

# The Lenoir Topic.

VOLUME XVIII.

LENOIR, N. C., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 1893.

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## OUR

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Wallace Bros.

Statesville, N. C., Jan. 5, '93.

## LATITUDE, LONGITUDE AND ALMANACS

### CANTON, CHINA.

To the Editor of The Lenoir Topic:

The latest home papers as yet received bear date of Dec. 15, 1892, and from them I see that the almanacs announced another year in America. We have had no such official announcement, no almanacs having as yet come to hand; but the year came without official sanction, and nearly a month of it is already gone. The Chinese, however, are not so fortunate; they have not yet begun a new year; but it has been announced to begin Feb. 17, and as the Chinese have had a habit of beginning a year about that time for several thousand years, and as they are great people for continuing in the same old ways, there is strong reason to expect, about the time mentioned, a great explosion of fire-crackers to announce the arrival of the New Year.

Last year I had the N. C. Baptist Almanac, and Dr. Jaynes' Medical Almanac, the latter presented to me by a Chinese drug store. It need hardly be stated that on matters of Baptist doctrine and Baptist history the said Baptist Almanac was a standard authority in our family, just as if we lived in Raleigh; for these things are not affected by Latitude and Longitude. But when it came to questions of eclipses, phases of the moon, rising and setting of the sun, its authority was at a decided discount, and the Medical Almanac, containing calculations for India instead of America, was much more nearly correct.

Are the astronomers going to allow us any eclipses this year? I have not heard, but I suppose they can scarcely refuse us two or three. But for the sake of illustration, we will suppose that they will allow one to happen. Suppose an eclipse of the sun, lasting two or three hours, should be seen by you on Monday afternoon just before sundown. Now in all the world where the sun can be seen, that eclipse will be seen at practically the same moment of absolute time. Accordingly soon after the eclipsed sun sets for you, it will rise eclipsed for us; but it will be Tuesday morning.

Again, suppose the February new moon, which fixes the beginning of the Chinese new year, occurs in our time a little before midday on the 17th. At about the same moment your new moon will occur, but you will mark the time as a little before midnight of the 18th.

These phenomena occur, all the world over, at practically the same moment of absolute time; but differences of Longitude, as explained in a former article, cause these times to be variously marked. Accordingly, calculations made for the Longitude of Raleigh would be nearly twelve hours different from the time of these events in our Longitude. India is a few degrees west of us, and the edition of the Medical Almanac made for that country would not be so far wrong for us.

But the rising and setting of the sun do not occur at all places at the same absolute time. When the days are 12 hours long, the sun rises a 6 and sets at 6. This means that it rises 6 hours before it reaches the meridian of any place, and sets 6 hours after it reaches the meridian. This happens two days in the year, called the equinoxes, one in March, the other in September. The sun is then on the equator, and any almanac is correct the world over. But take the time of short days and long nights. The N. C. Almanac will tell of a day when the sun rises at 7 and sets at 5, and the days are only 10 hours long. But it happens that this day, which is 10 hours long in N. C., is nearly 11 hours long in Canton, and the sun rises at half past 6 and sets at half past 5. In summer when your days are 14 hours long, the sun rises at 5 and sets at 7. But our days are about an hour shorter, and the sun rises at half past 5 and sets at half past 6. So the N. C. Almanac is correct for us only two days in the year.

This difference is due to a difference in Latitude. The Latitude of Raleigh and of Lenoir is about 36 degrees North. For all places on this parallel, the calculations of sunrise and sunset for Raleigh are correct. But the Latitude of Canton is about 23 degrees North; we are just below the Tropic of Cancer, and hence our long days are not so long nor our short days so short as in N. C. At all places on the equator the sun always rises at 6 and sets at 6, and the days are always equal to the nights. But as you go north or south from the equator the difference becomes greater and greater. New York has longer days in June than in New Orleans, and so there are more sunstrokes in the former city than in the latter. Shanghai has longer days than Canton, and so for a little while they have hotter days, but their hot weather does not last so long.

