

To all our customers and friends:

GREETINGS

The year which is just drawing to a close has been a most successful one with this bank, for which we have to thank our customers and friends who have made this possible.

We hope you have enjoyed a prosperous year, and that we have been of satisfactory service to you in bringing this about.

The Officers and Directors individually and collectively extend to you the Compliments of the Season, hoping that your Christmas may be a Merry one, and that the coming year may bring you increased prosperity and happiness.

Citizens National Bank
of Gastonia

GROUND-HOG DAY EXPOUNDED.

The Time and What it Signifies
Plainly Stated by The News
and Courier's Spartanburg
Correspondent.

News and Courier.

Spartanburg, Jan. 12.—Ground-hog day is always the 2nd day of February. The tradition and belief of many people is that the ground-hog comes out of his winter quarters that day for the first time.

If he sees his shadow he hurries back to his den for six weeks.

If it is cloudy and he sees no shadow he does not return.

February 2, 1904, was about half cloudy, the minimum temperature 20, maximum 50. The weather continued cold until the middle of March. The second day of last February was cloudy with no appearance of the sun. The four following weeks were the coldest of the winter, twenty of the days being below the freezing point. The first two weeks of March were cold, with frequent frosts.

It is doubtful whether many of the readers of The News and Courier have ever seen a woodchuck or a ground-hog. This little animal is found generally east of the Rocky Mountains but not in the South Atlantic States. They burrow in the winter and remain in a torpid state.

Of course there is nothing in the sign but for several thousands of years people have been clinging pertinaciously to signs and portents. There may be many descendants of our Dutch settlers in this State and North Carolina, who will clean their springs only on certain phases of the moon. Intelligent farmers are guided by the moon in planting. There are people who will not begin a journey on Friday or begin an important enterprise.

He Had Trouble With It.

The Catholic Citizen.

Judge Guinn is a leading lawyer and Democratic politician of Vandalia, Ill. He is "on the water wagon now," but it was not always thus.

Recently, a mail order whiskey house which had sold him "goods" in other days wrote inquiring about his patronage. We subjoin a portion of the judge's reply:

"Your favor is before me, and since you address me as your 'kind friend,' and make me so seemingly honorable and fair a proposition, I deem a reply in order.

"First of all, it is due that I say to you that all the orders that I ever planted with you were very promptly filled and the goods ordered came accordingly to your agreement. So in this regard I have no complaint to urge.

"You say in your letter, however, 'in case you [I] have had any trouble with our goods'—let us know at office and we will be pleased to fix up any trouble you have had without cost to you."

"Now, gentlemen, for fifteen years just prior to April, A. D. 1901, I was what temperance cranks called a drunkard. I was more or less drunk all that time. I used a large amount, or quantity, of your best brands of liquors, but on the 9th day of April, 1901, I was sitting in my office all alone, one dreary afternoon. I was sick, lonely, and more than ordinarily sad. I began to reason with myself. I knew that whiskey had robbed me of every reasonable prospect in life. When I began the habit of using strong drink I was a man of more than ordinary good health, was regarded as a good lawyer and had a large and growing practice, was worth in

the neighborhood of thirty thousand dollars.

"On that afternoon I was face up against the fact that by reason of strong drink I had lost all of my desirable clients, my money was all gone, I was involved in debt to a hopeless extent, my health was ruined, I thought of my family, they were almost on the verge of want, I had lost the respect of all my friends to a very large degree. There I sat, with a bottle of your best whiskey before me (one that was left of my order that you filled about March 28, 1901). I said to myself—it is late in life to do so, but I will quit strong drink—I was a profane man—I said aloud, 'Schweyer & Co., you and your whiskey can go to hell!' I will never drink another drop of whiskey while I live. I am keeping that promise.

"I may here remark that you folks are the first people who sold me whiskey that have ever made inquiry to know if it caused me any trouble—the other fellows did not seem to care whether their liquors caused me any trouble or not."

As the whiskey house in question had offered "to fix up any trouble," the judge had "with-out any cost to him," the judge suggested that they send him \$100,000.

"Yes, gentlemen, your liquors, even though I always bought the best, as your books will show, caused me more trouble than I could describe to you if I were to write unceasingly for one whole year. . . . I have already told you that your liquors and those of a like character bought from others stole from me my health, wealth, and good opinion of my associates, and left me a perfect wreck."

One hundred thousand dollars would not begin to make recompense for all my troubles. I will leave it to your generosity, seeing that you are anxious to retain my friendship, to say how much you will send me."

The whiskey house did not of course remit; but suppose the liquor business should make a bona fide offer to compensate consumers for "any trouble had" with its goods—how many thousands, even of "moderate drinkers," might not put in their bills for losses of health, and business opportunity, and energy, and above all—fatty degeneration of the moral fiber?

