

RELIGIOUS BELIEF FACTOR

IN ELIGIBILITY OF CANDIDATES

President Roosevelt's Recent Letter to J. C. McSwain, of Dayton, Ohio, Draws Fire From North Carolina—The Only Wise Course is to Elect to Office Men Who Have Economic and Religious Beliefs Whom We Have a Right to Know a Candidate's Convictions.

To the Editor of the Observer: Have electors a right to know the religious belief of a candidate for political office? To this question President Roosevelt replies: No. The demand for a statement of a candidate's religious beliefs is not in any other meaning except that there may be discrimination for or against him because of that belief.

This raises another question: Has the voter a right to discriminate for or against a candidate for political office on account of his religious belief? The answer to this question depends upon the nature of the discrimination. The word discrimination is sometimes used in an odious, and sometimes in a commendable sense. Used in its odious sense it smacks of the narrow, bigoted, the prejudicial, the uncommendable sense it favors of discrimination, penetration, judgment. Using the term in this latter sense we may say that we pity the man who votes, or makes any choice in life, without due regard to the religious belief of the candidate.

To overrate or underrate a candidate's general fitness for political office on account of his religious belief, and to vote accordingly, is to discriminate in a reprehensible manner; but to consider his religious belief, as an element of his fitness for political office, together with his other qualifications, and to vote accordingly, is but to use discretion in a laudable manner. When President Roosevelt says: "Discrimination against the holder of one religious belief means retaliatory discrimination against men of other faiths," he uses the term in its odious sense. But it must be born in mind that discrimination may be dispassionate—devoid of all spirit of retaliation and revenge.

But the whole question hinges on this: Can a man's religious belief be considered as an element of fitness or unfitness for the holding of political office? On this question President Roosevelt takes the affirmative side. He regarded it as an outrage even to agitate such a question as a man's religious convictions, with the purpose of influencing a political election. Therefore, he says: "Are you sure that there are several States in this Union where the majority of the people are now Catholics? I should reprobate in the severest terms the Catholics in those States (or in any other States) who refused to vote for the most fit man because he happened to be a Protestant and my condemnation would be exactly as severe for Protestants who, under reversed circumstances, refused to vote for a Catholic."

Now, the fact remains that we as citizens have religious rights which the State as such is obliged to conserve—our freedom of conscience, for instance. Now, if the electing of a Catholic to office would tend to jeopardize our religious liberty—as it unquestionably would—it follows that the religious belief of the Catholic would constitute in him an element of unfitness for political office, which must be taken into account. Yet, at the same time, it must be recognized that, in other respects, the Catholic might be so well qualified for the office, that all things considered, he would be the candidate most fit for the office and so most worthy of election. The fact which deserves our attention is that neither in the individual nor the State is the line of demarcation between the political, the moral and the religious sharply defined. President Roosevelt allows that "You are entitled to know whether a man seeking your suffrage is a man of clean and upright life, honorable in all his dealings with his fellows, and fit by qualification and purpose to do well in the great office for which he is a candidate, but you are not entitled to know matters which lie purely between himself and his Maker."

Now, it is begging the whole question to speak of a man's religious belief as a "matter which lies purely between himself and his Maker." This is the very point at issue. If I have a right to investigate the morality of a candidate for political office, I have a right to know those religious convictions of which his morality is, in large measure, the outgrowth. Why so? In order that I may the more accurately determine the character and the prospect of its continuance or change. As I cannot thoroughly know a tree without knowing its root, so I cannot fully know moral character without knowing the religious convictions from which it springs.

Again, the President says: "To discriminate against a thoroughly upright citizen because he belongs to some particular Church, or because, like Abraham Lincoln, he has no avowed allegiance to any Church, is an outrage against that liberty of conscience which is one of the foundations of American life." This is a very specious assertion, but will not bear inspection. To be a "thoroughly upright citizen" and yet to be true to the creeds of certain Churches is an utter impossibility. Consider this decree of the Council of Laetana, as an example: "Secular powers of all ranks and degrees are to be warned, induced, and, if necessary, compelled by ecclesiastical censure, to swear that they will exert themselves to the utmost in the defense of the faith, and extirpate all heresies denounced by the Church who shall be found in their territories. And whenever any person shall assume government, whether it be spiritual or temporal, he shall be bound to abide by this decree." This decree is binding upon all Catholics to-day.

