

# Orange County Observer.

ESTABLISHED IN 1878.

HILLSBORO, N. C. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1893.

NEW SERIES-VOL. XII. NO. 52.

The Austrian authorities have issued a rescript in which they call attention to the fact that physician's prescriptions shall be written in a right hand.

A Baltimore invention is designed to outwit train robbers. It is a double safe lock for express car safes. Should the messenger be attacked he throws the combination on lock No. 2 and the safe can then be opened only at the terminal station.

A calculation has been made by Professor Buzo, showing the difference in the purchasing power of money between 1492 and the present day. He says that the first expedition of Columbus cost \$7300 of American money, a very moderate sum for the equipment of three vessels, small as they were. Columbus, however, was paid an Admiral only at the rate of \$320 a year; his captains received only \$16 a month, and sailors from \$2 to \$2.50. Other expenses, of course, were in proportion, for a little money went a great deal further in those days than it would in these.

The stocking of Alaska with reindeer is a pronounced success according to the Rev. Doctor Sheldon Jackson, United States General Agent of Education in Alaska. Of 170 reindeer brought to Alaska from Siberia last year but eleven died, while eighty-eight fawns were born, of which seventy-nine were living three weeks ago. The reindeer steamer Bear made several trips across the straits this summer and transported thirty-seven more reindeer to Alaska. The purpose of the scheme is to furnish a reliable supply of food for the natives and also to establish the use of the deer for work purposes.

A Peruvian inventor has endeavored to provide against the danger to which vessels are exposed when in the vicinity of icebergs or other impending collisions by designing a means of stopping the vessel suddenly. A vertically sliding frame on a post at the bow of the vessel has on its sides pivoted wings which will expand transversely when required. The wings are held in their normal position by means of a cam attached to a forward projection of the frame, and other chain connecting the free ends of wings with the sides of the vessel. A winch, the mechanism of which is under the control of the officers in charge, is placed on deck, and it holds the chains or ropes which actuate the wings. As soon as danger approaches a few turns of the winch will throw open the wings and a resistance will thus be offered to the forward motion of the ship which will have a material effect in bringing it to a standstill.

Says the Washington Star: "Steadily and surely the business conditions in this country are improving and although many manufacturing establishments—some of them very important concerns—are still idle and unprofitable, it is easily probable that before many months the growth of healthy activity will restart every wheel. That stocks are stronger is a less satisfactory sign than the fact that many more works opened up during the past week than closed down during that period. In some instances resumption has only been brought about by the cooperation of employees who, recognizing the futility of the truism as to half a loaf being vastly superior to no bread, accepted reduced compensation and promise to be content therewith until industrial affairs are more buoyant than now. In the money markets there is evidence of returning confidence and although the volume of loans is as yet far from what it was six months ago it is large enough to be deemed refreshing enough to irritate. What for some time has been arid lands of commerce and investment. Extremely rapid improvement need hardly be expected at this time. This is an elastic sort of a country, but it recovers instantly from such depression as has existed throughout the summer. An even upward tendency is all that should be looked for at this time. The causes which resulted in such distress as will make 1893 a year to be remembered were slow in their operation and recovery has been and probably will be no less deliberate."

**A HAPPY MAN.**  
We know a truly happy man  
And of him we must tell  
His laughter sounds as pleasant  
As a boarder's dinner bell.  
He never says an angry word,  
He always wears a smile  
And everybody loves him  
For the goodness of his style.  
He's always brave and cheerful  
And is never looking blue.  
He doesn't growl and grumble  
Like some other people do.  
He doesn't try to run the world  
Upon a better plan,  
He takes things as he finds 'em  
As a happy person can.  
Although he isn't wealthy,  
He don't worry for a cent  
In poverty or riches  
He is equally content;  
He looks you squarely in the eyes  
And firmly grasps your hand—  
And any act of meanness  
He can never understand.  
He's never heard complaining  
And is "nervous" not at all;  
He's always glad to see you  
And you like to have him call.  
The birds are ever singing  
In his heart forever light  
And peaceful are his slumbers  
When he lays him down at night.  
In business he's successful  
For he's always making friends;  
His home it is the sweetest  
And its comfort never ends.  
His wife can't help but love him  
And his children do the same,  
His neighbors all respect him  
And are proud to spread his fame.  
The reason of his happiness  
(Which anyone can share)  
We think it right to mention  
For the sake of being fair:  
This simple man is happier  
Than any kings or queens  
Because he has the courage  
To live within his means.  
—H. C. Dodge, in Chicago Sun.

## MALVINA FLETCHER.

BY EMMA A. OPPER.

