

# THE MONTROSE DEMOCRAT.

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## The Country Store.

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The whole population in the neighborhood resort to it with regularity—all the loungers, all the idlers, all who have done up their weary day's work, all the town-guards and gossips in trousers, as well as those who go for molasses in jugs, for nails, tobacco, and raisins—loiter, and talk, and listen in this most convenient place of public reception. And if store and postoffice chance to be combined, the flocking of the sovereigns, with wives and offspring, fairly puts one out in any attempt at description. Besides the sugar, nails, tea, codfish, soap and brooms, there lie all the letters that are addressed personally to the men and women of the town.

Truly, an item to be thought of. The sum total of all their correspondence with their strayed away cousins, nieces, nephews and children. Therefore, at this little live the swarming town collects. Therefore do they come hither, evening after evening, picking up waifs of news and watching like paid detectives the postmaster's distribution of the letters. Therefore do they bustle and bustle around that functionary's person when the mail bag is fetched in from the coach, and proffer assistance in assorting the miscellaneous newspapers which he empties over the counter. Offering advice, when it is needed and when it isn't; submitting comments, original and assorted, on all classes of topics, with such fly-foot-notes as one may not at first understand.

Then a country store is a strangely quiet place of an afternoon, whether in summer or winter. Save when, perhaps, some little girl patters in to exchange a skein of thread, the flies and the rural merchant have it entirely to themselves. If the place is in charge of a spruce young clerk, in lieu of the master, he employs himself with brush and oils at the little cracked mirror behind the high desk, and lets the flies sun themselves in sleepy knots over the floor.

It is not less a realm of doze, either in planting time, and through the sweaty smell of haying. In the former season, the men are about their gardens and over their farms, and a fox might take a leisurely trot through the town street without attracting the eye of master hound. Perhaps an enterprising pedlar, atop of a bright red wagon, trundles up to the door-step, and from his canopied box, "passes the time of day" with the prompt clerk, asks for the latest news, and offers off essences at the very lowest "figger." Or a stray cow comes, tearing off the succulent grass near the door, and putting the town more completely to sleep with its snoring melodies.

This is the store in the country town, or the village. It sometimes stands, however, away by itself at the crossing of two roads, with the proprietor's dwelling in close proximity; its entire front protected from burglars by an ancient swing shutter, and barricaded with boxes and buckets, half filled with beans and dried apples and oats, that are tilled on the broad shelf just under the window; I do not believe a lonelier spot can be found in the whole range of Puritan New England; a mill-pond on a faded December afternoon is a place of resort by compassion—a hemlock thicket at sunset is noisy in contrast with the sepulchral desolateness.

But when farming does not drive, leisure is to be had in solid junk by all who want it. The store is not altogether so bare of interest to the casual observer. Huddled, as the talking population love to be found, their portraits, or full lengths, may then be readily taken. The men and the boys, perched on barrels or the counters, either swing their feet and gossip, or swing their feet and spit. If it is winter, they cuddle up to the dull box stove, and polish the long pipe with their hard palms as coolly as if they were salamanders. They are stowed in unseen corners, too—where they work over colorless, but sometimes rank, jokes in half whispers, and snicker in unison over their odd confidence about the girls. The small boys drink in what falls, grinning bashfully when the larger ones laugh; they are taking their early lessons faithfully and well.

Of winter evenings the stove, crammed with seasoned sticks, roars like a menagerie lion. No January wind without can drown its growling sound. The loungers are gathered in a great open circle, each with a hand erected for a screen. There it is the affairs of the nation are sifted; there each town sovereign closes and grapples with the dissenting neighbor, and finds his own personal niche among those occupied by the local worthies. The minister's last sermon comes up for analysis at this rustic round table, when the astonishing fact is revealed that they are not less profound theologians than marvelous masters of state craft and civil policy.

To the store flock the farmers, in earnest with their spring work, after seeds and manures and agricultural implements. Boys run thither on errands for their mothers, their sisters, and themselves. Thrifty housewives drive up before the door at an early forenoon hour, in the summer time, and go in to make barter of eggs, and cheese, and stocking yarn, for cotton cloth, or calico, or new shoes with a proper "power" of squeak in them.

