# THE FRANKLIN COURIER.

GEO. S. BAKER, Editor and Proprietor. TERMS: $2.00 per Annum.

VOL. IV. LOUISBURG, N. C., FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1875. NO. 48.


### *Afloat.*

My oars keep time to half a rhyme,
That slips and slides away from me;
Across my mind, like idle wind,
A lost thought beateth lazily.

Adream, afloat, my little boat
And I alone steal out to sea;
One vanished year, O lost and dear!
You rowed the little boat for me.

Ah! who can sing of anything
With none to listen lovingly?
Or who can time the oars to rhyme
When left to row alone to sea?

—*Elizabeth Stuart Phelps.*

### ROBERT'S WIFE.

"I am real sorry about Uncle James!"

There was real sorrow in Robert Franklin's voice and eyes as he spoke, and the lady who listened drew her merry, saucy face into dolorous puckers to suit the occasion.

"Because, you see," contined Robert, "he fancies because you have twenty thousand dollars that you are a fine lady, affected and useless, not the wife for a poor farmer."

"We must show him his mistake," was the reply.

"But he will not see you. He positively forbids your coming over to the farm."

"Does—does he know we are married?"

"I have not dared to tell him. Cowardly, is it not? But he is my only relative, and I love him dearly. It is not because he owns the farm and can leave a little money, Daisy."

"Hush, love, I know," Daisy answered, putting a soft, white hand over her husband's lips.

"I have had no other father or mother, either, for that matter, in all my life," continued Robert, "and if the farm is dreary, it is home."

"And you do not like to be banished! Well, if you will keep your promise and send Jane over to see me, you shall not be. Now, talk of something else. Oh, how can I let you go for two long months!"

For Robert Franklin had undertaken to go in person to see about some Western lands in which his uncle had invested, and which threatened to involve him in loss. Daisy could not well take the long journey, and besides, Daisy had other schemes in her wise little head. Loving Robert well, she resolved to remove the only shadow from his life—the resolute opposition of his uncle to a fine lady wife.

Robert Franklin had been gone from the farm three days when his uncle James yielded most reluctantly to the pangs of his old enemy, chronic rhenmatism, and told Jane, his old servant, that he must remain in his room. The old woman answered promptly:

"If you are going to be laid up, Mr. Franklin, I must have some help. I'm getting old, too, sir, and trotting up and down stairs isn't so easy as it was twenty years ago!"

"But who will come, Jane? Girls are not plenty here, as you know."

"I've a niece, sir, would come to me, though she's never lived out."

"Send for her, then, and—oh—rub my leg, will you?"

Late in the afternoon, a little bustle below stairs told the invalid of the arrival of the niece.

She came with one trunk, in a wagon, from the railway station, and standing in the wide, dreary-looking kitchen, looked a picture of healthful beauty. Soft brown curls gathered in a rich knot left their crinkey ringlets on her forehead and caressing the round white throat; large brown eyes lighted a sweet fair face, and the neat dress of blue woolen covered a dainty form.

"Will you go up stairs Miss ——?" Jane hesitated.

"Margaret!" said the new comer; "don't call me your niece, Miss, whatever you do. My name is Margaret. Has Mr. Franklin had his supper?"

"Not yet. There's dinner, you see, scarcely tasted."

Margaret looked at her big tray, the blue plate with food heaped upon it, the two-pronged fork and half-soiled napkin and did not wonder at the neglected food.

"Show me where things are and I will get the supper," she said.

Jane led her from closet to closet. In one was a set of gilt-edged china, some fine table linen, table silver and glass.

"Those were bought thirty years ago," whispered Jane, "when Mr. Franklin expected to be married. She died and they have never been used."

With her pretty face saddened by the hidden tragedy of those few words, Margaret took a small tray from the shelf, and covering it with a snowy napkin, selected what she wanted from the closet, and went again to the kitchen.

James Franklin, weary with the effort to hold a book in his aching hands, was now sitting in a deep arm chair musing, when Margaret tapped at the door.

"Come in!"

But he started as she obeyed. Such a sweet, bright face was new in the dismal old farmhouse, strongly in contrast with the bare, meager room and desolate air surrounding her.