"WELL, you boys is going after the new teacher?" said Ephraim Olds.  
It was an extremely informal meeting of the West Cary school board, held in Ephraim Olds's barn for convenience. The sons of two of the directors had dropped in.  
"Yes, one of you boys has got to go," Marcus Loring appended. "Your dad's are too old to be driving over the country after school-ma'ams."  
"Where is she?" Wade Loring inquired, lazily.  
Wade had "clerked it" in a larger town, and wore better clothes than any fellow in West Cary, and held a very complacent opinion of himself.  
"Lives down to Trenton," his father responded.  
"And what does she look like?" Wade demanded.  
He was smoking a cigarette.  
"If she's good-looking, you know, I might think of it."  
"Please hired her," said Mr. Olds, "and he's the only one that's seen her."  
Mr. Pease was looking at Wade Loring with shrewd eyes, which twinkled a little.  
"Wal," he said, drily, "she ain't much to look at. A little too tall in the first place, and kind of big-jointed—yes, kind of bony. Don't know as I can tell just how she looks; I didn't look at her no more'n I could help. She ain't no beauty. Reckon she's nigh on to forty. Malvina Fletcher's her name."  
"Excuse me," said Wade Loring, with a laugh. "You'll have to convey my deep regrets to Malvina Fletcher, Burt, my boy."  
But Burt Olds followed him out of the barn, looking anxious. He stood in some awe of Wade—of his self-confidence, his dressiness, his popularity with the girls.  
"If one of us has got to go, Wade, you'd do me an immense favor," he began.  
"I can't do it, my boy," said Wade, decisively. "Drive fourteen miles and fourteen miles back again with an old rump? That isn't me!"  
"It will use up a day about," Burt insisted, "and I'm so busy with my onions I can't spare a day. If my crop's going to amount to anything, it's got to be attended to right along. I know you aren't busy just now—"  
"Have a cigarette?" said Wade.  
"No? Well, I can't do it, Burt. Sorry, you know, but really I couldn't."

**HIGH** of you boys is going after the new teacher?" said Ephraim Olds.  
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And he sauntered away.  
Burt's father joined him later in his toothfully-tened onion field, where Burt was pulling weeds.  
"Wale won't go, will he?" he said.  
"Yal, I'd go if I could, Burt, but I don't know what a twenty-eight-mile drive would do to my rheumatism. I don't stand riding lately, somehow."  
"I'll go, father," Burt said cheerfully.  
He was a quiet, modest young fellow, who tried to do the right thing, and was not ashamed of having it seen that he tried to.  
He raised his handsome blue eyes and smiled at his regretful parent.  
"You're a good boy, Burt," said his father, warmly.  
The West Cary school was to begin the next Monday. At two o'clock, on Saturday afternoon, Burt drove up a shady street in Tenton village, and hitched his horse before an inviting little house painted in dull green, with a pretty porch, and a little bed of foliage-plants, and a hammock.  
A handsome, middle-aged woman answered his ring.  
"Yes, this is Mr. Fletcher's," she said.  
"I come from West Cary," Burt explained.  
"Ah, yes! Malvina has been expecting you," the lady answered, smiling. "Will you take this porch chair while you wait? It is cooler here."  
"Malvina's her husband's sister, I suppose," Burt thought, and whistled softly while he waited.  
He had but five minutes to wait, and then a strange thing occurred.  
A slender young girl, with chestnut hair crimped under her delicate face, with bright, dark eyes and a vivid coloring, tripped out of the house, and shook hands with him in the friendliest way.  
"I was all ready, you see," she said; and her quick smile made two distinct dimples. "Good-by, Tom!" She hugged and kissed a four-and-a-half-year-old boy, who had brought out a big sat-chel. "Good-by, mamma!" and other warm embraces. "I'm coming home next Saturday on the morning train, and I'll get back somehow. I'll write to you before then. Good-by!"  
Burt took the satchel, and followed the affectionate family group down the walk. He felt dazed.  
He did not know exactly what he was doing. When the blooming young lady kissed her relatives yet again at the gate, he shook hands with them both, confusedly. Then he blushed; but the young lady looked pleased.  
A light wind lifted the soft locks of her pretty hair, as they drove away. Burt hardly dared look at her. He did not find his voice till he had turned the first corner.  
"So you are Miss Fletcher—Malvina Fletcher?" he said, abruptly.  
The new teacher turned her bright eyes upon him.  
"Who did you think I was?" she demanded.  
"Nobody—I—nobody," Burt faltered.  
"Thank you!" Miss Fletcher cried, laughing; and Burt laughed.  
He was half afraid of this bright young creature, with her charming prettiness and her lively ways; and yet, he felt oddly at ease with her, she was so cheerful and so friendly.  
He did not know how he did it, but, commencing stammeringly, he told her of the little joke which Mr. Pease had conceived and successfully carried through.  
"How funny!" Malvina Fletcher cried. "And how cute of him! I believe I shall like him. I thought I should when I saw him. I believe I can manage him, you know—make him furnish new things for the school-room, and raise my wages a dollar a week," she declared, merrily, her dimples twinkling.  
"I know you can!" Burt responded, with warmth—Burt, the bashful, self-distrustful. "You'll have him at your mercy, too, for you'll board there. They always board the teachers. We live just round the corner from the Peases's," he added, more timidly.  
"I am glad you do," Malvina rejoined, frankly, and without blushing.  
"I've a tennis court," said Burt—"if you play?"  
"Oh, yes—badly!"  
Malvina laughed.  
"I am glad you do. We'll have some games. I'm busy just now, but my

