

A FIRST CLASS TOWN

The following newspaper article from just before the Civil War provides one editor's view of the requirements of a "first class town" at that time. The piece comes from the Columbia Democrat published March 6, 1858.

BLOOMSBURG.— There is some character attached to every town, on account of its location and importance. An isolated town, one that is so much secluded from the world, that the citizens neither see nor feel the effects of refined society, nor are stimulated by that enterprise and activity which characterizes the inhabitants of towns along our public thoroughfares, evidently cannot have much character in the eyes of the world. But a town like Bloomsburg, having a daily line of Cars running through it,—being the *Capital* of the County of Columbia, and in which the principal business of the county is transacted,—having five Churches, the one half of which are thronged every Sabbath,—having three licensed Hotels, and four Restaurants, having three newspapers published weekly; having seven Lawyers, (and who don't often complain of too much to do,)—surrounded by a thrifty, intelligent and enterprising community, and located in the most romantic and picturesque part of the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, is undoubtedly a town of some importance and character. But it is not yet quite, what it ought to be, nor has it all the necessaries of a convenient and pleasureable town,—it should have a Fire Company—it should have a Town Hall—it should have a Military Company—it should have a Savings Institution—it should have a Market House—it should have Gas Works—it should improve the pavements and streets—it should give more encouragement to the Printers, for they are constantly engaged in furnishing the community with the latest news—it should under all circumstances encourage its own Lawyers, instead of calling in foreigners, and many other things too numerous to mention. With these few alterations and improvements, our town would soon become a place of residence, envied perhaps, by all the villages around us—it would stand forth among the county towns of the State, and be known as a first class town.

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