"I have brought your supper," she said, drawing a little table near the arm chair, and covering it with a white cloth. Then, going to the door, she entered again with a tray. Upon a white china dish was half a chicken, delicately browned, a potato roasted in the ashes, and a slice of buttered toast; and besides this, a delicate cupful of fragrant tea.

"You must not scold if I have anything wrong," said a clear, sweet voice, "because Aunt Jane is too busy to look after me. I cleaned the fork and spoon, for silver gets dreadfully black"—then more tenderly as she marked the painful effort to move the tortured fingers—"Let me cut the chicken, sir."

Grimly wondering, the old man suffered himself to be fed, finding appetite as the well-prepared food was eaten, and listening well pleased to the cherry voice so unfamiliar to his lonely life.

"Jane," Margaret said, sitting down the tray in the kitchen again, "I don't wonder he is sick. No carpet, no curtains, that great hearse of a bed, and nothing pretty near him."

"It's all clean," said Jane.

"Clean as wax, but oh! so doleful. Can't we fix up a cozy room?"

"There's rooms enough. Six on that floor," said Jane, "and none used but the one Mr. Franklin's in, and Mr. Robert's the little one next to it."

"Well, we'll see to-morrow. Can I have a man to send to town if I want anything?"

"There's men enough. Will you sleep down here to-night, or in one of the rooms up stairs?"

"Down here, in the room next to yours."

"It's all ready. I'll go up now and make Mr. Franklin comfortable for the night."

"Comfortable!" Margaret said, shivering.

But the next morning, after putting a tempting breakfast before the invalid. Margaret selected the vacant bedroom she meant to beautify for his use. It was large, with four windows, light and cheerful, and well suited to her purpose, In the intervals of direction, Jane sending the man to town with her orders, and giving her own dainty touch to everything, Margaret visited the invalid, reading to him, chatting with him, and making the long hours fly by. It was late in the afternoon when she came in to say:

"Mr. Franklin, the room across the hall has a southern exposure, and I think you will find it more comfortable than this one. Will you try and get there if Aunt Jane and I help you?"

"I'm very well here."

"But you will be better there. Please come."

So he yielded, but once fairly in the room, could not repress a cry of amazement. Softly carpeted, white curtained, a bright fire crackling in the stove, a dainty supper spread upon the table, the room was cozy and cheery enough to coax a smile from the grimmest lips. Yet when James Franklin sank into the bright chintz-covered easy-chair and looked around him, everything seemed strangely familiar. That was the parlor carpet, taken from the never opened room below; those were the parlor curtains freshly ironed and starched, and held back with knots of broad pink ribbon. The bed, bureau, wardrobe, chairs, all were his own, polished till they shown again. The snowy bed linen, the white counterpane, the bureau covers with their knotted fringes were all his sister's work, stored away in chests since she died, long, long years ago. Even the chintz on the chair was part of some old curtains she had stuffed away in a long-forgotten corner or a closet.

"It is very comfortable, and you are a good thoughtful girl," he said, looking around with a keen appreciation of the added comfort. "I wonder we never thought of using these things."

"Now let me read the rest of our book to you. I have some new periodicals in my trunk if you will look at them."

The days flew by, cold weather strengthening, till Robert wrote he was coming home one chill January day. Margaret had been busy for a fortnight before in the lower part of the house, but Mr. Franklin asked no questions. He had been very ill, but was recovering, so that he hoped to welcome Robert in the sitting-room. How he shrank from returning to its dreariness and sending Margaret away, he told no one till he held his nephew's hand fast clasped in his own.

"I can never tell you, Robert," he said, then, "what Margaret has been to me. No daughter could have tended me more patiently and faithfully, and when I could listen, she read to me and talked as pleasantly as if I were a companion to her, instead of a grumpy old bachelor past sixty."

"I am glad you have been well cared for," Robert said, turning his head to hide a merry twinkle in his eyes; "you look very fine here."

But when he carefully led the old man to the sitting-room, both stood amazed. Was the handsomely carpeted, cheerfully furnished room the dreary old place in which they had been so well contented? While they wondered, a new sound greeted them—the tones of a piano touched by skillful fingers, and a voice sweet and clear singing a song of praise.

