

WILMINGTON, N. C.
Saturday Morning, November 6, 1875.
THE MELIORATOR OF GENERAL BARRINGER.
General Barringer has responded to our article of October 27th in a reply dated October 29th, a copy of which he had sent us in advance of its publication in the Charlotte Bulletin. We had not seen his reply in another column. It had also been our wish to publish in this issue his speech on Separate Schools, delivered in the Convention, September 27th, and out of which this controversy has grown. With this purpose in view, we have first written and then telegraphed to the Raleigh News, in which we originally saw it, to send it to us. We have not yet heard from them and have concluded not to defer this matter longer, since we would not have one of General Barringer's dignity and self-importance to stand waiting even a single moment for an answer. In his rejoinder, he complains of our doing him the injustice to suppose that he had in the speech aforesaid, actually spoken in favor of Mixed Schools. It is true that in our article of October 27th, we used some expressions which might lead our readers to infer as much. But in doing so, certainly no one but himself could have mistaken our design, which was not to misrepresent him, but to provoke him to reply again, and to thus draw him more fully out. In this we have succeeded completely, and now this political wolf in sheep's clothing has tumbled into our very trap. Our present purpose is first to remove as carefully as we can his upper covering, and then to strip the bristled hide from him in the broad light of day. And when we shall have done so, our readers may judge whether we were under any sort of necessity of doing him even the smallest injustice, and whether we were not rather seeking another opportunity to do him such signal justice, that he shall never again be heard to complain. And first for the speech itself, which we regret exceedingly that we cannot publish to-day, but upon our faithful memory of which, our readers may safely rely. Should our recollection of General Barringer the slightest wrong, he shall have another opportunity to be heard, although he will have little right to complain, since it was his duty to have sent us that speech, when sending us another on a subject totally irrelevant. He begins that speech by expressing his joy "that the agitation of this subject of Mixed Schools, was nearing its end," and yet in that form of expression, he more than insinuates his censure of the white people of North Carolina for their conduct in regard to that agitation. But is such censure, whether express or implied, either just or excusable? For who, indeed, but they and their Democratic delegates in the Convention, were they bringing that agitation to an end, and were that very moment engaged in giving it its coup de grace? On the other hand, who but General Barringer and his Radical allies began that agitation? Or does he presume that there is in North Carolina a man so ignorant as not to know that it was begun by a Civil Rights Bill compelling Mixed Schools introduced by Senator Sumner, and passed by the United States Senate. And when Butler, as chairman of the House committee failed to report that bill entire, does General Barringer imagine that there is in North Carolina a man so stupid as to have forgotten that Census of Pennsylvania, moved the Senate Bill as a substitute for that of Butler, and that thereupon every Radical in the House voted for that substitute, save and except a handful of cowardly renegades from the South? Mixed Schools therefore was, and is, and forever shall remain one of the recognized tenets of Radicalism, anything that such a doughface as General Barringer may say or do to the contrary, notwithstanding. Again in that speech, while expressing his willingness to vote for an ordinance separating the schools, still he says "in his judgment such an ordinance is wholly unnecessary." Now if words were not invented to conceal thought—if in the mouth of General Barringer, words mean anything, then words, for these, must mean that he preferred that the subject should have been left just as it was under the unamended Constitution, which as everybody knows allows Mixed Schools. Again he speaks of nature having reared a "wall of partition" between the races, and yet in the same breath he stigmatizes as "unholy prejudice," the instinctive antipathy of the white to the negro race. Such trash as this we should characterize as downright stupidity if it were possible, indeed, for a mind such as General Barringer's to stultify itself. We do not care therefore, to stop to notice the distinguished compliments of being "critical scholars," which in that speech he attempts to pay such negroes as Smyth and O'Hara faith; than to remark that a compliment of that kind coming from General Barringer, can be worth nothing to anybody. And now for his complaint of our misrepresenting such a speech as this! Why the whole thing from beginning to end was a clumsy piece of time-serving, double dealing and self-seeking evasion, and such as defies misrepresentation.