The explanation of these differences is exceedingly difficult to make on paper. If I had a good school globe and a geography class before me, I think I could soon make it clear. But I'll try on paper:

My honored teacher, Rev. G. D. Sherrill, used to say that some people do not seem to know that the pole-books are as long when standing straight up as when lying around

the side of the pot; and so they make the road straight over the top of the hill, when it would be quite as near and much easier to go around the hill. [I am glad the road makers of Caldwell have learned better, and I have been very anxious for them to apply this knowledge to the hill on the Ridge Road from Lenoir to Wilkesboro, near the county line, where you go down into the valley of Beaver Creek. When this little piece was cut off from Wilkes and added to Caldwell, I felt sure this bad hill would be mended. But a little while ago it was not, and if it had been done before now, I know THE TOPIC, "which prints the news," would have sent me word.] Sometimes the road around the hill is shorter than that over the top. The curvature of the earth is somewhat like a hill. At the equator the sun must climb over the top of the hill every time, and it takes till 6 o'clock to get there. But in the summer, as he goes farther north, he manages to go around on the north side of the hill, and gets in sight of the top of Hibrite some fine morning in June by 5 o'clock. But when he goes south in the winter, he must come over the top of the hill to the equator, and then over another hill to catch a peep at Davenport College, so it takes him till 7.

When we crossed the Pacific Ocean from San Francisco to Yokohama, I was surprised to see that we did not go directly west along the parallel of Latitude, but went northward, perhaps about the 50th degree, and it was explained that this course was nearer.

The sun always shines upon half the world at a time, and only half. This half has day and the other half has night. As fast as one part turns into the light, another turns into the shadow. Take any ball or apple, and mark on it the equator and the Parallels of Latitude, as represented in the geographicals. Then hold it a few feet from a lighted lamp, and you will understand this better. You will see that half the equator is always in the light and half in the shadow, unless you turn one of the poles toward the sun. So the days and nights are always equal. But when you hold the ball so that the light is directly over the Tropic of Cancer, more than half of it is in the light, the 38th parallel has a still larger part in the light, and the Arctic Circle is all in the light. Accordingly the farther north we go the longer are the summer days, until when we reach the Frigid Zone, for a night or two the sun does not set, and at the North Pole there is six months of daylight. When the sun goes south this is reversed, and the nights are longer and longer.

But the hour is out, and the Geography Class will take the lesson about "Climate." The class is dismissed! G. W. GREENE

## A Story of Secretary Carlisle.

Mrs. McClurk in Kate Field's Washington.

Mr. Carlisle is a masterly pleader before any bar. Kentucky judges look upon his appearance before them as a star attraction instead of a part of a wearisome routine of duty, and Kentucky literature has been enriched by many stories of the Senator's legal career. On one occasion Mr. Carlisle had an important case that the other side was sure of winning. Mr. Carlisle labored faithfully on his arguments and produced a speech that thrilled all auditors and deeply impressed the bench. The moment he had concluded the judge ordered court adjourned till afternoon.

The opposing counsel objected strenuously, pleading that it was nowhere near the dinner hour and that he was ready and anxious to proceed. But the judge was not to be moved.

"What," said he, "spoil the taste of such an argument as that? Never, sir. I mean to enjoy a good thing when I have the chance to. The court will adjourn."

## The Pension List is Too Large.

New York Herald.

The Pennsylvania State Encampment of the Grand Army recently adopted a very important resolution. If it truly represents the veterans the pension list will be very materially decreased in the near future by the elimination of bogus applicants.

General St. Clair A. Mulholland put his motion in these words after referring to the generosity of the government in providing for disabled soldiers:

It becomes the sacred duty of every member of the Grand Army of the Republic to use his best efforts to make the pension roll a true "roll of honor," and to see that the name of no person appears on that roll unless that of a worthy recipient of the bounty of a grateful and most generous people.