Throwing open a door to disclose a beautifully furnished parlor, Robert saw also a little figure on the piano stool, clad in a shining black silk, with lace and pretty jewelry to adorn it.

"Margaret," Uncle James cried.

But Robert said softly:

"Margaret Franklin, Uncle James, Daisy, my wife?"

Then she came forward with shining eyes.

"I wanted to make you love me," she said, in a low, tender voice, "for Robert's sake."

"And for your own," he answered; "but I am bewildered, my dear. Where did those things come from?"

"From my old home. They are all mine, and you will let them stay here, will you not, for our new home?" she added, shyly slipping her hand into Robert's. "I don't want to take Robert from you, Uncle James, when he is all you have to love, but if you will give me a place here, too, I will try to be a good daughter to you."

"Give you a place here!" the old man cried; "I think no greater grief could come to me now, Margaret, than the thought of losing you. God ever bless you, child, for few at your age would have cared to so kindly overcome so obstinate an old man's stupid prejudices."

"Thank you," she whispered, touching her lips to his for the first time; "you have made me very happy."

And as she presided over the carefully appointed table in a cozily furnished dining-room Uncle James had used for spare harness and bags of grain, but which was transformed beyond recognition, there was no cloud on the brightness of the face of "Robert's wife."

### *Alas! Poor Iceland.*

The New York *Herald* publishes a letter from Dr. Hayes, who is well acquainted with Iceland, about that country. There has hardly been on the face of the whole earth a more singular exhibition of the conflicting forms of nature than that which has been seen in Iceland during the past few months. How frail seems the crust on which we live, when, almost without notice, the whole rocky foundation is broken asunder, as it has recently been in Iceland, through thousands of square miles, and into the midst of enormous reservoirs of ice and snow are injected liquid fires, which first flood the valleys below with water and then overwhelm them with rivers of redhot lava, and at length bury the whole with hot ashes, which, mounting into the air from countless crevices in the rocks, fall, as a shower of snow may fall, over farms and villages, spreading everywhere an asphyxiating covering, until men, women, and children, hitherto happy in their primitive little homesteads, fall down and die of suffocation, and cattle, sheep and all living things are overwhelmed by the great destroyer! The picture is the sadder that we had such pleasing accounts from Iceland last year. How proud were the Icelanders then over their celebration, the parallel of which was never known before! What a scene of misery and desolation now succeeds to previous prosperity and contentment—the island rent and tortured through a third of its entire area and at least a third of its population either destroyed outright or rendered destitute! When we reflect that the Iceland winter is a period of darkness; that the ground is then covered with snow to the depth of many feet; that communication with the outer world will be cut off for several months, and even intercourse between the farms and villages will be at best difficult, and that the population, never more than eking out a bare subsistence at the best of times, now become burdened with those whose homes have been laid waste, and whose farms have been buried in lava and ashes, it is difficult to imagine anything more distressing than their prospects for the next half year.

### *A High Sense of Honor.*

The Duke of Wellington had a high sense of honor in all money dealings, and would suffer none of his agents to do a mean thing in his name. His steward once bought some land adjoining his country estate, and was boasting of having made a fine bargain, from the straitened circumstances of the seller.

"What did you pay for it?" asked the duke.

"Eight hundred pounds," was the answer.

"And how much was it worth?"

"Eleven hundred pounds," said the steward, rubbing his hands in glee at thought of the good bargain.

"Then take three hundred pounds, and carry them to the seller, with my compliments, and don't ever venture to talk to me of cheap land again."

The steward was confounded, and could scarcely credit his own ears. The idea that any one could refuse to profit by a sharp bargain, and throw money away in paying more than was agreed on, was hard for him to comprehend.

### *Cleaning Steam Boilers.*

Experiments were made some time ago in England relative to the preservation of boilers by placing unslacked lime in those boilers which could be kept empty, and in case they were liable to leakage from the sea, by filling them with a solution of lime in sea water. The result of this experimental application of the solution of lime proved so satisfactory that by direction of the government its use is to be extended to iron and composite ships. The regulation prescribes that in all cases where it is impossible to dry out completely any of the compartments, bilges, or wings in order to coat them with composition, paint, or cement, lime well slaked is to be deposited in the water contained in such places, care being taken, in order to prevent injury, that the lime used be first thoroughly slaked.

