

THE FREE CITIZEN.

E. A. WEBSTER, Editor and Proprietor.

A Weekly Paper Devoted to Temperance, Literature and Politics.

VOLUME II.

ORANGEBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1875.

NUMBER 15.

TIMELY TOPICS.

THE Freedman's Bank at Washington has commenced paying to depositors the twenty per cent. dividend decided on some weeks ago.

GEN. GARFIELD says that he intends to move a repeal of the law increasing the postage upon newspapers as soon as congress assembles.

RUSSIA'S part in our exhibition next year may be comparatively small, but it will be interesting all the same. It will consist of products which cannot be duplicated by any other country, for they are to be confined to those which are peculiar to her soil and climate.

THEY have recently had the seventh annual cat show in the Crystal Palace, London. The highest priced cat was valued by its owner at \$50,000, but it didn't get the first prize. "Tommy Dodd," aged nine years, valued at \$500 was the winner. There were over five hundred cats exhibited.

THE city of Berlin has but one steam fire engine, the rest being old-fashioned hand machines, and the water supply is inadequate. Recently an immense new hotel was burned, and water was brought in barrels and pumped feebly to the second story where there was no fire. At length a heavy rain extinguished the flames.

WASHINGTON dispatches assert that the Commissioner of Internal Revenue will not recommend any increase of taxation this winter. The receipts on whiskey, etc., during the last year have been larger than in any year, except 1870, since the taxes were first imposed, and at the increased rate they will be still further augmented during the current fiscal year.

COFFEE drinkers will please remember that the crop reports do not hold out any comforting assurances. A falling off has been reported all around. Of old Java there is a considerable falling off. Rio shows a still more marked diminution, though there is some coffee of the previous crop left over. The islands near Java show a decrease of about fifty per cent. in production.

It is a significant fact that the grain trade of New York has fallen off this year 18,772,519 bushels as compared with last year, while the delivery at Baltimore is greater than last year. Philadelphia also shows a gain. When our southern railway system is made what it ought to be, Charleston, Port Royal and Savannah will export more grain, flour and meat than any other Atlantic cities.

PEOPLE who write letters will find instruction in the facts shown in the report of the dead letter office last year. Some 3,640,797 letters went astray, mainly through carelessness in directing. There was taken out of these letters the astonishingly large sum of \$3,500,000. All of this was returned to its owners with the exception of \$400,000, which remains as a profit to the Post-office Department.

FITZROY, believed to have been chief in the organization of the whiskey ring at St. Louis, went into court Tuesday, and, to the dismay of his counsel, pleaded guilty to all the counts in the indictment against himself. Thorpe, a late store-keeper, also threw himself on the mercy of the court. This action is considered at St. Louis as the most significant episode in the downfall of the once formidable underground organization.

A COMPARATIVE analysis of the public debt statement published shows a decrease in legal tenders during the last month of \$705,000, and in fractional currency of \$102,000. The Treasury balance increased nearly \$11,000,000. The five-twenties of 1862 had disappeared from the interest bearing debt, having been absorbed by the new fives. The \$10,000,000 of 1864 bonds called in, leave but about \$12,000,000 of the new fives not taken. There are about \$8,000,000 of the new 64s still outstanding, and they will be called in before the 15th inst.

SAYS an English paper: A sample of condensed milk, weighing about one hundred pounds, was exhibited at the rooms of the Society of Arts, and an interesting experiment made thereon. This mammoth piece of solidified fluid was prepared by Hooker's process. It had been exposed to the action of the air for four years and three months, yet its quality was so excellent that in a few minutes it was resolved, by churning, into good fresh butter. This trial was only one of a series made at the International Exhibition, South Kensington, and elsewhere. In each case the same satisfactory result was obtained.

BUILDING ON THE SAND

BY ELIZA COOK.

'Tis well to woo, 'tis well to wed,
For so the world hath done
Since myriads grew, and roses blew,
And morning brought the sun.
But have a care, ye young and fair,
Be sure you pledge with truth;
Be certain that your love will wear
Beyond the days of youth!
For if ye give not heart for heart,
As well as hand for hand,
You'll find you've played the unwise part,
And 'built upon the sand.'

