

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19.

SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS PAPERS.

The editor of the Biblical Recorder, Mr. William J. Bailey, has written a rather intemperate letter to the Charlotte Observer concerning the Raleigh News and Observer. Mr. Bailey declares that that paper, being a secular and partisan paper, is hectoring the religious denominations. That it is demanding the retirement of a college president and a college professor and moving for the ultimate retirement by moving for the public degradation of the pastor of a church. The professor is Professor Basset and the President is Dr. Kilgo and the pastor is the Rev. J. C. Massee, of the Baptist Tabernacle, Raleigh.

Mr. Bailey further charges that the News and Observer by its opposition to the sainted Durham in his memorable campaign for Christian Education hastened his death. This we take to be the gist of the matter of the communication, minus its intemperate speech before referred to, of which Mr. Bailey has probably repented by the time he sees his letter in cold type.

The editor of The News is also the editor of a religious paper. He thinks that he understands the functions of both. He has no quarrel with either Mr. Bailey or Mr. Daniels. If they knew each other better they would like each other more. We know and like them both. And the editor of this paper, in his capacity as the editor of a religious paper has received, he thinks, his full share of abuse from politicians and from secular papers for stand for the right as it was given him to see the right, when the success of the right meant the defeat of selfish mercenary or political plans. He therefore does not speak from the view-point of a man who has been entirely free from the aspersions of the secular press. But we think Editor Bailey might himself see things in a new light if he were to become the editor of a secular paper for a while. Mr. Bailey knows that Professor Basset wrote that article in the South Atlantic Quarterly for the purpose, among other purposes, of holding up to contempt The News and Observer as a "yellow journal." Dr. Kilgo made a speech in the Eastern Conference the other day against the News and Observer, though he did not call it by name. Rev. J. C. Massee was undoubtedly influenced by the News and Observer's criticisms of his utterances in Raleigh when he spoke for governmental suppression of the editorial columns of the secular press. The News and Observer has had its say about Dr. Kilgo and Professor Basset and Rev. J. C. Massee. It seems to us that it takes quite a stretch of the imagination to say that this defensive or offensive attitude of the News and Observer under personal attacks is the "hectoring of a denomination."

Mr. Daniels is a Methodist in good and regular standing. He is a man of blameless personal life. He is the beloved teacher of a large class of A. and M. College students in the Methodist Sunday School. It would seem that as a Methodist he should be given the same right of criticizing the members of his own denomination that they have exercised in criticizing him. We may deplore the personalities on both sides. But it is clear enough that they have been on both sides.

Rev. J. C. Massee is a Baptist minister, useful and beloved in his own congregation. Had the News and Observer any right to criticize him? Let us see if we cannot work out a principle here.

Mr. Massee is a Southern man who had been living for a time in Ohio. Even Southern-born men soon lost their grip on Southern problems when they go North. Mr. Massee said some months ago something about the ill treatment of the negroes in the South, their scanty wages, and the fear that blood would run in the streets and the torch be applied to the white man's home for this. Any Southern man knows how dangerous such an allusion is to the race that is living among us. The News and Observer characterized it as an incendiary utterance. In effect, though we are ready to believe, not in purpose, it was. Then Mr. Massee distinguished himself in Charlotte the other day.

Now we hold that if a minister is discussing the doctrines or worship or rites of his denomination, or of Christianity itself, any adverse comment by a secular paper is an impertinence. Moreover it is an impertinence that will be promptly rebuked by the with-

drawal of the subscribers of that denomination. A secular newspaper has nothing to do with matters that are purely denominational. But it is not Methodist doctrine, what Professor Basset said. Nor is it Baptist doctrine, what Mr. Massee said. In fact Dr. Battle very promptly and conclusively showed that it was subversive of fundamental Baptist doctrine. And if the secular press has no right to comment upon a public speech advocating the annihilation of the rights of the secular press, in the name of common sense, what has a secular paper the right to comment upon?

