

The Charlotte Observer.

J. P. CALDWELL, Publishers.

EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR

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PUBLISHERS' ANNOUNCEMENT

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MONDAY, MARCH 1, 1909.

A RECORD OF SEVENTEEN YEARS.

It is just seventeen years since Caldwell & Tompkins bought and took charge of The Observer. It was then The Charlotte Chronicle but this was changed a few months later to its present name. It is not of the line of The Charlotte Observer of Col. Chas. R. Jones and others, as many suppose, for that paper had suspended several years before 1892, when Caldwell & Tompkins took this one.

At this period (1892) The Charlotte Chronicle was a morning paper of four pages, six columns to the page. The Observer, its successor, is of varying number of pages—ten or twelve during the week and twenty to twenty-six Saturdays, with seven columns to the page. The circulation then was 1,100, the daily average now is 2,513. Its paper bill then was \$1,600 per year, it is now \$14,200. The mechanical part then was \$45 per week, it is now \$192. The salaries list then called for \$75 per week, now \$312. It had then quarters, now eight. It occupied four spaces then, 2,800 square feet, now 14,000. It was set by hand, with one held in each hand. Then it was printed on a double cylinder flat-bed press & press at 2,000 impressions an hour, print two pages and turn, now on a Hoe perfecting rotary press, capable of sixteen pages at one impression, printed and folded at 10,000 an hour, or eight pages at 20,000 an hour. The telegraph to it is charged then \$12 per week, now \$120. Its postage bill then was \$7 per week, now it is \$92. It then rented quarters on West Trade street, the same year the present management took charge it bought the building it now occupies on South Tryon and later added a story to it, erecting at the time of the purchase a six-story mechanical building immediately in rear of and of course connected with the property with the Tryon street frontage. Ten years ago it became a daily paper in fact, therefore it had appeared but six days in the week. It carries more local and foreign advertising than any other paper in the State and at a higher rate, and collects more money from its subscription list and sales than any other. A good deal more could be said but this review will perhaps interest few people, excepting newspaper men, anyhow.

The public has been good to The Observer but it would enjoy more of public favor, circulation and influence except that it has not been able to pursue popular political policies. This has been unfortunate for it in financial and other ways but could not be helped. It has never known how to adapt its course to changing winds and thus has always been in the minority. This fact has never worried it except in so far as it has never agreed to be misjudged, to have one's motives imputed to be under suspicion of something wrong and thus lack friends whom one might otherwise have. When the Populist party was organized it could not stand for Democracy but later when on the State ticket, in 1896 for Democratic-Populist fusion on the national ticket—Bryan and Watson, the last named the Georgia Populist, but it supported the Democratic candidate for election. In 1900 it could not support Mr. Bryan and free silver again for that year he added anti-imperialism to free silver as one of his issues—abandonment of the Philippine Islands and the loyal American citizens there in their fate, after this country had been charge there and made itself responsible, a thing which we have ever held it should never have done. Last year Mr. Bryan abandoned both of these issues and The Observer found enough ground to stand upon to support him though it frankly said at the outset that it had no heart in the contest. In State matters the paper has stayed as close to the Democratic party as it has been permitted to. It could not go with the party in the prohibition election last year, because broadly speaking it is an anti-prohibitionist and locally a local optionist.

The paper's political record is supported by many to be variegated. It has been absolutely consistent with itself and with the highest Democratic standards. It has never supported a Republican candidate for any office

and its editor has never voted for a Republican. Looking back over these seventeen years, some of them storm and shadow. The Observer has never taken a position on any matter of political principle or important policy which it regrets or which it would reverse if all these things were to go over. It does not regret, though its heart has been often pained and it has suffered in its finances—except for this, that in 1896, when it had no ticket at all, that it did not support the Palmer and Buckner sound money Democratic ticket.

We had no idea at the outset of running into all of this but as long as we are at it it may as well be added that notwithstanding what might have been, the paper has prospered in a way, otherwise it could not be the enormously expensive institution it is to-day. This expense is justified in receipts, all of which go back into the paper for its betterment. The growth of its circulation has never been rapid but nearly always reasonably steady. It has never suffered but one recession, that in 1898, when it lost about one hundred subscribers in consequence of its having taken Bryan. The people have pardoned it to it much with which they did not agree—this because it has been to them a paper which meets their demand for news, as complete a service as conditions admit of and as accurately presented as possible. It is minded to say here that, apart from its mere value as a newspaper, The Observer, whether they believe it or not, has never wavered in its fidelity to them, has in every position it has ever taken, considered their interests before its own, and has never had an axe to grind. To public appreciation of what virtues it has and to that charity of the people which suffers long and is kind, it is indebted for its ability to meet its bills, to enjoy a fine equipment and to have around it in its little hive, in all departments, a capable, enthusiastic, industrious body of workers, who know their duties and do them and are happy in their work—some of the first requisites to good service.