onions will be off my hands before long, and then I'll beat you some games if I can."  
Onions! How far away and uninteresting they seemed!  
The color in her cheeks was like that of a rose, and her eyes sparkled with quick sympathy and girlish enjoyment.  
The sun was waning when they drove into West Cary.  
Burt had stopped and bought caramels and bananas, and the half-emptied bags reposed in a companionable way between them.  
Malvina had taken her hat off, for it was warm, and her flower-like face shone forth in all its sweetness.  
Therefore, when Wade Loring came driving down the street in his new buggy, and met Burt and the new teacher face to face, he almost dropped his lines.  
He stared; his jaw dropped; he grew red and redder. Bewilderment was depicted on his face—disappointment, indignation.  
And Burt—he could not help it—as he drove on, laughed.  
The new teacher went home at the end of the first successful week of her labors in the West Cary school, but she did not go by train Saturday morning. She went in Burt Olds's phaeton, Friday night, after school, and he drove back for her Sunday afternoon.  
It was by no means the only time she made a trip home in the same way; nor did Burt "hitch up" only on Fridays and Sundays.  
It became a matter of common knowledge that Burt Olds took the new teacher driving quite often on moonlight nights, and that they played checkers in Mr. Pease's parlor when they did not go driving, and did other significant things.  
Malvina often wrote to her mother; but a portion of a letter written early in the winter, when her second term in West Cary was half done, was the most interesting of all her loving letters:  
"I can't wait till Friday night to tell you, mamma—we are engaged. Yes, engaged, and I am the happiest girl in Dyke County or the State. I never could have loved anybody but Burt, and I am so glad he loves me. There is nobody like him in all the world. Mr. Wade Loring hasn't stopped bothering me for a minute—well, you know what I mean; he has kept on asking me to go out with him when he knew I didn't want to, and last night I told him it was no use, and he knew what I meant; he knew I must be engaged to dear Burt. Burt thinks I like him best because I didn't meet Mr. Loring first. Mamma, you know better, don't you?"  
"I will tell you everything Friday. He says we must be married in the spring. Oh, mamma!"  
"Make some caramel cake for supper Friday night, won't you? Burt likes it so much. Your loving  
"MALVINA."  
—Friday Night.

**DERELICTS.**  
**ABANDONED VESSELS DRIFTING OFF THE ATLANTIC COAST.**  
Dangers to Navigation—Strange and Weird Stories of Their Objectless Voyages—Burning For a Year.  
DURING the last five years 956 vessels were wrecked on the Atlantic coast of North America. In the same region and period 957 derelicts—i. e., floating and abandoned craft—were reported. The worst derelicts are coal-bladen and lumber-laden ships. The latter float the longest, while the former are particularly dangerous because they are so heavy and solid. The average derelict floats thirty days.  
Two years ago the Navy Department sent the Yantic to destroy twelve wrecks which lay along the Atlantic coast. She found them all and blew them into kindling wood. The usual method is to approach a water-logged hulk in a steam launch, drop over the stump of a mast a hoop of iron with torpedoes attached and then fire the torpedoes from a safe distance by electricity.  
The North Atlantic is the chosen drifting ground of such floating perils. Timber traders bound from this coast to Europe encounter cyclones on the way and are deserted by dozens. The vessels used in that traffic are commonly of an antiquated type and so rotten that only good luck keeps them on top of the water. Happy are the crews to be taken off when they meet with disaster, before they are drowned or forced to cannibalism, as in the case of the Thekla, of Philadelphia, reported a few months ago.  
Now and then it happens that somebody finds a derelict with a valuable cargo and tows her into port, netting a large sum in salvage. The most remarkable instance of this sort was that of a British ship called the Resolute, which was one of three vessels sent to find Sir John Franklin. During the winter of 1851 she was nipped in the ice of Melville Bay—the great sheet of water crossed the other day by Peary—and was abandoned. Four years later she was found, by a New England whaler, frozen in a floe and practically unharmed. She was brought to New London and Congress bought her for \$200,000 from the salvors. After being thoroughly repaired she was sent to England as a gift and token of amity to her Majesty. Years later, when she was finally condemned and broken up, the Queen had a desk made from her timbers and made it a present to the President of the United States. Mr. Cleveland uses it for his work every day at the White House.  
When a ship strikes a derelict the occurrence is not reported, usually, because no witnesses are left alive to tell the tale. But there have been cases where vessels have had the luck to hit such hulks and to escape destruction. Only last year the deserted "Fred B. Taylor" was cut squarely in two by the North German Lloyd steamship "Travel." For many months the bow and stern of the abandoned craft floated about separately in the track of commerce, the former presenting an extraordinary appearance with bowsprit standing almost perpendicular. Thus two derelicts were made out of one. In April, 1889, the steamer "Cuban," of Liverpool, ran into a water-logged hulk, cutting into it thirteen feet. Happily, she escaped with small damage.  
More than three-fourths of all derelicts along the Atlantic coast of the United States are created by storms of Cape Hatteras, and from that neighborhood most of them start on their strange and objectless voyage. Usually they drift eastward until they get about half way across the ocean, when they pause and swing aimlessly about in circles. Out in the middle of the wide sea it is everybody's business to destroy them, and therefore nobody's. So they float about until they sink. Many of them find their way into the Sargasso Sea, which has been described as a "graveyard of ships." That vast field of growing marine plants, in which many queer species of fishes and other animals dwell, lies in a sort of eddy made by the great revolving ocean current. Finding their way into this vortex, the wrecks go round and round until they no longer have

