FIRST OF ALL—THE NEWS.

The Boanoke Beacon.

PLYMOUTH, N. C., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1898.

NO. 20.

THE FAITHFUL COUPLE.

You are still a youth to me, John, You are still my bonny beau ; The same as when we plighted troth

Full fifty years ago!
The same as when our wedding bells
Rang out so glad and gay."
And here the good wife breathed a sigh
And shook her locks of gray. "It seemeth strange to me, John,

Who married you for aye, Who holds the ring you gave me as The apple of my eye,
To see the youngsters ne'er content
To give their hearts and hands, As we did in the good old times,

Without the scrip and lands!

"I didn't bring you much, John, And you had little more; But we had health in place of wealth And plenteous joys in store.

And through the joy and strife, dear,
We each one did our part;

And now we've one another still,
As we had at the start,

"The times have sadly changed, John, Since you and I were young The marriage tie is lightly held And many a heart is wrung. And yet you're young to me, John, And still my bonny beau; The same as when we plighted troth

Full fifty years ago! —Mrs. M. A. Kidder, in New York Ledger.

The Wrong Note.

and found that no one was there to hearing of the mother, the small meet me I was surprised. Twice I brother, the father and the shining walked around the station vainly peer- rival. ing into the gathering darkness in search of the Torrington trap. I was prised," she said, coldly. nonplussed, for I saw nothing but a "Cause!" I cried, "I received a rickety public hack, with a rickety horse and a rickey driver importuning asking me down for Sunday. I acme to become his fare. Loath to believe my eyes, I sought the station agent.

"Wasn't Mr. Torrington's carriage here to meet this train?" I asked. The man shook his head. "It was down for the 3 o'clock," he replied.

"Took a gentleman off."

This announcement served to increase my perplexity. Here I, having been formally asked to spend Sunday at a house and having formally accepted, was compelled to make my way thither in a public conveyance, while another had been met at the station and carried off in comfort, Over this unusual condition of affairs I puzzled my brain on the drive out myto Torrington's. The discomfort of my position was heightened by the increasing darkness, for the rickety horse made no very good speed, and I realized that the dinner hour was rapidly approaching. But at length we rattled through the gates and up the drive to the house.

Maria Torrington greeted me on the veranda, which was so illy lighted note on Thursday. I had an engagethat I could hardly see her face; yet it struck me that there was confusion | noon to try and settle a case I am con-

"I'm very glad to see you," she said. "It's a surprise, indeed." .
"Surprise?" I said. "You knew I

was coming." "Er-yes," she murmured, hesitat-"Er-yes," she murmured, hesitation. I took them both down ingly, "But it's so late we'd given town next day, and as the attorney you up. You must hurry for dinner, consented to my postponing the meet-Hobson, show Mr. Bottomley his ing I mailed the acceptance.'

Here a tall figure loomed out of the darkness into the lozeground, and beand a heavy voice said: "Hello! old man; glad to see you."
"Why, hello, Brooks!" I exclaimed.

"I'm glad to see you."

"Glad to see you-glad to see you," I repeated, as I followed Hobson into

the hall and up the stairs to my room. Glad to see Dick Brooks! Glad to see the man with whom I had been racing for two years for the fair prize below. When the servants had gone and I was alone I stamped the floor vigorously and tore open my bag with such violence as to send the contents scattering in every direction. This overlook the lack of hospitality in allowing me to make my own way to not forgive her asking Dick Brooks and myself at the same time and driving him home in triumph, as it were. I was angry-so angry that I crumdown to dinner with tan shoes on, and when I finally entered the drawing foom to find the family awaiting me. it was all standing out at the back. It seemed that, flustered and dishevelled, I was making a very poor showing in comparison with the immaculate

"I am very glad to see you," said Mrs. Torrington, cordially. "It's a special pleasure, as we understood you weren't—" Maria glanced you weren'tsharply at her mother, and the kindly woman stopped, flushed, and added: "As we were afraid you weren't coming. "The train must have been late.