There has been a transformation in the paper in seventeen years. It pauses to drop a tear to those who have fallen on the field and birds up its joys for the race yet to be if the people continue good to it and if the number of its patrons continue to increase until it shall have 50,000 subscribers instead of 10,000. It will, if God continues merciful and things go well, show them, after awhile, a newspaper which will really be worth their time, for while it has a sufficiently good opinion of itself now and is sure that it has lived up to the full measure of its opportunities, the men who make it are fully sure that they have not demonstrated all they know about the newspaper business and would like to be able to prove it.

Pardon, masters! Seventeen years is a long time in the life of a newspaper and The Observer, as will appear from a glance at the length of this article, has fallen into the garrulity of old age.

WHEREIN WE BOAST NOT AT ALL.

The Washington Herald and the Richmond News Leader are so absurd as to about at The Observer in chorus that John Sevier "not only was not born in North Carolina but seldom went there when he could help it." Of course we never said that general sevier was born in North Carolina, we said, in reply to the Tennessee claim, upon Andrew Jackson's being in action and achievement a Tennesseean though a North Carolinian born, that in action and achievement John Sevier was no less a North Carolinian. "His life as frontiers soldier and statesman was lived on North Carolina soil and among men of whom nearly all had been born within North Carolina's present borders." Because he found himself excessively remote from the State capital, he reluctantly—under the pressure not only of circumstances but of his associates as well—let a strong loyalty to the old State give way. He became the father of the State of Franklin and, ultimately, with North Carolina's full and free consent, father of the State of Tennessee. And here we are reminded to say—though with the past year's history before us, not at all beautifully—that the whole State of Tennessee was born in North Carolina.

The Nashville American says of Judge J. M. Dickinson, who is to be President Taft's Secretary of War, that "he has always been a Democrat, and as his friends know, did not vote for Mr. Roosevelt nor for Judge Taft." It is equally well known that he did not vote for Mr. Bryan, either. Mr. Franklin McVeigh, of Ohio, who is to go into the new cabinet as Secretary of the Treasury is another westerner who controls his own vote. He had been a Republican but became a Democrat in 1882 when Cleveland was nominated the second time and was the Democratic candidate for United States Senator in 1884 and renounced the State but was defeated. He quit when Col. Bryan took charge in 1888 and had been a Republican since. Happily, these changes of party do not insure a man in the North and West. How different in the South!

For the present one torpedo boat Congress can assure the country that its naval and military service will keep up with foreign countries in regard to the already important and constantly more important item of aeroplanes and dirigible balloons. But Congress practically contents itself with awarding the Wright brothers medals. The Wrights and our other pioneers of the air have to go abroad for financial support. It is an unfortunate case of deficient enlightenment.

AN ECONOMIC EVOLUTION.

South Carolina will doubtless be better off without its lien law. It will certainly be better off when it gets rid of the customs which the lien law has fostered. For many years the generality of South Carolina merchants did business practically on a loan basis. They furnished the farmer with his supplies, necessarily at swollen prices, taking in return liens on anything or everything he had. They virtually owned him. Under this system the farmer living on his own land often fared no better than if he had been a mere cropper. He occupied an economic status scarcely distinguishable from that of the Mississippi or Alabama negro tenant who rears nearly the whole cotton crop of those States without seeing five dollars from one year's end to another. Of course the system had its origin in hard-fare poverty and lack of actual money, but no system making more powerfully for continued straits could easily be imagined. It was ruinous to the farmer without really benefiting the merchant, upon whom the farmer's troubles inevitably reacted.

Gradually destitution came, not through the various wild schemes agitated in the politics of South Carolina and the South at large but through Southern industrial development. The factory was instrumental in procuring much better prices for cotton, tobacco and timber than could otherwise have been obtained and also in making a market at good or high prices for perishable products which had hitherto gone almost begging. It constantly turned the farmer's competitors into his customers, at once regulating the supply and indefinitely increasing the demand. So even the most luckless farmer came to know what actual money in quantity looked like.

The heavily-laden ritten South Carolina farmer progressed toward deliverance along with the rest, though at an exceptionally slow rate. For ten years past it has been increasingly possible for merchants to open up in a South Carolina county seat where not long before a few older-established houses had the whole county tied up with them and do profitable business on business loans. The lien practice, always productive of more evil than good, has happily become an anachronism and departs accordingly.

IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE THE GREAT.

The Greensboro Record says "The papers that so strongly oppose Mr. Bryan are doing more to keep him before the public than any others. At every opportunity they lambast him and thus arouse his friends. The best way to relegate a man to the rear is to let him alone—ignore him, if you please." This is, of course, intended for The Observer, which, without more definite designation than "the papers," "some papers" or "certain papers," was honored with two or three other lectures of the same sort last week. This is not new. It was heard often in the happy days when Mr. Marion Butler ran North Carolina—ignore him, "don't mention his name," etc. But how to run a newspaper and ignore a United States Senator who controlled the State and had more than half the people in his train was something we were never able to find out. The problem re-asserts itself. Here is Mr. Wm. J. Bryan, the leader and master of the Democratic party, the most popular man in it, the only candidate for its nomination for President in 1912 and its prospective nominee, and we are told that the way to relegate him to the rear is to ignore him, ignore the man who is to be inaugurated President four years from next Thursday and who in the meantime is to formulate more governmental policies and contribute more to the miscellaneous list than any fifty other men in the nation? Not if we know ourselves, not with The Observer, which as long as it is a newspaper, it did as much as any other newspaper in keeping Mr. Butler before the public as long as he was our most popular man and the people insisted on hearing about him daily. Shall we do less for Mr. Bryan and his admirers? Nay, nay, Pauline! Nobility is the breath of his nostrils and we shall contribute our share of the free advertising.

The country over, there has been marked decrease in popularity of corporation-baiting for the battings own sake as distinguished from rational and proper control. Especially has the feeling toward railroads changed. Even in Texas, we learn from The Houston Post, there is great change in feeling, because "development has suffered serious impairment." There are some victories in legislation which, for the people, are worse than defeats. It is pleasing to think that safety and sanity will rule the day for awhile now.

Some of our contemporaries, particularly The Lynchburg News, do not think that in appointing Judge Jacob M. Dickinson, of Tennessee, as his Secretary of War Mr. Taft showed a really liberal spirit. They point out that Judge Dickinson, like General Luke E. Wright, has never been a Democrat and as the last election voted for Taft, which statement is incorrect. But under what earthly obligation was Mr. Taft to appoint any manner of Democrat, especially a Democrat from the States of the inner and still solid South?

For once we line up with Oldjo Cannon. The reference is to the bout in the House Saturday. Happily that pestiferous phonograph, John Wesley Gaines, of Tennessee, was defeated for re-election last fall and will retire from public view next Wednesday.

The Pope Indisposed. Rome, Feb. 28.—The indisposition of the Pope continues. The attending physicians expect that his holiness will be entirely recovered in a few days.

MODERN POETRY.

Protest Against Assumption It is on the Decline. Current Literature. When other topics fail magazine writers invariably resort to the decline of poetry. A lady writing in The Bookman asserts: "Writers of verse are left, but let us accept the fact that this is a mechanical and commercial age, and not seek to re-plant Tennyson and Lowell by writers plainly unworthy to tie their shoe latches." Speaking of magazine poetry, the same writer affirms that "terrible stuff can be found in almost every issue of otherwise excellent periodicals. These verses team with every imaginable fault, the slenderest and most unpoetical of ideas being expressed in lines whose rhythm defies scanning and whose attempts at rhyme are an offense to both eye and ear." We, part of whose business it is to scan the magazines month after month, cannot subscribe to this opinion. While there is, indeed, much drift never so much as in the past, without the publication of at least half a dozen poems that seem worthy of preservation. Men are wont to seek the golden age in the past, or in the distant future, even in Shakespeare's days they have deplored the deterioration of the drama, and we need not turn many pages in the critical journals of Victorian days in order to find utterances even more pessimistic than those in The Bookman. The late T. B. Aldrich, in a letter to Mr. Madison Cawein, regrets that in England as well as in the United States, the poet who has had a great following is dead, and that no one has come to take his place. Let us hope, however, and this is a point we, too, should like to make, perhaps the great poet is with us in-ognito even now. "When Keats was laid in his grave at Rome," Mr. Aldrich remarks, "there were not twelve men, there were not two men in England who suspected that a great poet had been laid at rest. Leigh Hunt had a strong idea that Keats was a fine poet, but not as fine a poet as Leigh Hunt. Byron, Moore, Rogers and Southey could not see in 'The Eve of St. Agnes' and 'Hyperion.' No great poetry (except, possibly, in the case of Tennyson) was ever immediately popular."

