

PUBLISHED EVERY FRI. Y IN Louisburg, N. C.

Geo. S. Baker Ed., & Proprietor.

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Table with subscription rates: For one year \$2.00, For six months \$1.00, For three months \$0.50

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TERMS: \$2.00 per Annum.

VOL. V.

LOUISBURG, N. C., FRIDAY, APRIL, 7, 1876.

NO. 21.

RATES OF ADVERTISING.

Table with advertising rates: Advertisements will be inserted at the following rates per square: One Square one time \$1.00, two " " 1.50, three " " 2.00, four " " 2.50, three months 5.00, Fourth column one year 25.00, Half " " 50.00, One " " 100.00

Winter on the Retreat.

The buds of the trees begin to knock at the opening door of spring. A few more dirges of north wind and then look out for the apple orchards. Thank God that every winter has its spring! All up and down the world we trace the analogy. The winter of sorrow has a spring-time of joy. Have you not noticed that after a time of annoyance, exasperation, and hardship, there always comes a season of brightness? Do you not realize that we would be worth nothing at all were it not for the fact that we were pounded and flailed and upset again and again by God's providence? Are you not able to look back upon your personal history and see that a thousand things, which you thought were against you, have positively been your coadjutors and helpers and sympathizers? It has been so true in our own case, that when we have a season of toil and exasperation we are accustomed in the midst of it to say, "I wonder what bright thing is coming next!" After the darkness is the light, and after the winter, is the spring-time. God knows just what is best for us and we do not. The blacksmith can tell to the instant how long to keep the iron in the fire. If he takes it out too soon, he might as well never have put it there, for it will be hard as ever and will not submit to the stroke of the hammer. If he keeps it in too long it will be melted and destroyed. Well, do you not suppose that the Lord knows how long to keep us in the fire? Most certainly; and He takes us out not an instant too soon, nor leaves us there not an instant too long, but by the exercise of His infinite wisdom and goodness. He sees just the right moment to plunge us in, and just the right moment to lift us out. Then, putting us on the anvil, He molds us into shapes most fit for the Master's use. What consolation is this to those chit-deep in trouble—yea, to those who are standing so deep down in misfortune that the wave comes clear to the lower lip, and you sometime imagine that you are going to be submerged and drowned out. Though it may be frozen January with you, or snowy February, or gusty March, or fickle April, you are not far off from shining May. Sometimes there is a faint intimation of comfort flashing through your soul.—Do you know what that is? It is the precursor of sunlight. As in the first dawn of tolerable weather, after a hard winter, you hear a chirp in the tree-tops; and you say, "What's that?" Somebody says, "It is a bird's voice." Well, then you know that after that one bird there will come whole flocks of robins, and finches, and brown-throats, and that before the season is over, the heavens will be full of song. And when we see one faint intimation of comfort and of joy in a Christian's soul, we know that is the forerunner of a thousand bright and glorious and singing promises, and that soon the darkness will disappear, and the chill will be gone, and "the peace of God that passeth all understanding" will pervade the soul.—Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. So, after the winter of sin, there comes the springtime of pardon.—There was a time when, though you were willing to acknowledge yourself not just right in every respect, you thought that your faults were merely superficial imperfections; they were like very small spots on a rich silk, or a broken thread in a magnificent fabric. You do not have any such idea of your sin now. Your heart is beginning to thaw out. The winter is going away.—The trickling tear is the precursor of a mountain torrent of grief over your transgressions.

About the twenty-first of March there is an equinoctial storm, and we all say, 'Well, the winter is 'broken up'—Spring will be here.' And when we see a soul borne down with a sense of sin, and there seems to be a loud storm of sorrow over his misdoings, we say, 'That is the spring equinox. 'The time of the singing of the birds has almost 'come.'

'There is in the country what they call the 'blossom week.' It is the week when the most of the gardens and orchards are in full bloom.—There comes every year just one such week, and only one in all the round of the twelve months. And we wish that this might be the "blossom week"—the time of joy, of glorious Christian promise—for those who read these columns. So, likewise, the winter of earth will end in the springtime of heaven.—When we see the privation, the persecution, the trial of all sorts, it seems to us that no type is so forcible and appropriate as the snow and the frost and the hail and the tempest. It would take a very large portfolio to contain the story of the griefs of your life. It has been a series of misfortunes, of abuses, of tragedies, of catastrophes. Winter of pain; winter of privation; winter of toil; winter of bereavement; winter of death.—There is one line of snowbank all around our cities that never melts—it is the snow-line of the tombstones of the dead. But, blessed be God! beyond that snow-line there is a land of foliage and of watercourses; the trees in perpetual blossom and fruitage; no darkness at all; no sin at all, no pain at all; no death at all. It is eternal "blossom week."—Talange in *Christum at Work.*

Mr. and Mrs. Shott.