But come." I shall never forget the dinner that followed. It seemed as though there was a pall over the little company, or, rather, over all but Brooks. He is a t of us were em-

tion.

When I left the train at Elmwood | family," I said, once we were out of

"I think we had cause to be sur-

note from your mother on Thursday cepted

"You declined," she said, in a tone that brooked no contradiction, "and so I telegraphed to Dick to come down. See what a position you placed me in. I couldn't let him know he was second fiddle.

We had stopped walking, and she stood facing me in the light of a window. Her glance was one of deep reproach. "We are always glad to have you, as you know, but this time it is just a little embarrassing."

"But I accepted," I maintained, "Your note said plainly, 'I regret

that another engagement prevents "Jove!" I broke into a laugh.

"What are you swearing about? I don't see anything particularly amus-

How stupid I had been from the first.

"Why, Maria," I said, "it was my fault, and until this minute it never occurred to me. I got your mother's ment to meet a lawyer late this aftercerned in. As I couldn't attend to the busin() and catch the last train out I determined to try and postpone the matter. So I wrote two notesone accepting, the other declining the

"You mean you got them mixed and sent the wrong one," she said. A half smile lighted het race for an instant, fors I could follow the servant who to give place to a settled look of dishad taken my bag my hand was seized pleasure. "And I wired to Dick Brooks,"

I laughed quietly. "What are you laughing at?" she

asked. "Brooks must be puzzled over you having us down here together."

She resented this inference as to our mutual relations by turning sharply and, carrying herself with exaggerated erectness, entered the house, with me following crestfallen

at her heels. Brooks was puzzled; so extremely puzzled that he hardly said a word at breakfast, but was quiet and thoughtthing was getting unpleasant. I could ful, an unusual mood for him. I could see that he had an important piece of engineering on hand and tried to block the house; I could forget her evident his schemes, but despite my subtle surprise at my coming after I had been | moves he succeeded in inducing Maria formally invited by her mother and to take him out to the pond and show had as formally accepted; but I could him the trout. For a time I chafed in the library under Mrs. Torrington's verbose recival of the difficulties of secarring funds for a certain deserving hospital, and at length, unable to bear pled three ties in dressing and started the restraint longer, rather abruntly excused myself to take a stroll about the place. My steps carried me in the direction of the pond, down the drive, remembered that I had forgotten to over a stretch of lawn, through a brush my hair and was conscious that grove, till I was halted at the sight of two hats protruding over the top of a

bush a few yards away.
"Maria," I heard Brooks say in a more earnest tone than I had deemed him capable of assuming, "I have waited now for a year for an answer. Sometimes my hopes have been raised -raised only to see you shower kind-

ness on that fellow-I whistled to the collie that had been bounding along near by, and when Maria Torrington and her companion stepped hurriedly into view I ried "Hello!"

Brooks looked foolish and replied 'Hello!" Then he began stirring the

dead leaves with his stick. For a moment all of us must have Ladmit, and, seeming looked foolish, as Maria, her face crimson, stared blankly at a distant treeby some se- top, while I leaned over and fell to

he pro- patting the shaggy dog. The silence was broken by the girl. igs and She had completely recovered her composure, and, fixing her eyes on me, said: "Harry, as you have doubtless heard, Dick-Mr. Brooks-has just asked me to marry him."

"Asked for the thousandth time."

uttered Brooks. His clean-shaven e was turning red from the tip of hin to where the hair divided. A dom objects to having it known, attentive to a woman, but to agreeable if he occupies the position of one rejected.

"And you have also asked me." Maria Torrington went on, with a coolness that would have astounded me had I not known her.

"Yes," I said, stupidly, "asked you

frequently." "I like you both very much," she said, fxing her eyes on Brooks, who was still fumbling his stick among the

It hardly seemed fair that she should look so kindly on my rival, so I called her eyes back to me by asking, "Can't

you choose between us?" "No," she replied, after a moment of thoughtful silence, "I've tried very hard to, but I can't. A plan of choosing was suggested to me by your un-

expected coming." "We are both to go away and stay away?" growled Brooks.