The girls flock, with blushes burning in their cheeks, to see if anything lies over for them in the mail, or to exchange a few words with the sleek-haired clerk, or to finger for the twentieth time the limited stock of bereges, prints and mousseline delaines which he ever stands ready to spread about the counter.

You will see a whole caravan of old family cows about the premises, some with bobtails and some with switch, holding down their heads and drowsing away the hours as if they had cropped poppy-heads instead of green clover for their summer morning repast. And elderly females are visible, too, climbing friskily in and out of their open wagons, the day's successful barter giving them the nerve required to keep them from falling.

## The Opening of the Amazon.

On Saturday, the 7th of September, was the Brazilian fourth of July, the anniversary of the independence of Brazil; and on that day, this year, according to a proclamation issued last December, the Amazon, the great river, or King of waters, as the Indian name Para signifies, was thrown open, from the Atlantic to the boundaries of Peru. Henceforth all nations may freely use this great highway of commerce, which gives steamboat navigation from the Atlantic coast to within ninety leagues of Lima. Peru has also by treaty with Brazil, and by a former treaty with the United States, granted the free navigation of her Amazonian waters. Navigation thus extends almost across the continent. The Morona, a sea-going Peruvian steamer, built by the Penna of London, ascended, in October, 1864, from the mouth of the river to within ninety leagues of the city of Lima.

The valley of the Amazon is a vast and fertile wilderness, with here and there a town on the borders of the great river. The most important and productive parts of Venezuela, New Granada, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia, as well as of Brazil, are drained by its waters. Its valley has an area equal to the whole United States, without the Pacific States, and yet the population of the Amazon valley is at present no greater than that of the single city of Brooklyn. But new measures in regard to grants of lands and emigrants have just been proposed in the Brazilian Parliament, which, if carried out, cannot fail to induce emigration to this equatorial valley—where the mercury never rises as high as in New York, and where yet the rich and useful staples, coffee, sugar, cotton, rice, India rubber, &c., &c., repay the industrious laborer a thousand fold.

Meantime we hope to see our Americans preparing to take their share of the trade of the Amazon, which can be developed under the liberal system which took effect on the 7th to an important and lucrative commerce.

## Reflections for October.

A HYMN OF PRAISE TO GOD.

Thou, O Lord, hast created the hosts of heaven, and the myriads of angels which unceasingly surround thy throne. The immense extent of the heavens, with all their magnificence, is the tabernacle of those blessed spirits which love and adore thee. Thou hast adorned this globe of earth with a thousand beauties that delight our souls. The sun which animates so many spheres, which fertilizes our fields and enriches us with so many blessings, never wanders from the vast orb which thou hast prescribed to him. At thy command the moon's paler radiance nightly gleams in the heavens; wherever we cast our view we perceive the effects of thy goodness, and thy blessings never cease to visit us. Springs and fountains, that ever flow, preserve for us their pure and limpid streams. The mild dew waters and refreshes our meadows. The mountains and the valleys, the fields and the groves, present us with a thousand beauties; and the whole earth, which thy hand sustains in infinite space, is full of thy riches, crowned with thy blessings, and fertilized by thy bounty. Let us bear without murmuring the afflictions of life; they are always solaced by some moments of enjoyment, and mitigated by the cheering influence of hope. The grand spectacle of nature animates our drooping spirits, and the rays of divine grace dry up all our tears. But who can fathom the depth of thy ways? In this life good and evil accompany each other. Earthquakes, tempests, war, pestilence and famine, often disturb the happiness and security of men; and death, unrelenting and unsparring, spreads wide his devastation. A breath overturns us, and lays us in the tomb, and reduces us to dust. But blessed be God, the rock of our safety, and the tabernacle of our salvation, who has opened unto us the doors of eternal life, through Christ Jesus our Lord.—Sturm's Reflections.

REMARKABLE LONGEVITY.—The Columbia Herald says that Wm. B. Smith, who attends a restaurant in that place, "is one of the most remarkable cases of longevity of the present century. Bill is an American citizen of African descent, a strong Democrat, and thinks he was born in October, 1736, which will make him 131 years old this month. He is not a very strict Christian as he is heard cursing the black republicans every day."

## A Dangerous Plaything—An Adder Potted by a Little Child.

[From the Dubuque Times, September 20.]