### *Building a Bridge.*

The bridge over the East river connecting New York and Brooklyn will be a stupendous affair. The anchorage on the New York side now being built will take up nearly one-half of the large block bounded by Cherry street on the north, Water street on the south, Roosevelt street on the east, and Dover street on the west. The base of the anchorage is 141 feet long by 120 feet wide, and the structure will rise eighty feet above the sidewalk on Water street and sixty-five feet above the Cherry street sidewalk. Of materials, it will consume 600,000 feet of timber and 30,000 cubic yards of stone. The weight of this immense solid mass will be 60,000 tons. Four large warehouses, three stores and several tenement houses had to be removed to make room for the anchorage. The structure is raised by courses, the bottom course being of timber and concrete. The timber is Georgia or Florida pine, 12x12 inches. These timbers are put down in layers, alternately lengthwise and crosswise, and are firmly bolted together, the timbers in each layer being from two to six inches apart, and the interspaces filled up with concrete. This wood will not decay, being kept continually moist and out of the air. Pieces of old wooden docks built a hundred years ago have been taken out in a perfectly sound condition. It is expected that the structure will be completed in about a year.

The distance from the southern face of the anchorage to the center of the great pier is 930 feet, and it is 1,300 feet from the northern face of the anchorage to the end of the approach on Printing-House square. The anchorage will receive four cables, descending from the top of the tower and entering the anchorage about seventy feet above the ground, so that they clear the roofs of the tallest buildings that stand in their line. These cables will be sixteen inches in diameter, and made of steel wires woven first into strands and then into the cables by strands. They enter the anchorage horizontally, and run along through tunnels a distance of twenty-five feet, when the strands, of which there are nineteen in each cable, separate, and each strand takes hold of two links of a loop of chain, which makes thirty eight links to receive one cable. The two cables thus merge into four great chains which pass on through the anchorage in a curved line until they reach the bottom and are made fast to the plates put there to receive them. These four plates are of cast iron and are seventeen and one-half feet long by sixteen feet wide, each of them weighing twenty-three tons. The top surface is flat and the bottom convex. The great stones above the plates overlap each other in such a way that the anchor plates cannot rise without carrying up the whole mass.

### *Eating Fruit.*

The *American Agriculturist* says: We hardly know how to account for the popular impression that still prevails in many rural districts, that the free use of fruit is unfriendly to health. It has much to do with the scarcity of fruit gardens and orchards in the country. As a matter of fact, cities and villages are much better supplied with fruit the year round than the surrounding country. There are hundreds of farms, even in the oldest parts of the land, where there is no orchard and the only fruit is gathered from a few seedling apple trees grown in the fence corners. The wants of cities are supplied not so much from the proper farming districts as from a few men in their suburbs, who make a business of growing fruit for market. The farmers who raise a good variety of small fruit for the supply of their own families, are still the exception. The villager, with his quarter or half acre lot, will have his patch of strawberries, his row of currants and raspberries, his grape vines and pear trees, and talk intelligently of the varieties of these fruits. His table is well supplied with these luxuries for at least half the year, but there is a lamentable dearth of good fruit upon the farm from the want of conviction that it pays. It does pay in personal comfort and health, if in nothing else. The medical faculty will bear testimony to the good influence of ripe fruit upon the animal economy. They regulate the system better than anything else, and forestall many of the diseases to which we are liable in the summer and fall. A quaint old gentleman of our acquaintance often remarks that apples are the only pills he takes. He takes these every day in the year when they can be found in the market, and fills up the interval between the old and new crop with other fruits. He has hardly seen a sick day in forty years, and pays no doctor's bill. We want more good fruit, especially upon our farms, and the habit of eating fruit at our meals. This is just one of the matters in which farmers' wives can exert an influence. Many a good man would set out fruit trees and bushes if he were only reminded of it at the right time. One right time will be this autumn—at least in all but the very coldest parts of the country. A few dollars invested then will bring abundant returns in from one to five years. It is more intimately connected with good morals than our philosophers think. With good digestion it is quite easy to fulfill the law of love.