"One may come back." "I?" Brooks started eagerly toward her. She raised her hand in warning.

"I don't know which," she said. "There is an old saying about marriage being a lottery. I propose to increase the chances. If you two consent I shall carry out at once the scheme that I have got up after long and careful thinking."

"Are we to toss a penny?" I asked. "No. This afternoon I shall write two notes, one an acceptance, the other a refusal. They will be put in plain envelopes, mixed up, directed and mailed. The one of you who receives the refusal shall-

"Commit suicide."

Brooks' gloomy countenance gave credence to a suspicion that in event of his receiving the wrong note he would resort to self-destruction. The girl, however, speedily crushed all hopes of such escape from suffering.

"You shall not!" she cried. "If you do I shall never speak to either

of you again." There was a long silence, and then Maria looked from one to the other of us and said, earnestly: "You'll agree to my plan, won't you?"

"There is nothing else that we can do," said I.

"Nothing," repeated Brooks. In fact the scheme rather appealed to me, for of late things had not been going so smoothly as I could have desired. It had seemed at times as though Brooks was drawing away from me in the race. Now a chance had been offered. Once for all the question would be settled. Then, my luck was usually good. The plan was not so agreeable to my aval. Doubtless he feit that he had the advantage of me and in entering into such a game was gambling to obtain what was already almost his own. He had no other course but to assent, though, and he did it with rather bad grace.

"It seems hard," he said to Maria, "but you will it, and I obey. "It is agreed, then," said she.

Brooks and I bowed. The three of

us walked back to the house. F was up early next morning at my rooms in town. I had calculated everything to a nicety. The postman would reach the house at 8,10 o'clock. The train for Elmwood left at 9 o'clock. Provided the contents of the note that I expected were satisfactory, I would just have time to breakfast and reach the ferry. Should the note prove to be the wrong one, I certainly would not need any breakfast and much less to catch a train. I had been awake at dawn: excitement had driven sleep from my eyes, and the dragging hours gave me more than ample opportunity to figure out my hances. I revolved over and over gain in my mind the history of my equaintance with Maria Torriggton. reviewed my own life and picked out incidents in it in which luck had played a part, and I found such a balance in my favor that I was almost convinced that it was useless for me to worry over the outcome of the game of chance I was playing. Having brought myself to a state of comparative confidence, I began to pack a couple of bags full of clothes, for I had made up my mind to make a long stay at the Torrington house while I was about it. As I stuffed my golf things into a portmanteau I pictured Maria and myself plodding over the links together. As I folded up my riding clothes I thought of the gallops we were to have, and I broke into song. and as I sang I forgot all about the note that was then on its way to me and worked away as cheerily as though it were but the matter of an hour till was speeling to her. But a loud knock at the door called me back to realities, and when the hallboy held toward me a square envelope addressed in a small, angular hand, I realized that, perhaps, after all my joy had been premature. Decidedly premature! The note was brief, so brief that in an instant I comprehended its contents, sauk into a chair and, tossing the paper from me, repeated the fateful words: "Miss Torrington regrets that, owing to another engagement.

Why had I ever consented to risk all on a mere throw of dice? Why had I tried to win by a gamble what other men worked, waited and suffered for years to obtain! It would not have been so bad had Harkinson, who blazon it forth to all the | had been out of the game a year, won his worst rival in partie- her. But that snob brooks! He would

she cannot accept Mr. Blank's kind

invitation to become his wife."

ular, and in his presence, is not so never have an opportunity to gloat over me. I would go abroad, I would exile myself rather than witness one minute of his triumph. I would take the very next steamer-no! After all it would but add to the satisfaction of my rival to have me eating my heart out in some foreign city. Far better to stay right here in New York; to work and become famous, to bring home to the girl a full sense of what she had lost by her foolish lottery. But why should I waste my life in dull office drudgery? Why should I, with a solid income inherited from industrious forefathers, throw away the good things of this life for an empty bauble, for the sake of a petty revenge on a silly woman, Silly woman? A bold woman who had repaid my homage by gaming with me, Would a true-hearted girl, a girl worth having, have played with a man's love as she had done? She was a flirt-an infernal flirt. How lucky was I in getting the wrong note-how fortunate! I sprang from my chair and danced around the room, singing a snatch of a song. A bag, half packed for the journey, caught my eye, and in a frenzy of joy I kicked it and sent the contents flying over the floor.