Mr. Bailey refers to Dr. Durham's campaign for Christian Education. We confess our ignorance of the features of that campaign. But we know that at one time Mr. Bailey's plan of Christian Education included something which he has since given up, namely, that the State should not be allowed to appropriate anything to the State institutions, the University, the State Normal, the A. and M. We recall, also that when the Baptist Convention met in Charlotte before, with some half-formed plans of carrying that policy into effect, it was met with a broadside from the Charlotte Observer, for which the Charlotte Observer received the castigation of the Biblical Recorder, but for which we hope it has not repented. Because that was clearly a political question with nothing that concerned a religious denomination as such.

We would be the last to limit the freedom of a religious paper to discuss a political question or any other question if it seems best to the editor. It should eschew partisan politics. But in the political sphere it should learn to take as well as give. The religious paper can point out the errors in doctrine or practice of its own or of other denominations, as the secular paper cannot do. Nor would we limit the freedom of professors and ministers to discuss what they think best from the pulpit or by other modes of expression. Those things belong to the domain of taste. But when they do leave questions of religion in sermons or addresses of public property, they must expect criticism of these things on their merits and not say that an attack has been made upon their churches because criticism has been made of their own foolish views. Criticism is the saving salt of literature and of utterance. There would be many more foolish things said and written but for the function of criticism. And if that function is denied, what becomes of all that freedom of speech and freedom of thought that we were hearing so much about just now, from the professor and the editor and the minister aforesaid? Some mighty fine things were said about the "illimitable freedom of the human mind." Have they been forgot so soon? Or does it belong only to those who talk about it the most?

We rise to remark that Governor Aycock made a good beginning last night in Baltimore, telling the folks just how it is. They are talking about him for President now, and we doubt not that he is an abler man than any of the more available candidates that have been mentioned. But it is about four years too early to nominate a Southern man for that position and as the Vice-Presidential nominee he would have the chance that Roosevelt had and would use it better, to make a great campaign as a stump-speaker. We have heard Roosevelt and Aycock on the same platform and for all that Roosevelt was the President the North Carolina Governor simply laid it over him as a speaker. Nominate Aycock and send him North to explain the matter in its true light.

Christmas is almost here. Wherefore let Judah cease from vexing Ephraim and Judah from vexing Josephus. Let us have peace.

The Charlotte News observes that he who runs up against Josephus generally gets worsted. It's a fact. The editor of the News and Observer has a tremendous following. He is a trifle extreme at times, but unless you want to encounter a buzz saw it would be best not to get in his path.—Ex.

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ARCHBELL'S

A Letter From Santa Claus

Archbell's Store, Charlotte, N. C., Dec. 18, 1904.

My Friends and Dear Children:

You know it is my desire and purpose to visit every one at this Christmas season and especially the children, but I am getting old and therefore do not remember names and places as well as I once did, so advise you to call at my headquarters as early as possible and select your presents, so that I may have them wrapped, marked and delivered to you Xmas morning. Now, friends and children, don't wait until the best things have been taken, but come at once and make your selection.

Sincerely yours, SANTA CLAUS.

Santa Claus' Store

Is packed with all kinds of beautiful Gifts, so if you want to remember father, mother, uncles, aunts, daughters, sons, brothers, sisters, friends or whosoever it may be, you can do so by visiting "Old Santa Claus'" headquarters, where he has collected all kinds of useful, ornamental and pretty things for this joyous Christmas season.

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In Basement

You will find in our Basement a complete stock of things for the Children, as Santa Claus never forgets them: Toys, Dolls, China Sets, Toy Trunks, Phonographs, Violins, Harps, Horns, Balloons, Comb and Brush Sets, Soaps and Soap Boxes, Candle Sticks, Doll Wigs, Silver Novelties, Glove Boxes, Handkerchief Boxes, Mirrors, Lanterns, Black Boards, and many other Gifts that cannot be mentioned here.

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