'Tis well to save, 'tis well to have
A goodly store of gold,
And hold enough of shining stuff,
For charity is cold.
But place not all your hope and trust
In what the deep mine brings;
We cannot live on yellow dust
Unmixed with purer things.
And he who piles up wealth alone
Will often have to stand
Beside his coffin chest, and own
'Tis 'built upon the sand.'

'Tis good to speak in friendly guise
And soothe where'er we can;
Fair speech should bind the human mind,
And love link man to man.
But stop not at the gentle words;
Let deeds with language dwell;
The one who pities starving birds,
Should scatter crumbs as well.
The mercy that is warm and true
Must lend a helping hand,
For those that talk, yet fail to do,
But 'build upon the sand.'

THE TWO NEIGHBORS.

One evening as the twilight was dusking into deeper shades, Farmer Welton stood in his doorway, with a gun in his hands, and saw a dog coming out from his shed. It was not his dog, for his was of a light color, while this was surely black. The shed alluded to was open in front, with double doors for the passage of carts, and a wicket for pedestrians at the back; and this shed was part of a continuous structure connecting the barn with the house. Around back of this house was the sheep-fold.

There had been trouble upon farmer Welton's place. Dogs had been killing his sheep—and some of the very best at that. He had declared, in his wrath, that he would shoot the first stray dog he found prowling around his premises. On this evening, by chance, he had been carrying his gun from the house to the barn, when the canine intruder appeared. Aye, and in the barn he had been taking the skin from a valuable sheep which had been killed and mangled with tigerish ferocity.

So, when he saw the strange dog coming through his shed, he brought the gun to his shoulder, and, with quick sure aim, fired. The dog gave a leap and a howl, and having whirled around in a circle, two or three times, he bounded off in a tangent, yelping painfully, and was soon lost to sight.

"Hallo! what's to pay now, Welton?" "Ah—is that you, Frost?" "Yes. Been shootin' somethin' aint ye?" "I've shot a dog, I think." "Ye es. I seed him scootin' off. It was Brackett's, I reckon."

Before the farmer could make any further remark, his wife called to him from the porch, and he went in. Very shortly afterward a boy and a girl came out through the shed, as the dog had come. Down back of Welton's farm, distant half a mile, or so, was a saw and distill mill, with quite a little settlement around it; and people having occasion to go on foot from that section to the farms on the hill could cut off a long distance by crossing Welton's lot. The boy and girl were children of Mr. Brackett. When they reached home they were met by a scene of dire confusion. Old Carlo, the grand old Newfoundland dog—the loving and the loved—the true and the faithful—had come home shot through the head, and was dying. The children threw themselves upon their shaggy mate, and wept and moaned in agony.

Mr. Brackett arrived just as the dog breathed his last. One of the older boys stood by with a lighted lantern—for it had grown quite dark now—and the farmer saw what had happened. "Who did this?" he asked, groaning.

"John Welton did it," said Tom Frost, coming up at that moment. "He's been losin' sheep, an' a guess he's got kind o' wrathy."

"But my dog never killed a sheep—never! He's been reared to care for sheep. How came he down there?" "He went over to the mill with Sis and me," said the younger boy, sobbing as he spoke; "and he was running on ahead of us toward home. I heard a gun just before we got to Mr. Welton's, but oh! I didn't think he could have shot poor Carlo!"

Mr. Brackett was fairly beside himself. To say he was angry would not express it. He loved that dog—it had been the chief pet of his household for years. He was not a man in the habit of using profane language, but on the present occasion a fierce oath escaped him; and in that frame of mind—literally boiling with hot wrath and indignation—he started for Welton's.