A knock at the door interrupted the celebration of my good fortune. It was the hallboy with a telegram.

I opened the despatch and read: "Dreadful mistake. Letters mixed. Sent you wrong note. Come. Maria."-New York Sun.

TWO CALVES IN THREE MONTHS. Remarkable Performance of a Cow in

South Carolina. W. McC. Venning of Mount Pleasant is the proud possessor of a cow that has given birth to two calves within the last three months. In June she became the mother of a healthy calf. Since then she has been a steady milker, and a few nights ago astonished the little village by having another offspring. The second calf is a stout, well-built young animal, and is sporting around to the amusement of the villagers. The first one is almost large enough to eat hay, and is disposed to fight its younger brother for the mother's affection. The cow is still furnishing milk to her people, and does not seem to think her feat near so strange as the citizens of Mount Pleasant do. For a time Alhambra Hall is forgotten, and from all sides of the town the children have swarmed to see "de cow vot have two calfs in t'ree months

But there is no take about this cow. If the story is danbted it will be an easy ma her to get bundles of proof and afidavits from Mr. Venning and others. The oldest Charlestonian cannot recall an instance of a cow having made such a record. It is true there have been cows that have given birth to twins. The case is remarkable, and adds a new phase to cow cul-

ture, whatever that may be. Many persons who heard of the Mount Pleasant prodigy said it was all bosh. But it isn't, Good men, and honorable men, and men who know how to vouch for its truth, are prepared to prove it. This cow will go down in history. In years to come she will rival the one in Chicago that kicked over the kerosene lamp, or even the famous bull of the crockery store. Mount Pleasant feels a local pride in the animal, and it is probable that some official recognition will be taken of her patriotic service. It has been suggested that a jolification meeting be held and souvenirs in the shape of milk-shakes be presented to the guests, -Charleston (S. C.) News and

Certainly Complimentary. "John," said Mrs. Harkins, "I heard a nice compliment for you to-

Mr. Harkins put his paper down, twisted up the ends of his moustache, looked pleased, and said:

"Well, that's nothing so remarkable. I receive compliments nearly every Mrs. Harkins went on sipping her

tea, and her husband waited for her to resume. Finally, he said: "Well, why don't you tell me what

it was? Who was it that complimented me?" "Oh, you couldn't guess in a week."

"Mrs. Deering?" he ventured.

"No." "Not Bessie Fallington?" he rather eagerly suggested. "No."

"Oh, well, of course, if there's any secret about it, I don't care to hear what it is or who said it." "There isn't any secret about it, Mrs. Harkins sweetly replied.

Hannaford told me that every time he and I met he became more thoroughly convinced that you were a man of excellent taste." John Harkins then shoved his hands

down in his pockets and walked outside to think it over.

Inducements to Build.

There are in Vieuna 1263 old buildings whose owners are guaranteed eighteen years' freedom from taxation if they will tear them down and put new structures in their places. year 242 owners made use of this privilege. Philadelphia Ledger.

Bicycles are used for smuggling on pedestal to sheethe the frontiet of France and Belgium.

BIRDS TRAINED TO FISH.

PISCATORIAL HARVEST REAPED BY BY THE AID OF CORMORANTS.

No Less Than 42,000 Fishermen Utilize the Services of This Bird-How Cormor ants Are Taught, and How They Work for Their Owners - They Seldom Fail.

