

THE KINSTON FREE PRESS

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1916

The Free Press joins with the other papers in the state in expressing sympathy for its esteemed contemporary, the Charlotte Observer, which suffered damage by fire Saturday morning. The fact that the plant was not entirely destroyed and because plans, which had already been inaugurated for removal to another building, were well under way, the discomfort of our contemporary is not so serious as it might have been, and The Free Press is glad that the accounts indicate that the rehabilitation will be quickly consummated. In the meantime the Observer is printing from its afternoon contemporary plant, and with the usual spirit of courage manifested by papers, which suffer fire loss, did not miss an issue.

Editor Johnson of Charity and Children, who by the way, missed the profitable meetings of the State Press Association at Chapel Hill a week or two ago, has been ironically calling attention to the fact that the Newspaper Institute failed to settle the high cost of print paper. In this connection his attention is directed to the fact that Brother Varner has made in Washington as representative of the North Carolina press. He has carried the fight directly to the Department of Justice and has been able to make such a showing as to command the attention of the Attorney General and an independent investigation has been started. Brother Varner gathered much of his data and inspiration for the drive against the paper trust at the Chapel Hill meeting.

A QUART A MINUTE.

The Free Press is glad to learn that the Anti-Saloon League of North Carolina plans to present, for the consideration of the General Assembly, laws which will be shorn of evasive possibilities and which, if enacted, will in reality give to North Carolina the title of a dry state. The present situation is disgraceful. Gallon upon gallon of the vile stuff is being poured into Kinston now in anticipation of a falsely conceived Christmas celebration. About six hundred packages, The Free Press learns, were distributed from the local express office Saturday. One a minute for the office hours maintained by the company. The city authorities would do well to station one of the police officers at the express office this week to gather evidence and see what portion of the shipment is going into the hands of the known blind tigers and people of bad character.

According to Superintendent Davis of the Anti-Saloon League, the laws, which are contemplated for the forthcoming Legislature, will positively limit the amount of liquor permissible and the for-personal-use racket, which has been so badly overworked under the quart law, will be blocked.

Unquestionably new laws and more drastic ones, from which the loopholes have been taken, are needed, but there is in Kinston an opportunity for law enforcement under the present statutes. This, the week before Christmas, gives perhaps the best opportunity in all the year for a demonstration of law enforcement. Let every good citizen in Kinston co-operate to that end.

And it begins to look very much like we are going to have a dry Capital. Quite appropriate, too, that the government of a nation, the majority of which has already outlawed "John Barleycorn," should exile him also.

THE LITTLE THINGS IN LIFE.

It is the little things in life that count most. It takes the nickels to make the dollars and because the majority of mankind don't appreciate the necessity of conserving the supply of nickels the quantity of dollars available to the average man is limited. The man who takes advantage of the opportunities for small service is after all the one, who qualifies for doing the larger work, which is certain to present itself sooner or later. Many a man has failed to make his life count for very much because he has overlooked the opportunities at hand in his vain effort to discover a task which he feels was large enough for his abilities, which unfortunately may have been exaggerated in his own estimation. The little kindly leeds of life make living worth while, weld the ties of friendship more closely, and remove the sting of love's sacrifice. The little things in life count most because it is with them that the large majority of mankind deals. The opportunity to handle the large problems and participate in the large benefits is given to but very few.

As the Christmas season approaches, the opportunity for utilizing the little things in carrying gladness to the hearts of friends, loved ones and those, who are without friends and without the where-withal to provide for themselves, are manifold. In the words of the poet, it is not so much the gift as the giver and the spirit that prompts.

DR. McNAIRY ENDORSED.

The endorsement of the capable administration of Dr. B. McNairy, Superintendent of the Caswell Training School, by the board of directors as evidenced in their action at their annual meeting on Thursday in re-electing him and approving with slight alterations his recommendations for the enlargement of the school, is very gratifying to The Free Press. There is no question that Dr. McNairy has made good. Not only is he a good farmer, evidenced by the model farm which he is whipping into shape, but his direction of the training department of the school, the success of which is so manifest by the exhibits of the class rooms and an inspection of his charges has been most admirable.