We have often read of children and venomous snakes playing together, but we never had a case come under our immediate observation until yesterday. In the afternoon the two little daughters of Mr. C. C. Lieben, aged three and five years respectively, were engaged in playing in the front yard of their home on Iowa street, between Seventh and Eighth, when the oldest child ran into the house, and told the servant girl to run out and see to her sister who was playing with a big snake. The servant thought nothing of it, and continued her work. In a few minutes the child again besought her to go right out, for the snake was hissing at "sissy." The girl went out and was struck speechless and made to grow pale! On the brick wall near the front gate sat the little child, laughing and patting a large snake on the head! The snake was coiled up like a spiral spring, and with elevated head and protruding fangs was allowing the child to play with it. It was a blackish monster, streaked and spotted with green. When the child would cease patting it, the snake would strike at the little one's hand, and stiffen as preparing to jump at the child. Then the little one would pat its head and it would lower it and remain passive. The servant stood for a moment unable to say a word. At last she shrieked for Mrs. Lieben, who came out. She was also seized with terror, but waited only a second before she seized her child and bore it away. A lady who resides next door, alarmed by the servant girl's cries, had now arrived upon the scene. Before the snake uncoiled itself she threw a brick at it, which struck upon its head and stunned it. A man who was passing by then stepped in and killed the snake. It measured thirty-eight inches in length; was of the kind known as the house adder, the bite or sting of which is said to be terribly poisonous. The child had a narrow escape from an awful death.

MATRIMONIAL EMBLEMS.—The increase in the variety of goods adapted to matrimonial anniversaries has been quite surprising during the last few years. The two precious metals were formerly the only things thought worthy to figure in such celebrations, and the silver and gold weddings were the only ones commemorated. But a fashion arose not long ago of subdividing still further the cycles of married felicity, perhaps because of the increasing cost of the precious metals, and also, perhaps, because it was not found safe to wait quite so long in these days of "incompatibility" and Indiana divorce courts. Appropriate symbols were therefore adopted to suggest gifts for briefer anniversaries, and we gradually came to have tin, wooden, leather and glass weddings, representing respectively, as we are told by experts, the passage of ten, five, three years, and one, of married life.

The kind of household goods given of these several materials is useful in its way, and the custom has no doubt proved of assistance to struggling young housekeepers, though it has the objection that articles are often duplicated to a ridiculous extent. We have heard of a lady, for example, who received three tin-kitchens, five nutmeg-graters and seven tin bread-trays in this way. On the whole, however, the idea is good, and the subject is chiefly mentioned here to call attention to another article lately added to the list of commemorative wedding symbols. This is linen. A Providence (R.I.) editor has received an invitation to attend a linen wedding in Newport. The anniversary period is not stated, but may perhaps be guessed from the character of the gifts.—N. Y. Post.

A MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE.—The Poughkeepsie Eagle tells a story about a clergyman in that city who was recently aroused from his slumbers, a few moments before midnight, by a vigorous tapping at the front window of his residence. Raising the window sash, he inquired who was there. A gruff voice replied in the broken dialect of a Yorkshireman, that he wanted the dominie to come down to his house and marry a couple. The dominie wondered that he should be called on such business at such a late hour of the night, and asked for an explanation. The Yorkshireman replied that "a young couple had just arrived at his boarding-house, and wanted to stay all night, saying they were going to be married in the morning."

That was all well enough, but the Yorkshireman didn't have only one spare bed, and he didn't wish to turn the strangers out of doors, and didn't wish to lose the price of their lodgings, he concluded that they had better be married that night rather than take any risk. The god-natured dominie proceeded to the house, and in the presence of the household made the lovers one. At the conclusion of the ceremony the Yorkshireman stepped up to the reverend gentleman and placed a five-dollar greenback in his hand and said; "There, Dominie, if she makes a good wife for her husband, at the end of the year I'll give you five dollars more." The dominie returned to his parsonage, and the newly married couple were allowed the "spare room."

## Politics in the Pulpit.

OLD BRUDDER PETE'S SERMON ON WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.

"Beware of men that come to you in sheep's clothing, but within are raving wolves."

Belubbed Brudderin: Ise gwine to do on dis de present 'casion what I neder gone done afore since I commenced spou'ndin' de gospil; Ise gwine to preach a political sermon.