sufficient buoyancy to keep them on the surface. Then they disappear.  
Nobody can tell how many of the great numbers of good ships which have sailed away, never to be heard from again, have been victims of derelicts. For several months during the early part of this year an abandoned hulk called the Agnes Manning lay in the very track of the trans-oceanic liners. She was a four-masted schooner from Philadelphia carrying 940 tons of coal. On February 25th she was deserted with her masts standing and sails furled. Her crew was rescued, but the floating vessel remained a menace to thousands of lives. There would have been very little hope for the strongest steamship that struck such an object.  
An extraordinary instance of the burning of a vessel was that of the Ada Fredale, bound from Scotland to San Francisco with a cargo of coal. She was abandoned in October, 1876, nearly 2000 miles east of the Marquesas Islands. Her crew took to the boats and succeeded in reaching the Marquesas. Meanwhile the wreck, still burning, drifted westward in the equatorial current to Tahiti, a distance of 4223 miles. Finally she was towed into port and her cargo continued to smoulder for more than a year. However, she was repaired eventually and is now engaged in the China trade.  
On January 11th, 1892, the Colombo D, not far from Bermuda, saw a vessel three miles off the starboard bow. The stranger was a three-masted, square rigged. When signaled she returned no answer. She seemed to be steering erratically, with all sails set. She was approached so close that the name on her stern, "Hutchins Bros., Nova Scotia," was easily read, but there was no sign of life on her deck. The superstitious sailors refused to board her, thinking that there was something uncanny about her. The Colombo D stayed by all night, the skipper desiring to investigate the mystery, but in the morning, though it had been almost dead calm, the three-masted vessel had vanished from the face of the ocean. The crew of the Colombo D were terrified, believing that they had seen the phantom ship, and they thought they would never reach port alive. However, they got to land all right and learned that the "Hutchins Bros." had been deserted when about to sink by her men, who were picked up. The case was quite similar to the celebrated one of the Mary Celeste, which was found in the Mediterranean under full sail without a soul on board, though nothing apparently was the matter with her and the fire in the galley stove was lighted. That mystery was never solved. The vessel was towed into Genoa and was scuttled years afterward in the Gulf of Mexico for the insurance.  
The drifts of some of these derelicts are astonishing. One of the most remarkable was that of the schooner W. L. White, abandoned in the great blizzard of 1888. Her track formed a picturesque feature of the pilot charts for many months. From March to November she was reported by thirty-six vessels. In a cruise of ten months she traversed a distance of more than 5000 miles, eventually going ashore on one of the Hebrides. The American schooner Wren G. Sargeant drifted about the ocean for two years, covering 5500 miles. She was loaded with \$20,000 worth of mahogany. She was sighted thirty-four times and traversed the whole Atlantic, from the west to the east coast and from the Azores to Newfoundland.—Washington Star.

**Guerrilla Omnibuses.**  
Private omnibuses are causing consternation among the bus riders of London. The pirates look just like the regular omnibuses. A passenger goes in, expecting to pay a fare of four or six cents, and cannot get out until he has paid a quarter. There is apparently no legal redress for the passengers, because the pirates carry inside a sign reading "A shilling any distance."—New Orleans Picayune.  
The New York News boasts that "from the figures furnished by the State Board of Equalization it appears that the apparent value of real estate, plus the assessed value of personal property, make an aggregate of nearly six billion dollars. This is equivalent to about one thousand dollars for every man, woman and child in the State, or five thousand dollars for an average family."