Now I submit that no person can be a "thoroughly upright citizen" and not a traitor to his country—and yet conform to such an article of faith as this. Not to discriminate against the Member of the Catholic, and others who hold religious beliefs which are a menace to our free institutions; and not to discriminate against the utterly irreligious, is to act as though the one thing which is above all else insures integrity of character, namely: high religious principle. Two men apply to me for employment; both are equally competent; one is an Atheist, the other, a Christian. I employ the Christian and discriminate against the Atheist on account of his religious belief. In so doing I am obeying the teaching of Scripture which says: "Let us do good unto all, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."—Gal. 6:10. Yet President Roosevelt tells me that my ac-

tion "is an outrage against that liberty of conscience which is one of the foundations of American life." Special to the Observer, Nov. 11.—The United States Circuit Court of Appeals, Richmond, Va., Nov. 11.—The United States Circuit Court of Appeals reconvened this morning, with Circuit Judges Pritchard and Goff, and District Judges Morris and Brawley in attendance. The following North Carolina case was argued: Walter A. Wood Company, petitioner, vs. H. W. Eubanks, trustee, etc., respondent, on petition for review from the District Court at Statesville, N. C. Case submitted on briefs by Armfield and Turner, of Statesville, N. C., for the petitioner. No appearance for the respondents.

North Carolina Case Submitted to U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Special to the Observer, Nov. 11.—The United States Circuit Court of Appeals reconvened this morning, with Circuit Judges Pritchard and Goff, and District Judges Morris and Brawley in attendance. The following North Carolina case was argued: Walter A. Wood Company, petitioner, vs. H. W. Eubanks, trustee, etc., respondent, on petition for review from the District Court at Statesville, N. C. Case submitted on briefs by Armfield and Turner, of Statesville, N. C., for the petitioner. No appearance for the respondents.

Why Not a Home? The Mecklenburg Building & Loan Association

recently organized, is now ready to receive subscriptions to stock. The company will formally begin business on SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5TH, and will temporarily be located at the office of the Charlotte Trust and Realty Company, No. 18 East Trade street, at which place dues will be received on the date mentioned. After about January 1st the company will have an office in the "Realty" Building on Independence Square.

- Persons desiring to subscribe to stock may do so through any of the following-named officers and directors of the company: OFFICERS: JOHN B. ROSS, President, J. FRANK FLOWERS, Vice Pres., T. A. ADAMS, Attorney, A. G. CRAIG, Secretary and Treasurer. DIRECTORS: C. A. Duckworth, G. A. Smith, S. L. Vaughn, A. G. Craig, John B. Spence, T. A. Adams, M. E. Trotter, B. R. Smith.

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THE WEATHER. Washington, Nov. 11.—Forecast: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, fair and colder Thursday; Friday fair and colder, strong and diminishing west to north-west winds. Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, west Florida, fair and colder Thursday; Friday fair and colder; fresh north to north-west winds. East Florida, fair and colder Thursday; Friday fair and continued cold; fresh north-west winds.

LOCAL OFFICE, U. S. WEATHER BUREAU. Charlotte, N. C., Nov. 11, 1908. Sunrise 6:24 a. m.; sunset 5:21 p. m. TEMPERATURE (in degrees). Highest temperature... 73. Lowest temperature... 56. Mean temperature... 65. Excess for the day... 13. Accumulated excess for month... 25. Accumulated excess for year... 98. PRECIPITATION (in inches). Total for 24 hours ending 8 p. m.... 0.11. Total for the month... 0.44. Accumulated deficiency for month... 6.4. Total for the year... 6.09. Accumulated excess for year... 5.59. Prevailing wind direction... South. W. J. BENNETT, Observer.