I is a free American of African 'scent, and Ise got just as good a right to preach politics as brudder Beecher, or any odor man. De tex says, "Beware of men dat cum to you in sheep's clothin'." Now brudderin, de question axes itself, what is sheep's clothin'. Sheep's clothin', you all know, is wool; and you all know likewise, de black man got wool stid of bar on his crinology. So, widout stretchin de figger mor'n a politician sometimes stretches his conscience, we may read de tex in dis wise: Beware ob de white man dat comes to you in wool—dat is, kums to you in de guise ob de black man; dat dey feel like de black man; but widin dey are ravin wolves, seekin nigger votes. Dey cum to us in sheep's clothin'; dey call you fellow citizen; dey is laborin and sufferin persecution for de sake ob de black man; dey respect dare cullud brethren; dey lub dare cullud sistern.

Dey come to us in sheep's clothin'; dey is gwine to do great things for de black man; dey is goin to gib ebry black man a farm, and ebry black woman a pianor; and learn all de picanninies to cipher multiplication and talk Greek. Dey is gwine to gib de black man franchises, and cibil rites, and buros, and pluribus unums, and debil knows what; make crismus come twice a year and ebry third year a jubilo. Beware ob dem, my brudderin; dey lubs de black man and de black woman like de wolf lubs de sheep, and dat, you know, is for de sake ob de sheep meat.

Dey is ravin wolves, my brudderin, seekin nigger votes. Dey are broken-winded politicians, my brudderin, dat decent white men won't vote for, and dey tinks dey can get de votes of de black men, by pullin de wool over dey eyes. Dat's why dey go in for nigger suffrage; when de Lord knows de nigger's dese sufferin enough wid dere foolishness. What good it gwine to do a nigger to vote?

It ain't gwine to put meal in the barrel, meat in de pot, taters in de ashes, nor de corn in trough. What you know about de law, my brudderin? Which of you would know a tariff from a tarrapin, if you's to meet it by moonlight? Which way would you start to go Congress, if anybody was fool enough to elect you dar?

Brudderin, dey sometimes takes de eyes and noses in Congress, and sometimes dere are more noses than eyes. Has any ob you got sense enough to tell how dat mout be? If you don't know nuffin about de laws, how you gwine to make de laws or mend de laws? I know'd a smart nigger once who undertook to mend his watch. He got it to pieces in less than no time; but arter he worked it awhile, de debil himself couldn't put it together. Dat's bout de fix you'll get de government in if you go tinkerin wid it. Better be hoin corn, to make bread for ole woman and childer. You all knows how to dat, but you don't how to make laws or mend em, and you don't know what sort of men to choose to do it. You just as apt to vote for a fool as King Solomon, and you a heap apter to vote for a rascal dan a good man, kase de tex says it's ravin wolf dat cums in sheep's clothin'; and de black man can't tell wolf from sheep.

Dat's what dese mean white men know and dat's de reason why dey want you to vote. Dey afraid spectable white folks won't vote for 'em, and dey tink dey can fool de black man, kase dey don't know nuffin, and is easily soft-sawdered.

Dar's chesnuts in de fire, my brudderin, and monke want 'em; he rake 'em out wid de cat's paws; if it burn de cat, it don't de monkey. What do mean white men care how much de nigger suffer, so dey get and keep the offices. What dey care if a hundred sassy, fool niggers get kilt, as at Orleans, so as dey kin git up a helladello again de rebels, as dey call ebry white man; and get an excuse to have de handle ob de vise turned one more time, and dey get de rule ob dere betters. Beware ob dem, my brudderin. When we monkeys see chesnuts in de fire and begin to be mighty perlitte to de cat, let de cat take care ob her paws.

Dey is ravin wolves, my belubbed, seekin whom dey may devour. Dey show dere luv for de black man by taxin his cotton three cents a pound, while his childer is cryin for bread, his blankets a dollar a pair, while he is shibberin wid cold. Beware of dem, belubbed brudderin; if you lets dem fool you wid dere soft sawder, you'll be was dan poor Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of potash; and he moit ob knowed before he traded for it, dat it twant fit to eat, but only to make soup out'n.