resolution. And why was this? Simply because he was trying to tide two horses at once—a feat which he, although a quondam general of cavalry seems never to have attained. We have seen in this our town, and an acquaintance of a different order perform the much more difficult feat of riding four-in-hand, but never in all our lives have we witnessed such wide and awkward straddling as this of "Old Aunt Nancy."
Having had this much to say by way of comment upon the speech of General Barringer, we must now recur to the original matter in controversy between us, and growing out of that speech. This, as our readers will remember, was the disingenuous and demagogical use made first by Governor Chamberlain, and then by himself of an extract from Macaulay's Essay on Milton, in support of negro suffrage and its attendant evils. For this we arraigned them, and inflicted condign punishment upon both. But in doing so, we made a distinction, in behalf of Governor Chamberlain, indeed, we had no mitigation to make, but convicted him of perversion, the most willful, shameless, and dishonest. For he is a scholar and as such towers high above the motley host of meaner offenders pre-eminent in parts as in mischief. But of him we say no more until it shall become necessary to again take him in hand. Gen. Barringer in his first reply tried to make it appear that we had accused him of plagiarism only. Now truly inexcusable still that was not the gravamen of our charge which was the willful perversion of the one and the stupid misapprehension of the other. Taking that view of it we strove to acquit him as far as we could for he was and is profoundly ignorant of the whole import of the writings as well of Macaulay as of Milton. But he declines such clemency as we had to offer and persists in pleading guilty to the greater extent in our indictment. Even now we know he is far less guilty than he would have the public believe. But we think we can account for his perversity. For he is a lawyer and as such must be familiar with the maxim that ignorance is not a valid plea and that *crassa negligentia* may even become a crime. But it is otherwise in the court of criticism, and such *crassa ignorantia* as this of his shall always meet with proper indulgence while we are prosecuting theirs. Notwithstanding this Gen. Barringer continues to speak of our criticism of him with "contempt" which our readers and his cannot fail to see is only the contempt of ignorance. He shows however that he is himself not beneath contempt inasmuch as he is not wholly insensible to satire. This we speak in his praise and is more than we would say of any one of his political associates. But he is wrong in having charged us with expending in our first article "whose columns of vituperation upon him." For the truth is our entire article was barely two columns in length and of which more than three-fourths were taken up in vindication of Macaulay leaving less than one half of one column to be divided between himself and Chamberlain. But he doubtless has another mode of measuring the length of such things as this, in plain that he mistakes the acuteness of his own sufferings for the duration of our attack. In this view of the case his misstatement is both natural and in one sense true. We wish we could say as much for his use of the word "vituperation." But here we find such a confusion of ideas as is at once characteristic and unique. So much so that we should think him altogether incapable of distinguishing between "vituperation" and "satire" were it not that the keenness with which he has felt its edge shows that he is still able to feel what he cannot define. Indeed we think he has every reason to feel even honored by the well-deserved rebuke of the JOURNAL coupling as it did his own with the name of Macaulay or even with the name of Chamberlain. For as he lay there sandwiched as it were between them he must have felt as he certainly looked like a fly caught in amber feeling no doubt that he was not far from it.
