseur recognizes varieties which are very rare in the western world. The bird world is dominated by the storks and buzzards, the former spotted black and white, the latter yellowish brown.

The railroad from Saloniki to Uskup makes its way in more or less straightforward fashion through this whole region of the Vardar Valley, crossing the winding stream at frequent intervals, once on a bridge which was blown up six times during the Balkan wars. The river itself would be scarcely more than a good-sized creek in America and the water is tinged a muddy brown. In the distance, on both sides of the railroad, a broken line of low hills is always visible.

Let In.

Houston Post.
"I understand he let you in on a get-rich-quick scheme."
"No. Do you suppose I would be angry at him for that?"
"Then what was it?"
"He made me think it was a get-rich-quick scheme, but it wasn't."

If a man is unable to discover his weakness his wife will discover it for him.