The Old Blue-Back.

North Carolina Education. Commenting on the handy spelling rules in last month's issue of North Carolina Education The Charlotte Chronicle, which goes up head on spelling as often as any other paper in the State, pays deserved homage to that fine old spelling-master, Webster's Blue Back, surrounded with "reds" and "yeds," says the Chronicle, "is as easy as falling off a log to any one having an acquaintance with the blue-back." Editor Harris then lays down the following rule for learning to spell, a rule which, we are glad to believe, is adopted by an increasing number of our teachers and superintendents for the pupils in their schools. "The best rule for spelling that has ever been formulated would be to put down to the old blue-back and pay careful attention to the way it talks."

"Reddy" Walsh Signs Patriot Contract.

Washington Telegram, 26th. A good piece of news to the baseball fans of this city comes in the announcement by Manager James McKeen of the signing of "Reddy" Walsh for the approaching season. Walsh was one of the mainstays of last year's pennant winners, doing much of a critical time to steady the summer pennant. The local management intends making a number of substantial improvements to the local grounds and stands in time for the opening season. Manager McKeen, who is well known as the man who took the park to improve to look over the ground in order to determine just what improvements are needed. Fourteen players, including six of last year's team, have already been signed and it is believed that the new team will be considerably stronger and faster than the one of last year.

Washington Club Entertains Sperry and His Officers.

Washington, Feb. 28.—Rear Admiral Charles S. Sperry, commander of the Atlantic battleship fleet, and the flag officers and captains who served with him on the memorable world-encircling cruise were guests of honor to an elegant dinner given by the Metropolitan Club. About 100 covered-wet, laid, and those attending included high officers of the army and navy, Senators and Representatives and members of the diplomatic corps. Attached to the host was the vice president of the club, was hostmaster, President Roosevelt was unable to be present.

Soldiers Warned Against Wood Alcohol.

New York, Feb. 28.—Major General Leonard Wood, commanding the Department of the East, has issued a general order to the officers in the department commanding them to impress upon the enlisted men the deadly effects of the following drinking of wood or denatured alcohol. The order is now in the hands of the post and company commanders in New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, Maryland and West Virginia.

Mayor Franklin Fighting For the Charter.

Raleigh Times. The mayor of Charlotte, Capt. Thomas S. Franklin, so well known in K. of P. and other circles in the State, is in the city to help give the new charter for the City of Charlotte, which has been drafted by those who did not like it. He hopes to save some part of it, but The Observer of this city has said that if the enemies get all the meat, they are entitled to the hide as well and so throws it to them.

Unthinkable.

Charlotte News and Courier. We are informed by our esteemed contemporary, The French Broad Hustler, that Mr. Will Corn is to be elected by the mayor of Hendersonville on the charge of selling whiskey. We cannot believe that an unlawful connection between Corn and whiskey could exist in North Carolina.

Work on Inland Waterway.

Beaufort Look Out. Dredge No. 9, working on the inland waterway, is making great headway up the ship channel towards Core creek. This big suction machine works day and night. Good progress is being made in every part of the waterway work.

A Point Worth Remembering.

Real Estate Record. There is a deal more satisfaction in handing your rent money through the building and loan associations window, to be credited as part payment on the house you live in.

A. J. A. AGAIN IN SONG.

Richmond's Bard and His Newspaper Organ Shy the Poetic Casanova into the Ring—A Welcome to the Fleet, Richmond News Leader. Attention of The Charlotte Observer, The New York Sun and other envious or admiring contemporaries is directed to the fact that RICHMOND'S poet laureate has burst out in a direction entirely new and gorgeous. Inspired by the return of the battleship fleet, he has reproduced the long neglected poem he poemed but failed to promulgate to a deprived world in the return of the Manila fleet eleven years ago. In this connection he displays a letter signed by Theodore Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, promising him a berth on a patrol service to be established on Chesapeake bay. It will be perceived, therefore, that Mr. Andrews is not only poet and warrior but by intention sailor also—a fact doubtless accounting for the bilious and variant and occasionally tempestuous aspect to his verses, changing in measure and cadence as the changing sea. The Charlotte Observer's out-classed poets may find a suggestion and inspiration in the title and use of the maritime name of the capital of their own State.

"THE MANILA FLEET."

(Respectfully dedicated to the Manila Fleet by A. J. Andrews, Richmond, Va.) THE OLYMPIA. On the Philippine coast she ruled the coast. When Dewey was her captain, Neat hammocks made of his wavy Dead Spaniards to be wrapped in Long may she wave, our good old ship brave. And spur to revolution. Lay against him and landmen toast The Flagship of the nation.