John Welton and Peter Brackett had been neighbors from their earliest days, and they had been friends, too. Between the two families there had been a bond of love and good will, and a spirit of fraternal kindness and regard had marked their intercourse. Both the farmers were hard-working men, with strong feelings and positive characteristics. They belonged to the same religious society, and sympathized in politics. They had had warm discussions, but never yet a direct falling out. Of the two, Welton was the more intellectual, and, perhaps, a little more tinged with pride than was his neighbor. But they were both hearty men, enjoying life for the good it gave them.

Mr. Welton entered his kitchen, and stood the empty gun up behind the door. "What's the matter, John?" his wife asked, as she saw his troubled face.

"I'm afraid I've done a bad thing?" he replied regretfully. "I fear I have shot Brackett's dog."

"Oh, John!" "But I didn't know whose dog it was. I saw him coming out from the shed—it was too dark to see more than that it was a dog. I only thought of the sheep I had lost, and I fired."

"I am sorry, John. O, how Mrs. Brackett and the children will feel. They set everything by old Carlo. But you can explain it."

Yes—I can explain it. Half an hour later Mr. Welton was going to his barn with a lighted lantern in his hand. He was thinking of the recent unfortunate occurrence, and was sorely worried and perplexed. What would his neighbor say? He hoped there might be no trouble. He was reflecting thus when Mr. Brackett appeared before him, coming up quickly, and stopping with an angry stamp of the foot.

Now there may be a volume of electric influence even in the stamp of a foot, and there was such an influence in the stamp which Brackett gave; and Welton felt it, and braced himself against it. There was, moreover, an atmosphere exhaling from the presence of the irate man at once repellent and aggravating.

"John Welton! you have shot my dog!" The words were hissed forth hotly. "Yes," said Welton, icily. "How dared you do it?" "I dare shoot any dog that comes prowling around my buildings, especially when I have had my sheep killed by them."

"But my dog never troubled your sheep, and you know it." "How should I know it?" "You know that he never did harm to a sheep. It wasn't in his nature. It was a mean, cowardly act, and (an oath) you shall suffer for it!" "Brackett, you don't know to whom you are talking."

"O ho!" (another oath) "We'll find out! We'll see! Don't put on airs, John Welton. You ain't a saint. I'll have satisfaction, if I have to take it out of your hide!" "Peter, you'd better go home and cool off. You are making yourself ridiculous."

Now, really, this was the unkindest cut of all. Not all the mad words of Brackett put together were so hard as this single sentence; and John Welton put all the bitter sarcasm of the command into it. Brackett burst forth into a torrent of invectives, and then turned away.

Half an hour later John Welton acknowledged to himself that he had not done exactly right. Had he, in the outset—in answer to Brackett's first outburst—told the simple truth—that he had shot the dog by mistake; that he was sorry; and that he was willing to do anything in his power to make amends—had he done this, his neighbor would probably have softened at once. But it was too late now. The blow had been struck; and he had been grossly insulted; and he would not back down.

Mr. Brackett was not so much reflective. He only felt his wrath, which he nursed to keep it warm. That evening he hitched his horse to a job-wagon and went down to the village after a barrel of flour. Having transacted his store business, he called upon Laban Pepper, a lawyer, to whom he narrated the facts of the shooting of his dog.

Pepper was a man anxious for fees. He had no sympathy or soul above that. "You say your dog was in company with two of your children?" "Yes."

"And this passage over Mr. Welton's land, and through his shed, has been freely yielded by him as a right of way to his neighbors?" "Yes sir, ever since I can remember."

"Then, my dear sir, Welton is clearly liable. If you will come with me, we will step into Mr. Garfield's and have a suit commenced at once."

Mr. Garfield was the trial justice. All this happened on Friday evening. On Saturday it had become noised abroad in the farming district that there was not only serious trouble between neighbors Welton and Brackett but that they were going to law about it.

On Sunday morning John Welton told his wife he would not attend church. She could go if she liked. She had no need to ask her husband why he would not go out. She knew he was unhappy, and that he could not bear to meet his old neighbor in the house of God while the dark cloud was upon him. Nor did she wish to meet either Mr. or Mrs. Brackett. So they both stayed at home.