Mr. Shott hadn't been out of Detroit in seven years when, the other day, business called him to Chicago. Mrs. Shott wanted to go along, but he said that times were too hard, he didn't want to have the bother of taking care of her, and she was compelled to stay at home. He reached home in the evening after an absence of two days, and as he sat eating his supper he said,— "I tell you it was a long ride, and I am glad you didn't go." "Lonesome, was it?" she asked. "It would have been fearful if I hadn't had a young lady in the seat with me." "What! a young lady in the seat with you?" "That is—that you know the car was crowded," he said. "And you offered her half of your seat?" "I—that—is—she sat down there," he stammered. Mrs. Shott's ears grew red and her eyes snapped. "And so it was lonesome, was it? You didn't speak to her, I suppose?" said the wife. "Why, I—I spoke once or twice, of course." "Nice young lady, I suppose?" "Well, no, I can't say as she was," "And there you sat and looked your sweetest, and I'll bet that you passed yourself off as a single man." "I don't know as I did," he replied, as he drank his tea. "Did you inform her that you were married and had three children?" she demanded. "I don't remember; but I presume I did." "You presume you! Well, I presume you didn't. I know just how you sit up there and pretended to be a rich widower, and took care of her satchels, and bought pop-corn and illustrated papers for her." Mr. Shott calmly inquired if there were any more biscuit. "It's a nice operation your coming home and expecting me to find hot biscuit for you! Why didn't you ask if that young lady could make biscuit? Why didn't she

come home to tea with you?"

"Nancy, don't be foolish." "Don't be foolish! Who is foolish? Here I was scrubbing, and baking, and patching, and breaking my back, and you were braced up in a seat beside a young lady, talking about your bonds and mortgages and your lonely widower life." "I wasn't," he briefly observed. "Daniel, did that girl ride all the way from Chicago with you?" asked Mrs. Shott, as she toyed with the handle of the milk-jug. "Did she? Lemme see!" he mused, as he helped himself to the butter. "You know she did!" shouted his wife. "If she got off at any of the stations I didn't see her," he admitted. "And there you sat, and rode, and you paid out the money we need so much in the house, for peanuts and pop-corn and juba-paste and picture papers. Let me see your wallet?" "My wallet?" "Yes, sir, your wallet." "What for, Nancy?" "I want to see your wallet." "It's the same one I always had." "You left home with twenty-six dollars, and I know exactly what the trip cost. Fare to Chicago and back, seventeen dollars. Hotel bill two dollars. I'll allow one dollar more for incidentals; now where's that six dollars?" "I—I" he stammered. "You what?" "I met Green down by the depot and lent him four dollars." "Daniel Shott, who is this Green, and where does he live?" Daniel didn't reply. "Daniel Shott, you've lied to me! You didn't want to take me along owing to the hard times. You said I'd bother you. If I'd been with you you'd have growled four times a mile about the bother and expense, and there you went and bothered yourself with a young lady and squandered four dollars on her, and here I've worn these old shoes seven months to save expense!" "I will get you a new pair pretty soon," he replied. "You will, eh? When?" "Before the Fourth of July." "You can squander four dollars on an unknown girl, and make me wait four months for shoes, can you?" "What unknown girl?" "Daniel Shott—" The milk-pitcher came down on his head, she caught him by the neck-tie, and the oldest boy ran out of doors and yelled "fire!" Several of the neighbors ran over, but Mrs. Shott met them at the door, and said it was only a burning chimney. When they asked for Mr. Shott she remarked,— "Mr. Shott doesn't feel a bit well and is covered up on the lounge."