THE BALTIMORE.

There came by chance, to join the dance, The Iron-sided Baltimore. With flashing guns and Maryland songs, To wreath in this furor. A well-directed shot in a certain spot Sunk a Spanish ship on her first war trip, Her equipment be found the whole world round.

THE BOSTON.

The Boston, a cruiser bold, On the fuming ocean rolled, Commanded by Captain Wilds, The Dandy. O. Spaniards never found their match Till the Yankee did them catch. For the Boston boys for fighting Are the Dandy. O.

When the Spaniards have in view Says Captain Wilds in his eye, Come clear the ship for action, and Be Handy. O.

To the weather-gage, boys get her, And make my men fight better. Give them EVANS gunpowder Mixed with Brandy. O.

The first broadside they poured Carried the Spaniards by the board And made their lofty frigate Look abandoned. O.

Admiral Mantejo said, "I am done," And fired a Lee gun And the Yankee struck up Yankee Doodle Dandy. O.

THE CONCORD, PETREL AND RALEIGH.

Great gallant warships were these three—The Petrel, Concord and big RALEIGH, They steamed in bound in one solid line, And looking as pimp as you ever can find. The Petrel was the smallest on this fighting trip—She sunk in twenty minutes a Spanish warship. Then came the Concord, with cannons booming. Then the big Raleigh the Spaniards doomed.

The Raleigh's gunners were the best, And killed more Spaniards than all the rest. In a few hours' time the victory was won From the thunders of the Yankee guns. So let the merry church bells ring; Let us remember Dewey's victory sing; For my California's golden sand Ernie Dewey's men all over the land. They belonged to us, they belonged to all, And answered to the country's call. Those brave men fought not in vain, For in this battle They REMEMBERED THE MAINE.

What is a "Horseback" Opinion?

To the Editor of The Observer: At supper the other night in Raleigh over a cold bottle and a hot bird I was discussing with a number of legislators what action the committee would take in a matter of great interest to my county and myself, that was then before them. After fully going over the merits of the case as member from the western part of the State, I think, gave us his idea, but qualified it by saying "that was only a horseback opinion." Not caring to show my ignorance of the King's English, I said as a spoke, "I kept silent, mentally resolving I would go to The Observer, headquarters for the derivation of obsolete words and phrases, and find out. Please tell me what kind of an opinion is a horseback opinion, and how did the expression originate."

NORTH ROBESON. Red Springs, Feb. 27th, 1909.

[For The Observer. A CHEERFUL HEART.

A cheerful heart, with winsome ways, Is welcomed everywhere; It fills a life with gladdened days And makes them all seem fair.

'Tis sweet to hear the cheerful note She sings the living day, Like bird, with ever warbling throat, To drive black care away.

The soaring lark, up in the sky, While pouring forth its glee, Sings not its song, in flight on high, More free from care than she.

No trouble settles in her face To scatter gloom about; Her heart may ache, but there's no trace Of line to find it out.

She keeps her troubles in her breast; They lodge not in her eyes To dim their lustre with unrest And deepen others' sighs.

Her cares she keeps; her smiles she sows To bring forth heartfelt gladness That lighten sorrow's heavy woes, And dry the tears of sadness.

There are enough of grief-born sighs To burden life with care; To bless the soul that stops sad eyes From shedding blinding tears.

She's like the brightest midnight star That lends its light to night To cheer its gloom from way afar, While twinkling with delight.

'Twere joy to live with one like this—A joy of heaven's own— Kind earth-born angels brew such bliss For those who are forlorn.

Oh, cheerfulness! It sings a lay With ever fond refrain, And leads despair along the way To find lost smiles again.

—U. B. GWINN.

The Little Long Co. DEPARTMENT STORES CHARLOTTE, N.C.

COAT SUITS

The Coat Suit sale advertised for Monday is being added to by new arrivals, making the three special prices of \$17.50, \$20.00 and \$25.00 the very best values of the season. It takes nerve to put \$30 values on a \$20.00 rack but we've done it.

NOVELTIES

We received by express to-day another shipment of fancy embroidered all over frontings for waists, in both white and colors. These are very stylish and new, and very scarce in the markets, come quick, they will be on display tables Monday.

Our 5c lace table is still the talk of the town, being added to every two or three days with the very latest styles and best values obtainable.

The Little Long Co. DEPARTMENT STORES CHARLOTTE, N.C.