THE DEATH RECORD. Mr. C. D. Townsend, Formerly of Lumberton. Special to the Observer. Lumberton, November 11.—Mr. C. D. Townsend, formerly a resident of Lumberton, died at Florence, Ala., Sunday morning of fever. His body was brought to Lumberton for interment, reaching here last night. The remains were interred at the family cemetery at Back Swamp this morning at 11 o'clock. Rev. C. H. Durham, pastor of the First Baptist church here, conducting the funeral. Mr. Townsend is survived by his wife and four children who reside here. Also, a mother, Mrs. Narcissus Townsend, and two brothers, Messrs. L. B. and Walter Townsend.

Mr. R. I. Setzer, of Iredell. Special to the Observer. Troutman, Nov. 11.—Mr. Robert L. Setzer, a prominent farmer who lived near the Statesville ferry, six miles west of this place, died at his home to-day, after a very brief illness. The news of his death came as a shock to the community, as very few knew of his illness. The immediate cause of death was blood poisoning. The deceased was indeed a splendid citizen and a very unostentatious man. In his quiet, even walk he was an authority in the community. He married a daughter of Mr. W. H. Hunter of this place and his wife and three children survive. Interment will take place to-morrow at Bethel.

Mr. J. S. Craynor, of Wilkes. Special to the Observer. North Wilkesboro, Nov. 11.—Mr. J. S. Craynor, a prominent lawyer of Wilkesboro, died yesterday morning at 6 o'clock after a lingering illness. The funeral services were held at the Methodist church this afternoon at 3 o'clock. Mr. Craynor was 62 years of age and was twice married. He is survived by his last wife and nine children, Misses Edith, Fannie and Kate, of North Wilkesboro; Mrs. McEwee, of Statesville; Messrs. Hugh, Frank and Charles, of Wilkesboro; William and John, of West Virginia. Mr. Craynor was a lawyer of ability and held the offices of United States Attorney, Cleveland's administration, State Senator and solicitor. In his younger days he was a famous fox hunter and lover of fine horses.

CRUSHED BY WAGON WHEELS. Seven-Year-Old Girl Run Down and Seriously Injured in Elizabeth City.—Physicians Hold Out Hope For Recovery. Special to the Observer. Elizabeth City, Nov. 11.—The little 7-year-old daughter of Rev. Mr. Shaw, a Primitive Baptist preacher, met with a most fearful accident this evening and that she still lives, is remarkable. A few minutes past 6 o'clock the little girl, in company with Mrs. John M. Bell, was crossing the corner of Main and Polk streets, when she was knocked out and severely injured by a heavy wagon, which was loaded with a number of mattresses, druggs, etc., passed over the child's stomach. A number of teeth were knocked out and severe bruises inflicted. The child's condition, while hopeful, is of course, very serious.

Fayetteville Insurance Company to Erect a New Building. Special to the Observer. Fayetteville, Nov. 11.—At a meeting of the executive committee of the Southern Life Insurance Company here to-day, it was decided to erect immediately a handsome building for home offices of the company at the corner of Hazard and Burgess streets. The building, which will cost \$20,000 and will stand opposite the Federal building to be erected soon.

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For lot located on corner of Caldwell and Boundary streets; three 4-room houses and one 3-room house. Buildings new and occupied by good paying tenants. Annual rent \$376.00. Lot 100x126; rate of income 11 1-2 per cent. It will pay you to investigate this at once.

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NATURAL. Many folks are false alarms; they oft appear what they ain't. One woman removes a mole, another uses a court plaster beauty spot. One has too much hair, pulls it out; another gets a supply from the factory and the grave. BUT MAN—keep your eyes upon him; his crowning jewel is his SUN-DAY COAT. Get it right; get it right; his righteous garment; oft IT COVERS A FRAUD and hides a leopard. 25 acres good farm land in CHARLOTTE for sale—\$2,500.

F. D. ALEXANDER FIRE INSURANCE, best writ. "Jordan's on the Square" E. P. Purcell, President. D. A. McLaughlin, V. Pres.

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