Peter Brackett was even more miserable than John Welton, though perhaps he did not know it. He held in close companionship the very worst demon a man can embrace—the demon of wrathful vengeance; and in order to maintain himself at the strain to which he had set his feelings, he was obliged to nurse the monster. He did not attend church on that day, nor did his wife. Two or three times during the calm, beautiful Sabbath, as he glanced over toward his neighbor's dwelling, he found himself beginning to wish that he had not gone to see John Welton in such a heat of anger; but he put the wish away, and nursed back his wrath.

On Monday, toward noon, the constable came up from the village, and read to John Welton an imposing legal document. It was a summons issued by Wm. Garfield, Esq., a justice of the peace and quorum, ordering the said John Welton to appear before him, at two o'clock, on Wednesday, at his office, then and there to answer to the complaint of Peter Brackett, etc. The officer read the summons, and left with the defendant a copy.

It was the first time John Welton had ever been called upon to face the law. At first he was awe-stricken, and then he was wroth. He told himself that he would fight it to the bitter end. And now he tried to nurse his wrath, and became more unhappy than before.

On Tuesday evening, Parson Surely called upon Mr. Welton. The good man had heard of the trouble, and was exceedingly exercised in spirit. Both the men were of his flock, and he loved and respected them both. He sat down alone with Welton, and asked him what it meant.

"Tell me calmly and candidly all about it," he said. "After a little reflection, Mr. Welton told the story. He knew the old clergyman for a true man and whole-hearted friend, and he told everything just as he understood it."

"And neighbor Brackett thinks even now, that you shot the dog knowing it was his?" "I suppose so."

"If you had told him the exact facts in the beginning, do you think he would have held his anger?" "This was a hard question for John Welton, but he answered it manfully. "Truly, parson, I do not think he would."

"Were you ever more unhappy in your life than you have been since this trouble came?" "I think not."

"And, if possible, neighbor Brackett is more unhappy than you?" "Do you think so?" "Yes. He is the most angry and vengeful."

A brief pause and then the parson resumed: "Brother Welton, with you are needed but few words. You are a stronger man than brother Brackett. Do you not believe he has a good heart?" "Yes."

"I wish you could show him how true and good your heart is." "Parson!" "I wish you could show him that you possess true Christian courage."

"Parson, what do you mean?" "I wish you had the courage to meet him and conquer him."

"How would you have me do it?" "First, conquer yourself. You are not offended?" "No, Go on."

And thereupon the good old clergyman drew up his arm and laid his hand upon his friend's arm, and told him just what he would have him do. He spoke earnestly, and with tears in his eyes.

"Brother Welton, have you the heart and courage to do this?" The farmer arose and took two or three turns across the floor; and finally he said: "I will do it!"

On the following day, towards the middle of the forenoon, Peter Brackett stood in his door-yard with his head bent. He was thinking whether he should harness his horse and be off before dinner, or whether he would wait until afternoon. He could not work; he could not even put his mind to ordinary chores.

"And I was another, Peter; if I hadn't been I should have told you the truth at once, instead of flaring up. But we will understand it now. You can see the Justice."

"Justice be hanged!—John— Dang it all! what's the use? There!—Let's on it so!"

From her window Mrs. Brackett had seen the two men come together, and she trembled for the result. By and by she saw her husband, as though flushed and excited, put out his hand. Mercy! was he going to strike his neighbor? She was ready to cry out with alacrity—the cry was almost upon her lips—when she beheld a scene that called forth rejoicing instead. And this was what she saw:

She saw these two strong men grasp one another by the hand, and she saw big, bright tears rolling down their cheeks; and she knew that the fearful storm was passed, and that the warm sunshine of love and tranquility would come again.

Arsenic Eaters.

At a meeting of the German natural philosophers in Vienna, Dr. Knapp introduced two arsenic eaters from Styria; the one ate .30 grammes of yellow sulphuret of arsenic, the other .40 grammes of arsenic acid in sight of the assembly.