But we protest that our purpose in writing the original article which has led to this controversy was not simply to make Gen. Barringer look ridiculous in the eyes of the public. That we could not well avoid and what we have failed to do he has done for us and for himself. Neither was it our purpose merely to display our learning and make literary capital by the exposure of such a charlatan as he. That was an easy achievement indeed for us when we had done it—we as little thought of boasting as though we had impaled a butterfly upon a wheel. In our original article we undertook to show that the passage taken from the Essay on Milton was either perverted or misunderstood. We went farther and showed that if it could be made to bear the construction sought to be put upon it, still Macaulay had over and over again disavowed that as well as every other paragraph of that Essay. This we proved by reference to the Biographical Sketches of him prefixed to his last work—the fifth volume of his History of England—where, according to the London Times, he is made to say that "his matured judgment approvingly pronounced a paragraph in that Essay," and where the London Athlete says, "the later in life was

advised of it." And yet in face of such authority Gen. Barringer has the audacity to repeat, as he does in his rejoinder to-day, that Macaulay has never disavowed it. Shall we not rather say that he persists in his denial with a degree of dullness for which *crassa ignorantia* is no name. Indeed, he must allow us in want of a better, to coin a new word, for what to us is altogether a new thing, and to characterize this dullness of his as pure and unmixed *Old Aunt-Nancyism*. Now it will not do for him while depicting the lash to appeal as he did in his reply of October 20th to "the editorial courtesy of other days." It may indeed be true that an honest indignation may at times hurry us too far, but political rancor and literary quack as he is, he at least shall not be our arbiter *legantium*. Neither will it serve the purpose of Gen. Barringer in explanation of such heinous sins, both political and literary, to attempt to call in, as he does to-day as his compurgators, the good people of Mecklenburg and Cabarrus. For we can tell him that we have a far higher respect for them than he has, and know them too well not to know in what estimation he is held by all of them whose good opinion is worth having. We of course speak of his political and not of his personal character, which latter we do not impugn. Still less can we allow him to plead his works of supererogation by pointing as he does to his services in behalf of a cause for which we both fought and which we, at least, have never deserted. For as Brigadier General of Confederate cavalry he did his duty, and he did no more. Still in this matter we are disposed to indulge him a little and could well pardon even greater self-flattery than that in which he plumes himself, since this, indeed, is the only part of his career for which he need not feel ashamed. And even now as we think upon the bivouac, the march and the battle-field we are weak enough to confess that a touch of fellow-feeling comes over us for "Old Aunt Nancy" again, and we are half disposed to forget the Radical that is in the Cavalier that has been. But then, again, when we think of what he was and is, and might have been, we can only exclaim, "how art thou fallen, O Lucifer son of the morning." Surely he can pardon us if, while thinking of him, we now recall the words in which his own favorite poet Milton describes another Apostate:
So call him now. His former name is heard no more in Heaven.
Gen. Barringer attempts to evade the issue between us by going off into the merit of the political writings of John Milton, upon whom he bestows much unmeaning praise. He affects a fondness for the literature of the Cromwellian era; but of any acquaintance with it he has yet given us no proof. But were it far more intimate than we have every reason to think it is still we should not yield to him in our admiration of it. For it boasts at least one other name which we are disposed to rank, if lower, only a little lower than the name of John Milton, and that is the name of John Bunyan. Such, too, is the estimate of Macaulay. What says Gen. Barringer then to a quotation from John Bunyan? We will give him of which is germane to the matter in hand and which we believe our readers will think singularly apposite, and with which we will for the present take leave of this controversy. It is taken from the Pilgrim's Progress, and in order to put it in the power of Gen. Barringer to verify our quotation we will mention that it is to be found in the Second Part page 280 of our edition. The Pilgrim in thus speaking of the many human absurdities that he had witnessed and as the one most absurd of all, he tells us of "the attempt of two men—the name of one was Mr. Fool, and of the other Mr. Want—of washing an Ethiopian with intent to make him white. And the more they washed him the blacker he grew. The blacker he grew the more they washed him the whiter he grew. Therefore that in attempting thus to whiten the negro that Gov. Chamberlain and Gen. Barringer have been but copying a very ancient precedent. We must observe that these two characters in his allegory are not distinguished with the usual felicity of Bunyan leaving it quite in the power of Gen. Barringer to personate either one of them or both at the same time. But were they more sharply drawn than they are, still we should fear that our readers would accuse us of rhetorical exaggeration were we to call Gov. Chamberlain either the Mr. Fool or the Mr. Want, and stand in the performance. As the case stands we only need another character just a little less stupid than Gen. Barringer to make the parallel complete.

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