A codfish was recently caught at the Isles of Shoals that weighed sixty pounds and measured five feet in length.

### *MINING THAT DOES NOT PAY.*

#### *Visit to a Mine that Sinks Half a Million Dollars a Year.*

A correspondent writing from Nevada says: I experienced a desire to go into the once famous Savage mine. My desire was to go as far down as it was possible to go, and the depth to which the Savage is down is about 2,300 feet perpendicular, or, counting the number of feet in the incline, over 3,000 feet, or nearly three-quarters of a mile from the surface of the earth. One of the first party volunteered to go with me, and dressed in the garb of miners we were dropped into the Savage. The first landing or station we reached was 1,500 feet. Here we left the cage and entered what Mr. Andrews, the foreman, called his "palace car." This car, made wholly of iron, was about eight feet long, two feet deep, and about three or four feet wide, with flanging sides. Two very large wheels supported the front and two small ones the rear end of the car—the object being, as may readily be seen, to lessen the angle of the box in order that it might hold more ore. In this car, which was evidently used for no purpose but for transporting passengers, were half a dozen seats. A very powerful engine at the surface pulled the car, which ran on rails, presenting little friction, and the car was drawn by a wire rope something over half an inch in diameter. Andrews said that if the rope should break the car would stop. I looked in earnest for the philosophy to support his assertion, but I did not find it. The angle of the incline was forty-five degrees, which, as railroad men say, was "a pretty stiff grade." The incline is over 1,500 feet long, and the car sped down it at a frightful pace.

Going down in, or rather on a cage and going up again had begun to be a fascination. It was like riding in a balloon, but here was a car without breaks, driven down a sort of tunnel so low that it was necessary to incline the head, at a breakneck speed at an angle of forty-five degrees, held only by a single iron cord. Each passenger carried a lamp, and lights were placed at intervals along the incline. By these we were enabled to peer into the frightful prospect ahead and it was by no means assuring. There was, however, a safe end to this subterranean journey. We came, after a quick trip, which seemed long enough to us, to the lowest station. There were drifts on the way in every direction, and we saw where millions of dollars had been taken out. Reaching the bottom there was very little to see. There were men enough at work on all sides—there are 235 miners employed in this mine—but they were not taking out "pay dirt." We climbed out of the palace car and stood on a rickety platform of boards. The sound of picks came up from a region still below. Noticing my surprise, Mr. Andrews said: "There is a winze running down a hundred feet or more. Workmen are down there blasting and extending it." At that moment an ore tub came tumbling up filled with rock. It was dumped and down it went again. I asked Mr. Andrews if I could go down to the bottom of the winze. "You had better not," he said, "there is nothing to see, and the only way to get there is to ride the tub."

I wanted to see all that was to be seen and he offered to go with me. The tub was smaller than a flour barrel but very heavily made and bound and strengthened with iron. It hung by a bail, to which was tied a common hemp rope. Andrews stepped on one side of the top of the tub and I on the other—both were heavy weights and pretty evenly balanced. We clung to the rope for support, be guiding the barrel with one hand to prevent its striking the sides of the winze and bruising us. The bell was rung, the engine started, and the barrel slipped easily down the polished stringers at an angle of about eighty degrees. Andrews was right in saying there was nothing to see at the bottom. Two or three men were at work on the rock, but the lime in it made it decidedly warm. A minute's stay was enough, and up we went again. Blasts were going off in every direction, and the explosions were not agreeable to one's ears. We again took seats in our car and were quickly run up to the landing of the perpendicular shaft. Two minutes afterward we were on the surface. We were down something more than an hour, and take it all in all, notwithstanding the little nervousness and uncertainty, it was the most fascinating experience of my life.

The Savage mine has been one of the most profitable on the Comstock lode, but at the present time it is not paying a dollar. Mr. Andrews informed me that no pay ore had been taken out for a long time. I learned subsequently, from trustworthy sources, that it costs the stockholders half a million dollars a year and that the other side of the ledger is a blank.

### *His Change.*

In the case of King vs. Fenton, where the prisoner was tried in 1842 for the murder of Major Hillas in a duel, old Judge Keller thus capped his summing up to the jury: Gentlemen, it is my business to lay down the law to you, and I will. The law says the killing of a man in a duel is murder; therefore in the discharge of my duty I tell you so; but I tell you at the same time a fairer duel than this I never heard of in the whole course of my life.