## HOW "TEXAS ABE" CAME TO LIFE

The Thrilling Action of the Drama of a Ranch.

Philadelphia Times.

Austin and I were sitting up with the corpse. Abe had been a stiff since 8 o'clock, and it was then six hours later. We were cattlemen—cowboys they would call us east—living in a ranch on the Pecos in Texas. Abe was lying on a buffalo robe over against the wall, where he died; he had been grunting around for several days complaining of his old wound. He was taking a drink when I went out in the afternoon to salt some deer—when I came back he was dead. Austin and I straightened him out and threw a saddle blanket over him. We closed his eyes, but left his head out; it seemed more natural like.

Austin was sitting facing the corpse, I had my back that way. We were playing freeze-out poker for yearling heifers. All of a sudden there was a noise over by the corpse that made us both start. It sounded like two knocks on the floor. We dropped our cards and went over. Everything was all right. I said it must have been a prairie dog, or gopher; we had no cats or rats around there. Austin was horribly scared; he swallowed a larger drink of whiskey than usual. We went back to our game, and presently we heard the rap again, this time louder. We up again, and went over. All was quiet as a quiet mining camp. Austin was shaking all over, and he says: "D—d if I take any stock in spirits under the jug!" Then he took another drink and banged out of the ranch. When he came in he says: "We'll have a nother tomorrow."

We didn't play any more; we sat there talking about whether we'd better start Jose (our cook) out on the range to round up the boys for the planting. Presently Austin says: "Did Abe ever say anything to you about being married?" "No, he didn't," says I; "if he's married some one ought to get word to his woman." Then we kept still a spell. Then says I to Austin: "Was Abe married?" "I know nothing about it," he says, and then he went off his box onto the floor as if a broncho had kicked him. I jumped up to help him, and as I did so I saw Abe (the corpse) sitting up on that buffalo skin looking powerful mad. His lip was curled up like he was trying to hiss something, and his arm was stretched out, and one long bony finger was pointing at Austin, who lay knocked out on the floor.

I don't want any encores to that sock. I was so scared I couldn't smoke. I bent over and shook Austin, but he seemed like dead. As I went for the jug to get something to help him, I saw Abe was lying just as we had fixed him and the blanket looked as if it had not been disturbed. I took about five fingers myself, then poured some into Austin. The first thing he did when he came to was to look at his shooter, then he walked over to the corpse and peered to be examining the blanket. Then he says: "That's the second of those d—d strokes I've had; I guess the next will fetch me." I didn't tell him what I'd seen and I didn't ask him what he'd seen. It don't always pay to ask questions. Austin drank right along—a drink between drinks—and an hour later he fell over on the floor. I threw a robe over him.

I didn't feel any too good sitting there alone after what I'd seen, and I took more than I should have myself. I don't remember much about going to bed. The first thing I knew was Austin shaking me and saying, "Bill, where the devil's Abe got to?" I got up and looked around. There was the buffalo skin, but no Abe, and his Winchester was missing. We called in Jose; he'd seen nothing out of the way. We both felt far from comfortable and decided to ride up to the next ranch and tell the boys there. When we caught up our ponies there was Abe's sweat as big as life. We didn't come back to the ranch for a week. Then we were so played out and sick nothing could have scared us, but both of us kept wondering where Abe had got.

Two years afterward Austin and I rode into Cheyenne from the Crazy Woman's Fork, where we were then living. We went into Talbot's saloon; the barroom was separated from the theater part by a plain board partition. We sat down at a table in the barroom and called for liquor. There was a long haired, heavily-whiskered man, who looked like a bull-whacker, stretched out on a bench. He looked as if he were sleeping. We'd taken several drinks and I got to thinking of old times and somehow of Abe. "Do you ever think of Abe now?" I says. "Indeed I do, often," says Austin; "I'll never rest till I know what became of him."