TRAILING REYNARD IN AUTO

Novel Scheme of a Fox Hunting Enthusiast.

A Nashville (Tenn.) fox hunting enthusiast, Professor J. P. Draughon, puts his automobile to a novel use whenever he starts out on the trail of wily Reynard, says the Motor Age. He designed and had built a trailer for carrying the dogs, and this he attaches to his motor car and bows away to the best fox hunting grounds, some fifteen or twenty miles distant from Nashville.

The trailer holds twenty dogs and has an upper deck. Tents are carried on this part, while underneath is a compartment which is used to carry cooking utensils, etc. In the event a hunt is planned and executed. The professor hit upon the plan of attaching a trailer to his car to enable him and his friends to enjoy Nashville in the afternoon and yet reach the hunting ground without worry as loss of time from his business and turn his dogs loose fresh and ready for the sport. When he arranges for a trip at some distance he sends his horses to the hunting place or some convenient paddocks in the afternoon, and when he and his friends arrive the horses are saddled and the dogs let out of the trailer and the fox is soon going.

After the chase by special signal the dogs come in, get into the trailer, and the hunting party is soon on the return trip to the city.

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UNCLE SHADRACH'S GIFT.

Christmas Story of an Old Time
Barber.

A Tale of Human Interest With
the Scene Laid in Mecklen-
burg County.—An Accurate
Portrayal of an Old Negro and
His Anti-Slavery Master.

Charlotte Chronicle, 11th.

The following story was written by Mr. Howard A. Banks, formerly editor of The Chronicle, and was awarded second prize in the short story contest in which members of The Philadelphia Record staff competed. "A white Chris'mus to-morrow!" said Uncle Shadrach Davidson, as he shuffled out of his cabin door into inch-deep snow, which had fallen during the night. "I 'lowed dem lead-cullud clouds dat blowed up yestiddy ev'nin' had snow in 'em."

It was even so. A mantle of immaculate white wrapped the broad Catawba-washed plantation in Southern Mecklenburg, near where the county touches the South Carolina border.

"Hit mus' be nigh on t' 5 o'clock—time for me to be 'tintin' up to de big white house ter buil' Marse Polk a f'er," continued the old negro. Stooping suddenly, ere he reached his gate, he cried out in soft, sympathetic tone, as he would sympathize in comforting a child with a cut finger.

"Well, now ef dis ain't too bad!"

He proceeded to shake the snow from the petals of a blood-colored Jacqueminot that had been a blossom for several days past in too great trust to a late autumn's beguiling.

"Jack Frost" is de wolf what's kilt my po' H' Red Ridin' hood rose," he went on, lifting the sluice gates of sympathy from his fathomless big heart.

"Tain't safe fer small chillun to stray away from home, nar fer roses to keep on blo-min' a'ter de las' o' November. 'But dis same snow dat makes a shroud fer my lag-behin' flowers, will furnish de young folks wid fine sleddin' and snow ballin'." The old man soliloquized, with optimistic philosophy. "Dis col' raw mornin' air howsomever, cert'n'y does cut throo dis ol' nigger's bones like a sword. Hit ain't doin' dis rheumatism no good. Righty-fo' year old, 'come nex' Fibwary 'cordin' es it's set down in Marse Polk's big Bible. Shadrach Davidson won't be in dese low ground's o' no-ter to ketch ol' Marster Chris'mus gif a year from to-morrow."

Pausing in his soliloquy, the venerable servant lifted his eyes heavenward, in the rising snow clouds just beginning to clear away a single brilliant star gleamed in the Southern skies immediately over the crest of King's Mountain, whose high heaving outlines were beginning to be visible in the gray of the dawn.

"De sign o' de Son o' Man in heav'n" exclaimed the old man, rapturously. "De Star o' Bethlehem mus' er look like dat on de fus' Chris'mus."

The sight appealed to the strong religious nature of the aged negro, which he shared with all the race. He was in a soul ecstasy, and the spirit of prayer came upon him. Oblivious, for the moment to the keen wind he threw his broad-brimmed felt hat on the snow and offered a fervent petition:

"Have mercy, O Lord," he began, "on a po' sinner wid a black skin, but a white heart—fer Thou has created in me a clean heart an' renewed a right spirit widin me. Thou knowes, O Lord dat if Shadrach Davidson had er been born way back in de days o' Herod de King 'stid er in slay'ry times, and had er been a camel driver fer one o' dem wise men from de East, 'stid er a mule teamster on de Davidson cotton plantation, dat he would er followed de Star wid exceedin' great joy twell it come to a stan'till over de barn wher de young Ch'ill, wrapped in dem swaddlin' clo'es, was lying in de hayrack. Thy servant O, Lord, has followed de Star, anyhow, de bes' he knowed how, all his life twell now his hair's es white es a cotton boll in October. He could er had his freedom a'ter de Surrender, and dey was plenty o' good jobs waitin' fer him wid de quality in Charlit ef he had er wanted 'em. But how could I leave Marse Polk, O Lord, when he ain't never helt up his bald sence dat day I brung home young Marse Lee—and him de only son—from Gettysburg, wid de red stains on his gray uniform, and de boy's mother fell daid over de coffin? Dey ain't no great er lov' den for

a man ter lay down his life fer his fren', I ain't been called on ter lay down no life, but I 'se lived out a might long life fer Marse Polk. It's hard to hear folks callin' him a hermit—but dat's because de Mistress and de young Marster was buried de same day. It's hard to hear 'em callin' him a miser—but kin he he'p it ef de intrus' cumulates on his money?

"Hit says in de word, Lord, dat Thou ain't no respecter er pussons. Grant dat de angel what keeps de books may put down sump'n to de credit uv a po' sinner dat never knowed nothin' but slay'ry—slay'ry cause he coud'n he'p it fo' 'Mancipation an' slay'ry uv his own free will and acco'd ever sence. Amen."

The combination of light-wood knots and hickory logs soon had a roaring fire spanning the big brass andirons in Col. J. K. Polk Davidson's room.

"Morning, Marse Polk, mornin' suh," said his aged valet as rising from his knees he perceived that his master was awake. "Hit snowed las' night, suh, and we will have a white Christmas to-morrow. Why what's de matter wid you Marse Polk?"

A sudden leaping up of the flames on the hearth, making it lighter in the yet dark room, revealed a strange look of suffering and worry on the old master's face.

"I have a dread of tomorrow, Shadrach, in spite of it's being Christmas, and a white Christmas, too. It is because of what I have seen in a dream this past night."

"Marse Polk you's goin' on 79 year ol', an' dreams ain't never give you no onceslucses befo' is dey?"

"Who is the richest man in Mecklenburg county, Shadrach?"

"Why, you is suh, ov co'se, but what's dat got to do wid dis vision?"

"A good deal, old friend; a good deal. But, say, Shadrach, Bob Blackwood has made big money buyin' cotton in his day, and Tom does the largest mercantile business in Piedmont North Carolina."

"But dey ain't none o' dem Charlit fo'ks got de money you is, suh. Ef you's been dreamin' 'bout de richest man in de county, I'm mighty afeared you's been dreamin' 'bout yo'se'f."

"Listen, Shadrach, I seemed to see ghostly, invisible hands, removing the hanging holly of holiday season, and in its stead they tied funeral crape to a door knob. Then I knew that somebody was dead on Christmas day. Thereupon a coffin came before my vision and along its side in fiery letters, was this inscription: 'The richest man in Mecklenburg!'"

"I ain't no prophet, Marse Polk," the servant broke in as the planter concluded "I ain't nothin' but a po' preacher ov de African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. It ain't fer me to say if dis is de han'writin on de wall like you war goin'—to be seized, suddin' like. You aise got no misery in yo' haid is you, Marse Polk?"

"No I feel as well as I did yesterday saye for the bad night this dream has given me."

"Ner no survivous gnawin' in yo' vitals, nowher."

"No."

"Dey's some es says dreams goes by contraries, but if you'll excuse de like o' me for de liberty I takes in axin' de question, Marse Polk, ef dis dream is to come true as meanin' you, is you—'is you ready for de sudden summons, suh?"

The old planter turned his head the other way on his pillow.

"I fear not, Shadrach," he answered at last sadly.

My chances of heaven are not as good as yours. But listen I may be foolish. It may be I'm in my dotage, but any way have one of the farm hands ride to Charlotte before daybreak to-morrow, and tell Dr. Joseph Graham that Polk Davidson wants him. And you Shadrach will sleep on the cot here in my room this Christmas eve. I have a presentiment that this dream will be fulfilled, as was the one I dreamed on the second day of the fighting at Gettysburg when my boy died on the slope of Cemetery Hill.

It was the servant however, not the master who needed the physician's services on Christmas morning. Paralysis shot its benumbing shaft into the former slave's weakened body. The master made his own fire Christmas morning.

"Do all you can for my old valet, Graham," he said. But the doctor shook his head.

"He'll not live out the day," was the result of the diagnosis. "He appeared to have weakened himself by overtaxing his strength in his advanced age."

"Have you exerted yourself lately, Shadrach," the planter inquired as the physician drove away.