### *Mohammedan Divorces.*

During the first few days of my stay in Cairo, says Thos. Knox, our party employed a guide whom we found at the hotel. He was an intelligent Mohammedan, speaking French quite well, and his certificates of character were most flattering. While I was questioning him about marriage customs, he declared, with no appearance of regret in any form: "I have had nine wives, and am now living with my tenth. When I don't like a wife, I divorce her."

The whole story is told in the last sentence of his remark—"When I don't like a wife, I divorce her;" and the only form of divorce necessary is for the husband to say to the wife, in the presence of a single witness: "I divorce you." No residence in Chicago or Indianapolis is necessary; there are no lawyers to be engaged and fees to be paid; no troublesome affidavits about incompatibility of temper and the like are to be signed; nor must one stretch his conscience in making oath to any document. Say only: "I divorce you," and the work is accomplished.

As a consequence of these facilities, the people of Egypt are very much married. Men can be found in Cairo by the hundred who have had as many as twenty or thirty wives in half that number of years, and women who have had the same plurality of husbands in a similar time. But divorced women are not considered as desirable as those who have never been married, and consequently these frequent divorces fall more heavily upon them than upon men. The present intelligent ruler of Egypt is well aware of the debasing effect of the marriage laws, and has improved them in several ways.

Polygamy is becoming less popular every year, and would probably die out altogether in course of time if it were not expressly sanctioned by the Koran. I was told that among the middle and upper classes there was not one husband in fifty who had more than one wife. Polygamy is more prevalent among the lower classes, but even there it is not common. The legal number of wives is four, but not one man in five hundred in Cairo or Constantinople avails himself of the privilege. A Mohammedan whom I questioned one day on the subject of polygamy, made the following reply: "I have one time two wife. Now I have one wife. One wife make house enough warm. Two wife make house so hot you bake bread in all times and no fire. You have three wife—house hot so no man live there."

The mother-in-law has the same popularity among husbands in Moslem countries that she enjoys in more Western lands. Most men there prefer to marry women whose mothers are dead, and who have no near relative of their own sex; and some husbands forbid their wives to see any women except those who are related to the lord and master of the house. But this latter rule is very seldom enforced.

### *Vanderbilt's Boyhood.*

The old commodore was born on Staten Island. His family were Moravians. The old church is still preserved, but the homestead is going to decay. The owner will not lay out any money to put things to rights. The barn is an old tumble down thing, and stands a a nuisance amid fine improvements. Vanderbilt when a boy was as far above his associates as he is now above the business men of this age. He was known as "Corneale." He was a slim, tall, daring, athletic lad, doing what no one else dare do. For a consideration he would row to New York on a dark, tempestuous night, when all but the daring boatman expected to see him go to the bottom. When a mere lad he earned $600 by putting a crew on board a vessel in the harbor in a storm. He owed his start in life to a daring feat. At the risk of his life he rowed a man to the Battery, the man lying flat on the bottom of the skiff and not speaking on the trip. That man's father wanted a fearless man to run an opposition steamboat, and though years had passed away he came to New York and asked for Corneale, the daring boatman. Vanderbilt has no real estate in his own name except the house he lives in. It was all conveyed to William for the consideration of $1 on the eve of the old man's marriage.

### *How to Treat Them.*

The Boston *Globe* solves the difficult problem of how to treat watering place acquaintances when met in society afterwards, by telling this old story:

The story told of George Selwyn, the famous London man of the world of the last century, illustrates the combination of brilliancy and discourtesy which are so characteristic of a certain kind of "swell." Being at Bath during a season of unusual dullness for that fashionable watering place, Selwyn became quite intimate with an old gentleman who was rather outside the pale of that select society to which the wit belonged. Meeting Selwyn in London, in the height of the season, the old gentleman was disposed to renew the acquaintance formed at Bath, but the man of the world persistently ignored him. At last the old fellow came up to his quondam intimate, and said: "Why, Mr. Selwyn, don't you remember me; I was with you at Bath, last year?" "Oh, yes," said Selwyn; "I remember you perfectly, and when I go to Bath again at a dull season, I shall be happy to become acquainted with you again."