In his lecture on the arsenic eaters Dr. Knapp said, among other things: "It is difficult to give any certain particulars as to the increase in number of arsenic eaters. I have convinced myself that there exist many of them in Upper Styria, and also in Middle Styria; very many stable boys, hostlers, wood cutters, and foresters, are known to me as arsenic eaters; even the female sex is addicted to the practice. Many began already at seventeen or eighteen years of age to take arsenic, and continued it to a great age. Most arsenic eaters keep the matter secret, so that it is impossible to give accurate statistics. They all assign as their motive for indulging in the habit that it prevents illness; furthers their wish to look rosy and healthy; that it is a remedy against difficulty of breathing, and assists the digestion of indigestible food. A poacher in Upper Styria, who made experiments in my presence of eating arsenic, told me he had acquired courage by the habit. The appearance of the arsenic eaters in all cases known to me is healthy and robust. I think only robust persons can become accustomed to the practice. Some of them attain a great age. Thus in Zeiring I saw a charcoal burner, upward of 70, still strong and hearty, who, I was told, had taken arsenic for more than forty years. I heard, too, of a chamois hunter of 81, who had long been used to eat arsenic. I never observed an arsenic cachexy in those addicted to the habit. It certainly happened once that such an arsenic eater (a leather dresser's apprentice in Ligest, 1865), while intoxicated took too much, thereby poisoning himself severely. According to his own account he had taken a piece as large as a bean. He entirely recovered, however, and ate arsenic afterward, but more carefully. As far as my observations extend, white arsenic, namely arsenic acid, AsO₃ (also called flowers of arsenic), and the yellow arsenic, As₂S₃ (orpiment), are taken, and that taken in a dry state, alone, or on bread. The dose is of course very small at first, and is gradually increased, the largest quantity eaten in my presence by the poacher in Zeiring being fourteen grammes. A certain Matthew Schober, in Ligest, ate seven and one-half grammes before me on the 17th of April, 1865. The intervals, too, at which arsenic is taken vary—every fortnight, every week, twice or three times a week. But all doubt as to the existence of arsenic eaters is now removed by the present experiments."

—There is an old lady living in the town of Zebulon, Ga., who is famous for an implicit belief in the truth of every story she tells, without reference to the impressions she created upon the minds of her hearers. She had lately lost a cow, and in telling her neighbor where it was found, said: "You know them punkins o' ours? Well, the vines of them punkins they grew right across our creek, and they grew so thick and so heavy you could cross on 'em just like on a lot. My husband he walked across them punkin vines, thinkin' to hunt our cow, when he heered sunthin a chawmpin an' a chawmpin around him, and he listened to hear what it was, when what do you think? He spied one of them thar punkins what grew on them vines, and thar he fou'd that our cow had bit inter it on one side, and had gone so fur into it he couldn't see her tail, but found her eatin' her way thro' the other side."

RUSSIAN INDUSTRIES.—In 1866 Russia had one hundred foundries and machine shops, and only fifty-two of which were provided with steam. At the present time there are three hundred and sixty-two of these establishments, seventy-nine of which are exclusively occupied with the manufacture of agricultural implements. Statistics are to hand concerning one hundred and seventy-nine shops only; these employ 46,528 workmen. In 1868 there were two hundred and twenty-two locomotives made in Russia; last year the number was seven hundred and ninety-eight. A large number of English workmen are employed in Russian engineering shops, but they complain of being treated as naturalized Russian subjects; that is to say, their personal rights and liberties are but little respected.

—During a clerical conference the following conversation was heard between two new boys: "I say, Jim, what's the meaning of so many ministers being here altogether?" "Why, answered Jim, scornfully, "they always meet once a year to swap sermons."

—The reason why a woman requires a large wallet for the transportation of a twenty-five cent shimplaster is as deeply wrapped in mystery as the reason why a dog always turns around three times when he gets up after a nap.

—It is the curious logic of sin that its fruit should be no greater than its seed; but acorns swell to oaks, and grains to granaries full; and grains of sin grow harvests of the death that deathless spirits know.—Jay.