How to MAKE MISCHIEF.—

Keep your eye on your neighbors. Take care of them. Do not let them stir without watching. They may do something wrong if you do. To be sure you never knew them to do anything very bad, but it may be on your account they have not. Perhaps if it had not been for your kind care they might have disgraced themselves long ago. Then don't relax in your efforts to keep them where they ought to be. Never mind your own business—that will take care of itself. If you find any symptoms of any one passing out of the path of duty, tell every one else what you see, and be particular to see a great many. It is a good way to circulate such things, though it may not benefit yourself, or any one particularly. Do keep something a-going—silence is a dreadful thing. It is said there was silence in heaven for the space of half an hour. Do not let any such thing occur on earth. It would be too much for this mundane sphere.

A Stranger's Suggestion.

One day recently, during the balmy weather, a stranger, who had that morning arrived in New York, was down looking at the East River bridge piers, when he was approached by an old beggar with a broken nose and a bad limp. "For God's sake, give me something to buy bread with!" wailed the beggar, as he caught sight of the stranger's genial face. In response to his appeal, a ship-plaster of the denomination of twenty-five cents was handed over, and the stranger turned to the piers again. Such unlooked for success astonished the beggar, and in five minutes he returned and said:—"Stranger will you give me money to buy medicine for my dying child?" "Why, didn't I give you two shillings only a few minutes ago?" asked the sight-seer, recognizing the broken nose and plaintive whine. "No, it must have been some other poor man!" was the reply. Two nickels were handed over, and the beggar returned thanks and disappeared. The stranger was just turning away from the piers when a hand was laid on his arm and a voice asked:—"Mister, for God's sake, give me a little money to buy a crust for my children, who haven't had a mouthful for three days!" "See, here, I gave you money only a minute ago!" exclaimed the stranger. "Ah! sir, it must have been some other poor man, sir, and God bless you, sir!" A shipplaster was handed over after some hesitation and the beggar shed tears and went his way.—The stranger had not reached the Fulton Market when the old man accosted him for the fourth time, saying:—"Lord keep you forever, and bury you give me ten cents to help buy my wife, who has been dead in the house two days?" "See here, old man, you can't fool me again!" replied the stranger. "I've given you money three time already." "Ah! sir, you are mistaken, sir." "But it was a man with a broken nose, a lame leg and a voice just like yours." "It might be so. There's forty others just like me in New York!" After a long look of amazement the stranger laid his hand on the old beggar's arm and said:—"Well, I can't contribute over six shillings more unless I jump my hotel bill. Suppose you broken-down men haul off and let a few of the deaf and blind and insane have a chance at me!" And the beggar did.

No Time to Read.

We have encouraged many who professed they had no time to read. Now we think of it, there have always been men of such character, the points of which are easily summed up. Five times out of ten they are men who have not found time to confer any substantial advantage either upon their families or upon themselves. They frequently spend whole days in gossiping, tripping, and swapping horses, but they never have any time to read. They sometimes lose a whole day asking advice of their neighbors, sometimes a day picking up the news, the prices current, and the exchange, but those men never have time to read. They have time to fish, to fiddle, and to drink too—do nothing, but no time to read. Such men generally have uneducated children, unimproved farm, and unhappy firesides. They have no energy, no spirit of improvement, no love of knowledge, they live unknowing and unknown, and often die unwept and unregretted. A newspaper is a window through