The Free Press congratulates the Caswell School or retaining the services of Dr. McNairy and his good helpmeet, and congratulates him for the splendid work that the institution is doing under his management.

WORK SENTENCES ESSENTIAL.

The magistrate, who places a man, caught with a large quantity of liquor in his possession manifestly for illicit purposes and carrying concealed weapons, under a \$100 bond, fails to have a proper conception of the offense and he menace to society. Such characters are. We don't believe the fixing of normal bonds and the imposing of fines in lieu of work sentences, after conviction, is conducive to upholding the laws. There are offenses against the law, committed on the spur of the moment without previous plan or plot, which we believe entitle the offender to some consideration, but the "blind tiger," that despicable, scheming, conniving, lawbreaker, should not, we believe, even on first offense, be permitted to pay a fine which by the continuance of his legal business, he can recover in short order, but should be given a work sentence for each and every offense of which he stands convicted.

As a matter of fact, The Free Press advocates the changing of the law now giving to the court the option of a fine or work sentence with reference to the enforcement of the anti-liquor laws, so that it will be mandatory upon the tribunal to impose a work sentence. When the booze-peddlers, who move about in sheep's clothing, when a reality within they are ravaging wolves, understand that upon detection and conviction they face a work sentence with no alternative of a fine, some at least will have care before embarking in the business. Let's have respect for the law created by its enforcement instead of its building up of a license system through fines.

It seems that President Wilson has decided to forward the central power's peace proposals without comment. So, well and good, for we have confidence in his judgment to do what is right and best in the matter, but we venture the hope that he has found it possible for instituting a good follow-up system and that he will be able to lend the influence of this country very forcefully or peace through this apparent opportunity.

The Christmas season is at hand. Let us remember the teaching of the Master: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

THE NEWSPAPER'S OBLIGATION.

The newspaper is the mouthpiece of the community, which it serves, and if it fails to represent the whole people—the good people—it falls short of its mission. The newspaper, which opens its columns only to those things which are in line with its own ideas is abusing the great power that is vested in it.

One of the most interesting discussions at the recent newspaper institute was devoted to this subject. One of the papers, read, suggested that this was the era of independent journalism. Some took the position that a newspaper could not be independent and unbiased and be true to itself. Some went so far as to say that advertising columns of the newspapers should be closed to those, who were opposing the views and the policies of the paper. For instance, it was suggested that a Democratic paper should not accept any campaign advertising matter from a Republican or vice versa. Others took the view, which we believe to be the correct one—that the newspaper had no moral right to deny those, who were opposed to its policies, space in its columns to present their arguments so long as the copy, which they furnished conformed to the requirements as prescribed by the policy of the paper and was not libelous.

The newspaper has space for sale, besides being the mouthpiece, the great moulder of public sentiment, and the great agency for democracy in the dissemination of knowledge, it is a business proposition. Its stock in trade is space. The newspaper owes it to its clientele, its readers, who have confidence in it and who are guided by what appears in its columns, to employ certain safeguards and so far as is within its power to keep from its columns objectionable matter of all kinds. Fraudulent advertising, indecent suggestions and all that has a tendency to lower or impose upon the public should be barred. But the newspaper has no right to deny the use of its advertising columns to those, who oppose its views, simply because they do oppose when their copy meets the specifications. The Free Press would consider itself cowardly if it feared to give its opponents such opportunity to present their arguments. There are, of course, instances where copy is submitted for publication in which there are veiled threats, libelous and offensive suggestions which in the judgment of the editor must be withheld.

The conduct of the newspaper calls for good judgment. The newspaper, to serve its community as it should, must be fearless and independent to the point of being honest and fair with all of its reputable citizens whether or not their political, religious or other views conform with the individual or personal views of the editor or publisher. The Free Press believes that the dawn of independent journalism is at hand.

DAREDEVIL VILLA.

Bandit Villa is a man out of the ordinary. As a news to the unexpected. It is the daring and unlooked for producer he is great. Villa can always be counted on to that the outlaw chief perpetrates. No better evidence of his daredevilry has been given than his latest reported message to the United States Government in which he seeks by compromise to gain recognition. He understands that the entire regular army has been on the border and that this has been augmented by a hundred thousand or more militiamen, drafted into regular service, awaiting the opportunity to seize him and bring him to answer for a long reign of terror, murder and pillage against not only his fellow countrymen, but Americans, culminating, as it did, in the dastardly raid on Columbus last spring. Mr. Villa now proposes to be free again. He offers protection to Americans and other foreigners in exchange for amnesty and recognition, and a free rein, so far as this country is concerned, to go after Carranza.