—They do things rather "fast" down in Boston, sometimes. A certificate of marriage was issued in that city a few days ago, to a woman only eighteen years old, who had been married twice before.

—An exchange affords the etymological information that the aboriginal title of Niagara was "Awnigarah;" which closely accords with the pronunciation of the world by the modern English tourist.—New York World.

—"Pa, I guess our man Ralph is a good Christian." "How so, my boy?" "Why, pa, I read in the bible that the wicked shall not live out half his days, and Ralph says he has lived out ever since he was a little boy."

—Mount Holyoke seminary has supplied one hundred and fifteen wives for foreign missionaries, the last two graduating classes furnishing eighteen; but it is impossible to say whether or not Mount Holyoke has done well until the missionaries express themselves.

—"The first step toward wealth," says an exchange, "is the choice of a good wife." "And the first step toward securing a good wife is the possession of good wealth," says another. Here we have one of those good rules which works prettily both ways.

FACTS AND FANCIES.

—The Punch man notices that the bald-headed men comb their heads with towels.

—Help somebody worse off than yourself, and you will feel better off than you fancied.

—Children should be taught the frequent use of good, strong, expressive words—words that mean exactly what they should express in their proper places.

"My faith," says De Quincey, "is that a great man may be an infidel, by a rare possibility, but an intellect of the highest order must build upon Christianity."

I know not why my path should be at times so straightly hedged, so strangely barred before.

I only know God could keep wide the door, But I can trust.

—Young women are advised to set good examples, because young men are always following them.

—That writer does the most that gives the reader the most knowledge and takes from him the least time.

—The Milwaukee Sentinel remarks that "times will continue hard as long as the \$2,000 a year man strives to appear as a \$10,000."

—Now put padlocks on your coal-bin doors and graft small powder magazines into your woodpiles.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

—It was observed of a deceased lawyer that he had left but few effects; to which a lady remarked that "he had but few causes."

"Jimmy, give us the core of yer apple, will ye?" (Johnny, still eating). "You don't want this, it's a cooking apple. I never give a feller a cooking apple."

—Two hundred and sixty-three years ago Sir Henry Walton said in a letter to a friend: "An ambassador is an honest man sent to lie abroad for the good of the commonwealth."

"Bless you," said John Henry, with tears in his eyes, "she takes her own hair off so easy that perhaps she doesn't know how it hurts to have mine pulled out."—Boston Journal.

—London Fun—Old party (who stammers, comes in for some pecuniary)—"Oh, if you please, young man, I w-want some ip-ip-ip—Festive assistant fired by recent reminiscence)—"Hurrah!"

—When a man has been "ard at work in an obscure way for years"—at length achieves success, nine-tenths of his acquaintances insult him by offering congratulations on his "luck."—Boston Transcript.

—Loan your money, deposit your earnings, intrust your wealth as you may but be sure it is not loaned to a "fast" borrower, deposited with a "splrgy" banker or intrusted to a "magnificent and princely" acquaintance.

—At an elegant wedding of recent date at Lockport a very decided position was taken by the parents of the bride in relation to the custom of wedding gifts. On one corner of the note of invitation was significantly engraven, "no presents."

—The reason why a woman requires a large wallet for the transportation of a twenty-five cent shimplaster is as deeply wrapped in mystery as the reason why a dog always turns around three times when he gets up after a nap.

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—If all the gold in the world were welded into one solid cubic block, one side of the cubic would measure only twenty-three feet. It isn't much of a lump, to be sure, but we should like to play with it a day or two.—Buffalo Express.

—Dr. A. W. Saxe recently described before the California academy of sciences a colossal tree, one of a grove discovered in Santa Clara county. Its circumference, as actually measured six feet from the ground, was but a few inches less than one hundred and fifty feet; as over one hundred feet of the top had fallen, it was impossible to determine the exact height, though this was probably about three hundred feet! This tree, even in that land of vegetable wonders, stands chief over all, although the other trees in the grove are said to be of immense growth.