Just as he said this the bull-whacker rose up and says: "Mr. Williams, or Austin, if you prefer it, you may rest from this date. I am Abe!" Austin reached for his gun, but Abe caught his arm and said, quiet like: "Hold on a minute; if you want any shooting later I'll give you a show." Then he turned to me and said: "Years ago, back in the States, Williams here

and I loved the same girl. Her parents did not approve of either of us. She made me think she loved me, and she led Austin to believe he was the favorite. She finally consented to a secret marriage with me, and we slipped away, saying nothing. Somehow the report got back to her home that I had taken her off under promise of marriage, and had then deserted her. Austin never recognized me up to the day of my supposed death, but I knew him the first time he showed up at our ranch on the Pecos. After you went out that afternoon I felt very sick, and really thought I was dying, so I turned to Austin and said: 'Williams, I'm John Walker.' Quick as a cat he was on me. I couldn't get my gun, and he had me by the throat, so I couldn't speak. He choked me, as he supposed, to death. The next thing I remember was hearing you two talking about me as if I were dead. I really felt not far from it. When Austin, in answer to your question, said he knew nothing about me, it made me mad, and I rose up to tell him he lied. The sight of me knocked him senseless. I knew then that I was supposed to be a corpse. When you both had turned in drunk I crawled to the jug and took enough to strengthen me. Then I slipped out, mounted the first cow pony I found, and rode away. I did not feel like fighting Austin—in fact, he would not have touched me had he waited to hear me—and I thought my disappearance would worry him some."

Again Austin reached for his revolver. "Wait," said Abe, "until I finish. I married the girl and treated her as white as a woman ever was treated, but five months afterward she ran away with a blooming drummer. I hear the music tuning up. Come inside. I have something to show Austin there."

Abe purchased the tickets and we entered the partially-flicked room which was doing duty as a theater. A rude stage was constructed at the end of the room and a few men seated on boxes before it were grinding out their cracked and discordant instruments an air that recalled "Rise Up, William Riley." Presently the large canvas wagon sheet that served as a drop curtain was raised and a gaudily and scantily dressed and roughly-painted woman marched to the center of the stage and burst forth in a song that would not have been tolerated east of the Platte.

Austin's eyes were riveted upon her. At first surprise was seen in his face, then nausea. Abe was watching him; presently the latter said: "If you envy me now, Mr. Williams, I will go outside and you may shoot me." But Austin extended his hand to Abe and we left the building together.

## When To Marry.

Atlanta Constitution.

A German statistician has been bothering himself about the question as to when people should marry. In the first place, he holds that the mother in her teens is an abolition. No woman should marry until she has crossed her twentieth year. Children born of mothers under twenty die in trouble the proportion of those whose mothers are above that age.

This spectacle professor also raises the limit of age on men. The father who has not raised his first mistake should be confined in an asylum for imbeciles. By law, men should be prevented from marrying until they have reached the age of twenty-five. The best results in children are seen among fathers whose ages range from thirty to forty.

Women under thirty years of age should not marry men who have passed fifty. The professor quaintly adds that "it is not wise for women over thirty-five years of age to become the brides of men under thirty."

But what is the use of all this? Not only is love blind, but the lover as well, and when the notion seizes the heart, there is nothing that can prevent the marriage from taking place.

## Pat's Joke on His Neighbors.

An Irishman took a contract to dig a well. When he had dug about twenty five feet down, he came one morning and found it had fallen in—filled nearly to the top. Pat looked cautiously around and saw that no one was near, then took off his hat and coat, and hung them on a windlass, crawled into some bushes and awaited events. In a short time the neighbors discovered that the well had fallen in, and seeing Pat's hat and coat on the windlass, they supposed that he was at the bottom of the excavation. Only a few hours of briar digging cleared the loose earth from the well. Just as the excavators had reached the bottom, and were wondering where the body was, Pat came out of the bushes and good-naturedly thanked the diggers for relieving him of a sorry job. Some of the tired diggers were disgusted, but the joke was too good to allow of anything more than a laugh, which followed soon.

