

THE DAILY SENTINEL.

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We exert the aid of our friends in extending our circulation.

(From the N. C. Presbytery.)

Death of the Hon. Geo. E. Badger.

The most brilliant intellect of the country, for some three years past partially clouded by disease, has, in God's providence, been extinguished by death. The Hon. George Edmund Badger departed this life at his residence in Raleigh at mid-day of Friday last. He was born in Newbern on the 17th of April, 1795, and was consequently a little more than 71 years of age. In boyhood he was entered as a student at Yale College, but did not complete the course of studies there, for lack of pecuniary ability. This was no eventual disadvantage to him, as all understand who knew his vast and thorough acquirements in all departments of knowledge which he seemed to master almost by intuition. He was a rare instance of the man of letters, the jurist, the statesman, and the theologian, combined—in all an original and profound thinker, and a student for the love of knowledge. Coming to the Bar at a very early age, he at once took his place in the front rank of that profession, then more distinguished than now for great men, if not for Gaston, John Stanly, Edward Graham, Irredell, Moses Morehead, Duncan Cameron, Hodge, Ruffin, Archibald Henderson, Eccles, Joseph Wilson, and other eminent men. He was elected to the Legislature from the town of Newbern at 21, and Judge of the Superior Courts at 23. He held this latter position for only five years, but long enough to command a profound respect for the ingenuity of the Law, which he administered without fear, favor or affection. Many were the evidences of his impartial and upright judgments, perhaps the most conspicuous of which was the imposition of a heavy fine and imprisonment upon one of the wealthiest men in the State who had abused his office as a Magistrate to wrong a poor negro.

Retiring from the Bench in 1823, he resumed the practice of the Law, and remained at the head of the Profession till called by Gen. Harrison, in 1851, to a place in his Cabinet as Secretary of the Navy. On the death of Gen. Garrison, his successor, Mr. Tyler, having repudiated the principles of the great Whig party which had elected him, Mr. Badger, with all his associates in the Cabinet except Mr. Webster, resigned his office in September, 1841. In 1840 he was elected to the United States Senate, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of Mr. Haywood, and in 1842 he was again elected and for a full term of six years, at the expiration of which, the Democratic party having gotten into power in the State, he was succeeded by the Hon. As Biggs. And this was the last political position which Mr. Badger filled, except as a member of the State Convention which, in May 1861, passed the Ordinance of Secession. In this Convention, which he entered to aid the cause of Revolution, rendered necessary by Lincoln's Proclamation of war upon the South, he endeavored to prevent a recognition of the doctrine of secession, which he had always denied; but being overruled by the majority, he united with everybody of that period in the step which was taken. And he remained faithful to his pledge to the Confederacy.

The Senate of the United States was the principal theatre of Mr. Badger's fame. It might not have been so, however, if his great forensic efforts had been delivered in large cities instead of obscure County Court Houses in North Carolina. Among hundreds of these, his arguments in a murder case in Granville, a slater case in Wake, and another murder case in Bladen, (removed from Cumberland,) will never be forgotten by those who heard them. But no record of any of these exists, nor of his brilliant and political speeches in different parts of the State and in the Whig State Conventions, (with a single exception it is believed.) It is said to think that with his contemporary generation will die even the memory of those grand displays of his genius, and eloquence, and erudition, in all of which one prime object was ever foremost in his view, viz.: to illustrate and enforce those sacred principles of Justice, of Humanity, and of Religion, which his whole life illustrated and enforced—for what he professed he remained faithful to his pledge to the Confederacy.

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But his Senatorial speeches are preserved in the records of the country. They are purely and rigidly statesmanlike and logical. The dignity of the place appears to have impressed him with a feeling that it would be improper to decorate them with the flowers of rhetoric of which he had so exhaustively a store ever at command. He stood there as a Statesman, not as an orator; as a logician, not as a rhetorician. And he came to be universally regarded in Washington as the most profound logician in that then great body, where such men as Clay, Webster, Calhoun, Pearce, Clayton, Moggan, Bell, Corwin, Douglass, Beverly, Johnson, Davis, Bowditch, Case, Berrien, Buchanan and Beaton, sat by his side. To have this admitted of any man born and raised in and representing North Carolina, (to whose merit it is so seldom that justice is accorded,) is sufficient evidence of its unquestionable truth. Perhaps one of the most remarkable instances of his influence, and of the consciousness of his arguments, was furnished by his speech on the bill to create the office of Lieutenant-General, for the purpose of putting Col. Benton at the head of the armies in Mexico, to supersede Generals Scott and Taylor—a measure which President Polk and Col. Benton and the Democratic party generally had docketed at heart. In the history of Congress for the last fifty years there is not probably another instance in which, in high party, a Presidential recommendation of great importance has been decided upon a single speech. Yet when Mr. Badger closed his calm and unimpassioned argument against the bill, no one ventured to advocate it, and there was nothing further needed to be said against it. The vote was taken and the bill rejected.

There was a still stronger evidence of his influence in the Senate. The purity and integrity of his life,—his courtesy, frankness, directness and unselfishness, ever doing what was right, regardless of consequences to himself,—won upon his associates in the Senate, so filled them with respect and admiration, that they did in regard to him what was never done before or since, passed unanimously a resolution of regret on learning that the Legislature of North Carolina had failed to continue him in its service, and that he was no longer to be associated with them in the duty of conducting a powerful nation upon its career of greatness and prosperity. Members of all parties, who could agree upon nothing else, with many of whom he had differed radically upon public questions, all agreed that they and the country

DAILY SENTINEL.

"I WOULD RATHER BE RIGHT THAN BE PRESIDENT."—Henry Clay.

VOL. I.

RALEIGH, TUESDAY, MAY 22, 1866.

NO. 241.

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