"I hauled a load o' wood out o' de 'lowance o' my own suh, to de widder Clayton's down in de bend o' de river. Dat triflin' boy o' her'n was on a spree an' chopped a couple o' sticks er so, an' dere wern't no fire in her house. I ain't never been quite de same man sence, Marse Polk. We'll say no more about dat howsomever, but let me ax yer d'f. Wid me de sick man and you well dis Chris'mus day what comes ov de fulfillment, ov yo' dream, Marse Polk?"

"Shady"—the master used the word that was long years ago his endearing name—for the little slave playmate—"it must be that you are the richest man in the country. In the selfishness that has too much characterized my life since we buried his mother, and him, I concluded that I was the doomed man of my dream. But the doctor says you can't live through the day. Shady you have the riches that I know nothing of. You have laid up treasure where it counts—where the Good Book says the moths

Inventory Gleanings

Some Price Attractions on Some
Popular Lines

We have
just com-
pleted in-
ventory and
in going
throughour
stock we
have laid a-
side and
marked down
many choice
items which
we wish to
close out at
once. :: ::

SKIRTS.

Our line of skirts, regular retail price from \$3.50 to \$5.00, the whole lot to go quick at \$2.50. Skirts from \$1.75 and \$2.00 reduced, for prompt buyers, to \$1.25.

SHORT JACKETS.

Our line of Short Jackets that sold from \$5 to \$10. Entire lot will go now at, each, \$3.00. One lot ¾ length coats, sold for \$12.50 to \$15.00, will go for, each, \$10.00. Complete line of raincoats in stock from \$8 to \$10. We carry them the year round. The regular price of these coats was \$10 and \$12.50.

DRESS GOODS.

One lot of dress goods which sold regularly for 30c and \$1.25 per yard to go at 20c, 50c, and 60c per yard. These are excellent values.

GINGHAMS.

One lot of excellent dress gingham 8 cents; one lot 5 cents. Splendid assortment of outings at 5c, 7½c, and 10c per yard.

UNDERSKIRTS.

Greatest values ever shown. See our leaders at 75c and 95c. All the new styles and high grades carried, constantly in stock.

TRIMMED HATS.

350 Trimmed Hats to go Quick! Worth a
Sight More Money Than We Ask.

One lot of 200 trimmed hats closing out at 35c each. Another lot of 150 trimmed hats to go, each, at 65c.

These hats sold regularly from \$1 to \$3 each, but the sifting given by our inventory throws upon our bargain counters this attractive lot of 350 hats. Our show window display gives an idea.

Everything
here offered
is good stock
and worth
far more
than we ask
for it. Stock-
taking time
placed these
offerings on
our bargain
counter and
we have made
low prices
to move them
quick. :: ::

James F. Yeager

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WITH RENT MONEY

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for rent could be saved by little un-
til you could buy a home with it?
IT IS TRUE!

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helps you solve questions of this kind. It is one of the
great purposes of this institution to help the wage-
earner become a wage-saver, and to help the home-
renter become a home owner. :: :: ::

New series of stock began Jan. 1st.

Learn particulars by inquiring of

C. B. ARMSTRONG, Sec'y

**Royal
Baking
Powder**
is made of Grape
Cream of Tartar.
Absolutely Pure.

Makes the food
more Wholesome
and Delicious.

and the thieves can't touch it."

"It ain't ve' becomin' in me to say it, L'I' Marster—that used to be Shadrach's name for his white playmate—but some such idea as dat was runnin' thoo my own haid. Cept fer leavin' you I ain't sorry I'm goin' to die. Do you min' dat go' pen de ol' mistiss, yo' mother, give you fer sayin' de shorter Catechism without minis'n nothin' de day you was 12 years old? Ef you can lay yo' hand on it, I wish you'd git it Marse Polk."

"And now, L'I' Marster, will you copy on a piece of paper out o' yo' old fam'l Bible—John's Gospel, de sixteenth verse from de third chapter?"

In a hand that trembled with age and grief combined, the old planter scrawled with his pen of gold.

"Now sign my name to dat, Marse Polk, and when you makes my mark lemme tack de pen. One he's ain't parallel yet. Thank you suh. Dat's my deed to my property, to a inheritance incorruptible, undecied and dat lasteth not away."

The voice of the servant grew feeble. Seeing his lips yet moving, the master bent over the cot and caught the last words:

"Everlastin' life for a Chris'mus gif!"

The freight flickered weirdly in the twilight of that Christmas day on the corpse of the aged slave and on the form of the millionaire master that knelt beside it as he prayed:

"God be merciful to me a pauper!"

HOWARD A. BANKS.

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