A woman is never afraid of a brave man.

## WHEN WOLVES ARE SILENT.

Bits of Talk Before a Menagerie Cage.

An old man stood in front of the cage of wolves for a long time and then said to the keeper who was trying to sell him a catalogue, "That wolf in the corner has a familiar air about him. He reminds me strongly of the only wolf I ever had a close acquaintance with. I was a boy about sixteen years-old, and Iowa was pretty wild then. I lived on my father's farm there, and we had a big hog which ran away from home every change he got. He was the meanest, stubbornest, most contrary critter you ever seen, and I hated him like poison. Many's the weary mile I had tramped after him, and many the sore back and tired arms I had got through driving and coaxing the brute home. One day he was particularly aggravating, and after I had tried to coax him with feed, etc., he bolted off into a wood where I could not see to follow him.

"I was about to give up the chase in disgust, when I heard him squealing terribly, as if some one was cutting his throat. Guided by the sound I soon found him fast in the teeth of what I at first took to be a big dog. I had a stout stick in my hand and I brought it down with all my force on the dog's backbone. He let go of the pig, without making a yelp of any kind at the blow, and looked at me. Then I saw that it was a wolf. I was terribly scared, but stood my ground. We each looked at the other a few minutes in silence, and the hog slunk around behind my heels for all the world like a dog.

"As the wolf did not attack me I backed away from him. So did the hog. The wolf came a step nearer. I continued to retreat; so did the hog, and the wolf walked near us with an air which seemed to say: 'If you don't attack me I won't attack you; but I just would like to meet that hog out alone.' As soon as I got over my fright at meeting the wolf, I could not help laughing at that hog. Usually so stubborn, not to say pig-headed, he now walked along on the other side of me from the wolf, like a spaniel. For a joke I tried to drive him off and he squealed with terror. I kicked him, but he would not leave me. Then I was mean enough to fall on him with my stick and take some satisfaction out of his thick hide for the many bad turns I owed him; but he seemed to like it. Nothing could make him budge from my side, and even after the wolf left us he continued to hold his place until the door of the sty was opened before him."

"What you said about the wolf's silence under your blow," remarked the keeper, "is characteristic of the species. They howl loudly enough at times, but when fighting they are dumb. One of Barnum & Bailey's wolves raised a litter of her pups in winter quarters at Bridgeport last year, and it was interesting to watch her train them. She began young, and would grip their tails and their ears slightly at first. If they cried out, she would bite them hard; if they were silent, she would lick and fondle and feed them. Finally she got them where they would stand lots of punishment without a whimper."

"What are you giving us?" asked the old man.

"I'm willing to believe it," said a reporter who had been listening. "You know what Macaulay says in his 'Prophecy of Caps' about the wolf:

"When all the pack loud baying, Her bloody lair surrounds, She lies in silence biting hard Amidst the dying bounds."

"I ain't much on poetry," replied the keeper, "but the man who wrote that knew something about wolves."

Living in the mountains of Western North Carolina, near the city of Asheville, and within a mile of where the walls of George Vanderbilt's ten-million dollar castle are growing skyward, lives a man who, if he had the opportunity, would become a poet laureate. He is ignorant, uneducated and very profane; but for all that he has an ardent eye for the beautiful in nature and is a pastoral poet of nature's own making. This man, or boy rather, for he is not more than twenty years, is a natural improviser of song, and, in the rude, uncouth language of the mountaineer, he will sometimes repeat verses by the hour, rolling them out as fluently and as charmingly as a whittier or a Burns. He can neither read nor write, and seems to be devoid of memory, as he can never repeat his verses a second time.

"Where are you going, my pretty maid?"

"I'm going out shopping, sir," she said.

"Can I go with you, my pretty maid?"

"You're not the shade of green I want," she said.

Primus—Motley says the thought of his honor prevented his using the funds of the bank.

Secundus—His honor? Yes, yes; I see—the judge on the bench.

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