which men look out on all that is going on in the world—

without a newspaper a man is shut in a small room and knows little or nothing of what is happening outside of himself. In our day the newspapers keep pace with history and record it. A newspaper will keep a sensible man in sympathy with the world's current history. It is an unfolding cyclopedia, unbound book forever issuing and never finished. The man who does not take a newspaper of some kind allows his children to starve for intellectual food. Take the Paper We find the following going the rounds of the press. Read ponder and—PAY UP! Why don't you take the papers? they're the life of my delight except about election time, and then I read for spite. Subscribe, you cannot lose a cent; why should you be afraid? for cash thus spent is money lent at interest, four-fold paid. Go, then, take the papers, and pay to-day, nor pay delay, and my word it is inferred, you'll live until you're gray. An old neighbor of mine, while dying of a cough, desired to hear the latest news while he was going off. I took the paper and I read of some new pills in force; he bought a box—and he is dead? no—hearty as a horse. I knew two men as much alike as e're you saw two stumps; and no phrenologist could find a difference in their bumps. One takes the paper and his life is happier than a king's, his children can all read and write, and talk of men and things. The other took no paper, and, while strolling through the wood, a tree fell down and broke his crown, and killed him—"very good." Had he been reading all the news, at home like his neighbor Jim, I'll bet a cent that accident would not have happened him, for he who takes the paper, and pays his bill when due, can live in peace with every man, and with the printer too. Wouldn't Marry a Mechanic A young man commenced visiting a young woman, and appeared to be well pleased. One evening he called when it was quite late, which led the young lady to inquire where he had been. "I had to work to-night." "What do you work for a living?" she inquired in astonishment. "Certainly," replied the young man, "I am a mechanic." "I dislike the name of a mechanic," and she turned up her pretty nose. This was the last time the young man visited the young lady. He is now a wealthy man, and has one of the best women in the country, for a wife. The young lady who disliked the name of a mechanic is now the wife of a miserable fool—a regular vagrant about groggshops—and the soft, verdant, silly, miserable girl is obliged to take in washing in order to support herself and children. You dislike the name of a mechanic, eh?—You whose brother are but well-dressed loafers. We pity any girl who is so verdant, so soft, to think less of a young man for being a mechanic—one of God's noblemen—the most dignified and honorable personage of heaven's creatures. Beware young ladies, how you treat young men who work for a living, for you may one of these days be menial to one of them. Far better to discharge the well-fed pauper with all his rings, jewelry, brazenness and pomposity, and to take to your affection the callous handed, industrious mechanic. Thousands have bitterly repented their folly who have turned their backs on honest industry. A few years have taught them a severe lesson. When you go to a theater, where a fussy ushair, with centrally-parted hair, and bows in coat collar, seats you in a chair which belongs to an othair, who comes late in great anger and with eyes of lurid glare, calls you intrudair, rush to the managair, and after a gushing swair, he'll scold that young ushair, with the centrally-parted hair, and the roay coat collar.

A Few Reasons Why Land Should be Improved.

More can be cultivated with the same hands because tilled with less hard labor. Briers and shrubs disappear, grasses appear. Cattle damage the land and grassless, because they do not have to tramp so great a space to fill themselves. Less land required. Less fencing. Less trotting after cows and horses. Less work at the smith's shop. Fewer whips worn out. Stronger teams. More manure and loosened for it. A stimulus to action. A protection against winter's frost and summer's heats. A good example to children and neighbors. Keeps off sheriffs and buzzards. Stops emigration. Produces money for books, and time for reading. Also, school houses and churches. Produces time for travel, to lecture on economy, and preach the Gospel. Produces sociability and hospitality. Makes a paradise of a barren, plenty out of poverty, and a blessing out of a curse. The barn is filled, the dairy is filled the purse is filled, and the soul is filled with gratitude. If the reader will reflect, he will discover that the number of good reasons why the farmer should improve his land is almost innumerable.—From an old Paper of 1864. There Might Have Been A man in want of a load of wood visited one of the markets to make a choice. Finding a load that suited, he asked the owner if there was a cord on the wagon. "I think there is," was the reply. "Do you know that there is?" "My son William loaded it up, and he said there was a cord." "Well, what do you say?" asked the citizen. "And my other son, John, helped William load it up, and he said there was a cord." "Do you say so?" "And my neighbor came along, and he said there was a cord." "I don't believe there is." "And my wife stood at the gate as I came away, and she said there was a cord," continued the farmer. "There may be three-quarters," said the citizen. "And as I came through the toll-gate the keeper said he'd eat it if there wasn't a cord and a half." "He did?" "And a policeman stopped me and wanted to know how much I asked for that cord and three-quarters of beautiful wood." "The citizen took it before the load could swell any more.—Detroit Free Press. 1872. 1876. THE ROANOKE NEWS, PRICE REDUCED—FOR—The Centennial Year. AN INDEPENDENT SEMI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER; Devoted to Politics, Literature, Agriculture and News. Circulation large and daily increasing. NOW IS THE TIME TO SUBSCRIBE. It circulates in Thirty-two Counties of Eastern and Middle North Carolina and South Side Virginia. Advertisements will be inserted at the following rates: Single copy 5 cents. Subscription Price, in advance \$2.00 per year. Send for sample copy to MARSHES BROS., Proprietors, Weldon, N. C. WYOMING MONTHLY LOTTERY Draws on the 30th of each month. By authority of the Legislature. \$275,000 in Cash Prizes, 1 Chance in 5, Tickets \$1 each, or 10 for \$5, leaving \$5 to be deducted from the prizes after the drawing. Full particulars sent free. Address: J. M. PATTEE, Laramie City, Wyoming.