Uncle Sam will probably not signify this latest proposal with so much as passing notice but regardless of that, it serves to demonstrate that in Villa he is dealing with a most unusual character.

The Free Press hopes that the full reports coming from Fort Bliss in regard to the shooting of Lieutenant Barbour by Lieutenant Faulkner, of the Kinston company will show beyond the question of a doubt that the shooting was accidental. The information that The Free Press' correspondent on the border has been able to get pending the official investigation seems to bear out the accidental theory; while other reports carried by other papers have charged that the shooting was premeditated. The Free Press hopes that no Kinston soldier will be known to have maliciously attempted the life of a fellow guardsman.

NOT DEAD, BUT RESTING.

The question, "what has become of the whole-time health officer, the anti-fly crusade, etc.?" has been put to The Free Press on several occasions recently. The answer has been that these righteous matters are not dead but resting.

Paul's injunction to the Galatians: "Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not," is a text that has given us a great deal of comfort and consolation in the effort to arouse the public conscience to the necessity of safeguarding its health through the creation of adequate machinery for so doing. It is true that there has been little evidence of interest or co-operation on the part of those who should assist in a fight for the institution of necessary health measures. This is due perhaps largely to the fact that those, who have the intelligence and the information to appreciate the matter, have failed to take into account that Kinston is no longer in the village stage and that precautionary measures, necessary in city life, are requisite to Kinston's safety now. Kinston is growing. Her population has perhaps increased upward of two thousand within the past twelve months, but still Kinston has taken no steps whatsoever to throw around its people those safeguards, which they are entitled to. As a matter of fact, there are rural communities in some sections of our fair country which have given more attention to conservation of health than have we in Kinston.

Kinston needs a meat and milk inspector. Some of the barbecue stands and meat markets, which are tolerated in Kinston and permitted to serve food for human consumption, are positively nauseous with their filth and unsanitary environment. Of course, this does not apply to all the markets in town. If such were the case we would eat no meat. And there are none, which will not bear inspection. Some of these days we will know better, and we will have a health department with proper provision for food inspection and controlling infectious and contagious diseases.

WE STILL ROPE FOR A SQUARE DEAL.

Not being learned in the law, we do not know what effect the decision of the Supreme Court will have on the Britt-Weaver controversy. Of course, it is generally known that the final decision regarding a seat in the House of Representatives is for the House itself to render, but it is to be hoped that the State's Supreme Court can clarify and give to whoever goes to Washington as the representative of the Tenth, credentials which will stand the test of the House.

The Free Press has already gone on record in this matter as favoring a square deal. It favors such in all cases and it believes that the honor of the State and the Tenth district demands that the man, who actually received the highest number of votes on November 7th should have the honor of representing the Tenth district. Very naturally we hope that when the mists have cleared away and the situation has been thoroughly clarified that Mr. Weaver can show clear title, because he represents the principles of government, which we advocate. We don't want Mr. Weaver to go to Congress by the juggling of technicalities route, and we believe we echo the sentiment of the best people of the State in taking such a position.

The second thought of the Allies, as is generally the case with mature deliberation, seems to be saner with respect to the attitude to be assumed towards the peace proposals of their enemies than were the foundations for the first expressions. The indication that the proposals of Germany and her confederates will not be turned down without examination and some consideration is indeed more encouraging than was the report that a flat refusal would be given.

Americans generally will take little pride in the fact that their fellow-countrymen have been detected in violating the neutrality laws by aiding and abetting Mexican revolutionists and the activity of the Department of Justice in bringing such culprits to law will unquestionably be approved by the large majority of the people of this country. The fellow, who sells his honor and jeopardizes his nation's interests for paltry mercenary gain, deserves no consideration but the limit of the law.

Sam Gompers et al are launching a movement to have the President's salary increased. Mr. Wilson will no doubt appreciate the injunction, "casting bread upon the waters."

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