There are a great many ways of catching fish, but it is to the Chinese, says the Philadelphia Inquirer, that we must give the credit for the most peculiar scheme ever devised. On most of the rivers there is a great deal of fishing with live birds. That is, the birds do the fishing and the owners of the birds reap the harvest. At most of the smaller sea coast towns also the fishing is carried on by these birds, which are called cormorants. While the seas about and around China are supposed to teem with fish, such is not the case. China is more than overcrowded, and the natives are very fond of fish, dried or otherwise. Naturally, the fish are becoming scarcer every year, and as a last resort the Chinaman has cutely taken the cormorant into his confidence and employ. While this mode of catching fish is not new to the Chinese, it is to Americans. As a matter of fact, the Chinese have fished with these birds ever since anyone has known anything about China.

The Chinese government taxes fishermen who use more than ten birds, but in spite of that the average owned by each fisherman runs up to twenty, and statistics gathered by the government, and which have recently been made public, show that there are now no less than 42,000 men using them. The cormorant is very much like the American fish hawk, and on an average measures about five feet from tip to tip of the wings, although the bird only weighs about seven or eight pounds. The birds are very carefully trained, being bred in captivity for the purpose of becoming fishers, and when about half grown are taken in the boats on fishing expeditions and allowed to watch the performances of the other birds for several weeks. When just permitted to dive, they are secured by a light, strong cord fastaned round the ankle to prevent escape, and a wooden ring is tied round the neck to keep the greedy and hungry youngster from swallowing the fish he has caught. Both string and ring soon become unnecessary, however, for the bird quickly learns that it must not eat, and that it must return to the boat, and when these ideas are clearly impressed on the cormorantine brain. the Chinaman's assistant becomes extremely valuable. The bird is an expert diver, can remain under water several minutes at a time, and, being as quick as a fish in its movements, it seldom fails of success when dispatched on its errand.

The fishers sit on a small perch provided for them in the boat. On beginning business for the day, the fisherman kneels to the idol in the bow of his boat, lights a joss stick, picks up the first bird, and, with a prayer for its success, places it in the water. It instantly dives out of sight, and the Celestial lights his pipe and waits for its reappearance. A moment or two later it comes to the surface of the water, a hundred yards distant, with a fish in its bill, looks round for the boat, toward which it swims with its booty. It is received on board, the fish placed in a barrel of water, the bird is petted, rewarded with a small piece of fish, and No. 2 is dispatched. Thus the fishing goes on all day, the birds eagerly anticipating their turn for business and, apparently taking great interest in the sport. If a bird fails to procure a fish his master shouts at him a volley of Chinese oaths and signals for him to dive again, and if after a second effort the bird is still unsuccessful, he is angrily pulled into the boat, roundly cuffed for his failure, and thrown down in the bottom of the craft in disgrace. However, the birds are seldom unsuccessful, and, after a day's catch has been made, the cormorants are permitted to Ish for themselves. They are not, however, allowed to eat in their own way what they catch; to do so would undo the careful work of training. The fish are taken from them, laid on a board and chopped to pieces, while the eager, feathered gluttons watch the operation with glittering eyes. The board is passed along in front of the perch, while the fishers help themselves, each gobbling what he can capture.

Coins in Statuary Hall.

When the pedestal of the statue of Blair, which Missouri has presented to Statuary hall, was standing in that hall the other day awaiting its bronze figure, some one noticed that in the centre of the stone block was a small square hole. The Missouri delegation was present to watch the placing of the statue, and one of the congressmen, fishing through his pockets, found a penny. He put the coin in the square hole, and also deposited a bit of paper with his autograph.

The example was contagious. Every member of the delegation put in a penny and his name, some curious bystanders did likewise, and with time that the statue was plant there was almost enough

GITTER-SWEET.

The maid I loved, and still shall love, What song of mine her praise may ren-der?

All song could say, she stands above.
Beyond all words, being dear and tender,
Bright as the stars, yet not so high;
Fair as the moon, but far less fickie;

Sweet as the lovely months that lie Between the seed-time and the sickle.