### *Items of Interest.*

Josh Billings says he lectures for fun, with one hundred dollars thrown in.

When a man goes to a quilting party about tea time, and sits down on a ball of wicking with a long darning needle in it, he will think of more things connected with darning in a minute than he can mention in two hours.

Several of the students of Brown University have been turning their summer vacation to profitable account by serving as waiters and gardeners at the seaside resorts of Rhode Island. Their services are said to bring high wages.

Dumas has written an American novel, in which a coon chases a couple of young United States lovers up a tree, and then tries to get them by gnawing through the trunk. Dumas says the Virginia coon is as large as a yearling calf.

The funeral cortege moved slowly down the street, and, as she left the house of mourning she observed to her companion: "Lizzie, if any of our folks should die, I don't think I'd wear crape rosettes on my bonnet, would you?"

A drunken man drove a horse and wagon on the Boston and Albany railroad three miles the other night, passing over several cattle guards and coming out uninjured. He kept out of the way of several trains that he met by the way, and says that one of the trains "turned out for him."

The Hornellsville *Times* is authority for this: Twenty-five years ago (in August) it rained eighteen days in succession without a skip. Hay blackened and molded in the swath, wheat grew in the shock, and even in the uncut wheat the kernels sprouted in the heads. It was a wet harvest.

The New England peach train is extensively utilized by the tramp fraternity, to which it offers opportunity both for free rides and free lunches. One day there were discovered upon it, at Meriden, Conn., five tramps who had ridden from New Haven, and on their way had eaten their fill of the fruit.

And now they have found out that Gutenburg, the inventor of printing, was tried at Mayence, in 1422, for the assassination of his uncle, and only acquitted after a long imprisonment. Thus the art preservative is made to perpetuate a knowledge of his badness as well as his genius.

A ragged little urchin came to a lady's door asking for old clothes. She brought him a vest and a pair of trowsers, which she thought would be a comfortable fit. The young scapegrace took the garments and examined each, then, with a disconsolate look, said: "There ain't no watch pocket."

### *A California Bank President.*

William C. Ralston, the president of the California bank of San Francisco, who committed suicide after the suspension of the bank, was born in Pennsylvania, and at the time of his death was forty-five years of age. He was a shoemaker in early life, but soon went to California, where he became interested in speculations, and also held a clerkship in a bank. Subsequently he went to Panama as the agent of Garrison's steamship line. About 1852 he returned to San Francisco and established a banking house with others, under the name of Garrison, Fritz & Ralston. This firm was afterward dissolved, and he became a partner in the firm of Donahue, Kelley & Co.

About 1864 he organized the Bank of California, with O. Mills as president and himself as cashier. Mr. Mills was already connected with a bank in Sacramento, and his time was largely taken up there. Mr. Ralston became the head of the Bank of California, though nominally its cashier. All its great enterprises were conducted through him, and even when Mr. Mills was present, business men always went to Mr. Ralston for consultation. About two years ago, Mr. Mills resigned the presidency, and Mr. Ralston became the real as well as nominal head of the bank. It was through his business abilities, almost entirely, that the bank attained its great influence and became so potent in all commercial, financial, and even political affairs. In 1867 the bank reached the zenith of its influence, and was then the most powerful corporation west of the Rocky mountains.

Mr. Ralston was the most popular man in California. His munificence had won him friends everywhere. His career is full of instances where he has kept from failure men who were on the verge of financial ruin. His mode of life was on a plan commensurate with the extent of wealth at his command. At Belmont Valley he built for himself a house costing, it is estimated, $1,000,000, and supported it with an annual outlay of $350,000. His house would accommodate one hundred and fifty guests, and occasions were frequent when that number accepted his hospitality. His stables are built on a magnificent and extensive plan. Some years ago he had some difficulty with with the railroad which leads to Belmont Valley—a distance of thirty miles—and then provided himself with a light buggy and having relays of horses stationed along the road, drove every day to and from San Francisco in less time than the train could make. He was the last man at his office at night and the first one in the morning. He was known as a good liver, and won many friends by his generosity and hospitality.