

THE PINE KNOT.

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VOL. 2.

SOUTHERN PINES, N. C., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1887.

NO. 2.

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It makes us very, very tired to see over and over again that bit of foolishness which protectionists urge against free trade: "Oh, it's an excellent theory, but very bad in practice."

This is uttered with an air of profound wisdom which leaves nothing to be desired. The statement sounds well, and those who are convinced by "sound and fury, signifying nothing" think there must be an argument in it somewhere. For the comfort of such people we will say that this statement is just as true about free trade as about anything else. It is also just as foolish as it was the first time it was uttered. A good theory that is bad in practice! A good machine that will not do the work for which it is made.

THE PROPOSED RAILROAD.

All our citizens who are interested in the future prosperity of this section should enter heartily into the project of building a railroad from the southern part of our town to Montgomery county. We take it that the desirability of this road does not need to be argued. That is a settled question. It would strike immediately into a country rich in turpentine and lumber and, after that was passed, would traverse a fertile farming district extending as far as Troy, the county-seat of Montgomery. The chief question for us to decide is this: Where shall the proposed road tap the R. & A. R. R.—at Southern Pines or at Blue's Crossing? It seems to us that there can be but one answer to this question, when the subject is viewed in all its bearings.

Sometimes nature marks out a path for a railroad so plainly that to follow any other course is a wilful thwarting of her plan and is sure to entail trouble and expense. Here is a case in point. If ever mother Nature did everything for a railroad except put down the ties and lay the iron, she has done it here, along the smooth back of the ridge that extends north-westerly from Southern Pines toward Montgomery county. For miles and miles there is not a stream to bridge or a cut of any depth to make. Men who know the ground say that a stout locomotive could pull its load over this route, without any grading at all. It is evident, then, that as long as the road keeps along on the ridge to Southern Pines grading will be but slight expense. But, on the other hand, if it goes to Blue's Crossing, it must encounter a very steep grade, besides bridging the creek. More than that, after the freight has been trans-

ferred to the R. & A. R. R. it has still to be hauled up the steep grade between Blue's Crossing and this place, and we all know what a tough pull that is, even now. With the additional freight this road would bring in, it would be tougher than ever.

Here is the case in a nutshell. The bulk of the freight that would be hauled on this road lies on top of the ridge. Southern Pines is on top of the ridge, at the point where the R. & A. R. R. crosses it, but Blue's Crossing lies at the foot of it. Is there any philosophy in hauling a lot of nava! stores and lumber down to the foot of the hill for the sake of tugging them up the same hill again? We don't see the philosophy or the fun either.

It is argued that, if the road starts at Blue's Crossing, it will strike immediately into a region where freightage is heavy, whereas, by the other route, it must go a few miles farther before it gets to heavy timber. Granting this to be so, it is a very temporary advantage at best. In a year or two this tract would be entirely worked out, and there would then exist not the slightest reason for the expense and inconvenience of running in at that point.

We will not mention, in addition, the advantage of an outlet from Southern Pines, so rapidly building up as a health resort, to the famous mineral springs which lie near the proposed route, or the ease with which the road could be carried on from here to Fayetteville. These are matters for future consideration. We hope, however, to hear both sides of this question fully set forth at the meeting on the 13th inst., at the Big Oak on Graham & McDonald's tramroad, a notice of which appears elsewhere in our columns.

CORN FODDER IN SILOS.

We visited R. M. Couch at Mr. Patrick's farm near Keyser, recently and learned something about saving corn fodder in silos, &c. He "topped" about 7 acres of corn, curing and saving it in fine order, then drove through and gathered the corn, hauled it to the barn and shucked it, putting it in an open crib where it has nicely dried. He kept his team and some hands cutting the butts and hauling to the silo where it was cut fine in feed cutters and the silo filled. Thus the whole of the corn crop is utilized for feed, cows eating the ensilage voraciously after it is softened by the change which it undergoes. Another advantage of this way lies in having the field clear from stalks for fall sowing or another spring cultivation. Mr. C. has enough cow peas to fill another silo after they have a little more growth.