Oh, were my vows like breezes shy
With fragrant sighs to breathe upon her,— Oh, were my hopes like flowers to lie About her path to do her honor,—

Oh, were my voice a silver lyre
To sound her praise and sing her glory,—
My happiness and heart's desire
Had not been now an ended story.
—Pail Mail Gazette.

HUMOROUS.

D'Auber (sneeringly) - What on earth, may I ask, is that picture of yours intended for? Hyart (complacently)-For sale, dear boy!

Skilner-What makes Colone Puffington so successful as a conversationalist? Babel—He's so taciturn—gives the others lots of chance to take

"Do you speak German?" Well, yes; but not to natives of the Fatherland, as they evidently did not learn the same language as I did at college."

"Was the bonnet expensively trimmed?" "Very It had a \$450 price tag of the Maison de Snooks, and I fancy that alone never cost less than \$20. Mrs. Gabbleton-I am told that Mrs.

Hennypeck-has lost all hold on her husband Old Aunt Broadhead-Yes; I've noticed that he has shaved off his chin whiskers. Kittie-I heard today that you married your husband to reform him.

Sarah-I did. Kittie-Why, I didn't know he had any bad habits. Sarah -He had one-he was a bachelor. Bill Pluggem-Failed in myattempt to hold up that bank cashier. Sam Swattem-What was the cause of the failure? Bill Pluggem - Over produc-

tion. I produced one gun and he produced two. "And are you really going to sing in the chorus?" "No-not exactly. When the manager heard my voice he said he'd let me go into the ballet." "Humph! If you had danced for him

ne might have let you sing." The Mistress - Be very careful, Marie, when you give little Algernon a bath He shrinks from it so. The New Nurse-Do he, me'm; that's bad. Wid two or three more shrinkin's

there'll be nothin' left of him. Robert-I see in the papers that there are germs in bills. Richard-What? Is that so? I must give directions at home, when Dunwell comes again with that little bill, to tell him that I do not consider it safe to receive it.

"I see," he said, looking up from his paper, "that a couple are to be married in a wild beasts' cage. What folly !" "I don't know," she retorted. "When one has to live with an old bear she might as well get used to it from the start." And the curtain dropped.

Benevolent Old Gentlemen (pointing a moral to village school children) -Now, why do I take all the trouble to leave my home and come over liere and speak to you thus? Can any boy tell me? Bright Child (innocently)-Please, sir, perhaps you like to hear yourself talk, sir.

"I know," said the somewhat irresponsible friend, "that you don't believe in signs in the ordinary sense. But don't you sometimes find yourself in circumstances which cause presentiments of evil?" "Yes; every time some people ask me for a loan feel as if I were going to lose money.'

"She has a wonderfully forgiving nature," said the young woman. offended her unintentionally, and when I spoke to her about it she said she was perfectly willing to overlook the past." "Yes," replied Miss Cayenne. "That is a specialty of hersoverlooking the past. She says that she is only 28 years of age.

Smallest Electric Motor. What is said to be the smallest

electric motor in the world was made to be worn as a scarfpin by D. Gordin, a jeweler and watchmaker of Mc-Kinney, Texas. Complete it weighs one pennyweight and three grains, The front of the motor is of highly polished gold, and the commutator segments are also of gold. Viewed from the front the motor presents only a gold appearance. The field magnets are made of two thicknesses of No. 22 neetiron scraped down and polished. hese are held together with gold screws and wound with No. 28 silkcovered wire. The armature is of the four-pole type, and is wound with No. 36 wire. The little brushes are of hammered copper, and are, of course, There is a small gold very thin. switch on a black rubber base, made with a pin, to be worn on the lapel of his vest. A small chloride of silver battery, carried in the vest pocket, furnishes current for the little machine. The motor runs at a very high speed, and its humming can be distinetly heard by any one standing near the wearer.

A Pensylvania slate quarry has just