Finally, in conclusion, my brudderin, beware of men dat cums to you in sheep's clothin, but widin dey is ravin wolves.

—General Grant's father is speaking on the Democratic side in the Ohio canvass.

## The Rings on the Oak.

A correspondent of the London Daily News, in the course of a letter with reference to a historical and legendary tree known as "Herne's Oak," gives not only some interesting facts about the tree itself, but also an explanation of a natural phenomena in connection with it. He says:

"While working up a portion of this memorable tree into covers for the book I have written on its identity, and looking on the end, I observed a great peculiarity, namely: The annular rings accumulated in a healthy and vigorous manner up to a certain point when they suddenly ceased, became almost imperceptible, then increased in size again till they attained nearly their former width, afterwards gradually diminished towards the outer edge of the tree, where they finally became undistinguishable.

"Upon mentioning this phenomena to an intelligent gardener of fifty years experience—without informing him in what wood I had observed it—he said that the tree must have been struck with lightning or blighted in some way, so as to have stopped its growth, otherwise such an appearance would not have been presented.

"It was in the nature of trees, as it was with us, that when they arrived at maturity they began to decline, the same as we did, but it was generally a gradual process; the rings in the trunk would become smaller and smaller by degrees, as the sap flowed less and less up the trunk of the tree.

"I have since examined the wood more closely, and from the healthy part of the tree to the outside of the piece, I have counted 164 annular rings. If to these are added twenty for the sap that was wasted away from it, and forty-four years, which time at least it is known to have been dead, we are carried back as far as 1639, as the latest time when the tree would have been seared or blighted. How much earlier than this it may have been, I am not in a position at present to prove; but, considering that the rings are so small as to be scarcely discernible, and that some of the outer portion of the tree has been wasted away, I submit that it is not a preposterous idea to assume that the blasting of it happened in Shakspeare's time."

## Sharp Practice.

Nantucket is famous for pretty girls, excellent fishing, Siasconset and good stories. One of the latter is told of an inhabitant of the island who lost hens from his roost. To detect the thief, he placed a sharp scythe in a position to be placed by the criminal as soon as he entered the hen-roost door.

The next morning there was blood upon the blade, but no hens were missing. The gentleman did not hunt for wounded hands, and in a short time went to California, returning after an absence of several years.

There used to live in Nantucket one of the largest story-tellers for a young man upon the continent. He was quite popular, however, had a good deal of "brass," and on election days could get out more voters than any other man on the island. He was "stirring up" voters one day, and came upon the returned Californian.

"Hello, B—," said the latter, "give me a ride to the polls."

"No!" said B—, with an oath, "A man as puts scythes in his hen-roosts shall never ride with me!"

B— was never prosecuted for the confession.

LATE VS. EARLY SOWN WHEAT.—For the past four or five years, almost all winter wheat in the Northern States has been more or less injured by an insect variously denominated Hessian fly, chinch-bug, &c. In some localities the crop taken together, being less by one-half—some particular pieces not yielding five bushels to the acre, which had not been for the fly, would have produced twenty—while in other instances the crop was entirely destroyed. In Michigan, last winter, I saw several fields sown to wheat last fall, which had been entirely destroyed by the pest, and ploughed under—the fly commencing upon it as soon as it had nicely got to growing, and eating it out so as to leave the ground entirely bare. One would suppose that an insect so destructive in its nature, and doing as much damage as this has done, would be more widely noticed in our agricultural papers, and a remedy sought for—for there is a remedy by which these injuries can be entirely avoided, which is simply by late sowing.

I have seen fields of wheat injured at least two-thirds by the fly, while an adjoining one gave a maximum crop, with not a trace of the fly to be seen—the only sown early, in the latter part of August or first of September, the latter not before the 15th or 20th of September—while wheat sown even as late as October last season is giving a good yield. The Hessian fly has not done much injury here this season. Last season and the one previous they hurt us badly. By sowing late a chance is given to top-dress fields to be sown with wheat. This is practised now in this locality almost universally, our sweeping winds and bleak, cold winters, rendering it necessary.

## RAIN ON THE ROOF.

When the humid shadows gather  
Over all the starry spheres,  
And the melancholy darkness  
Gently weeps in misty tears,  
'Tis a joy to press the pillow  
Of a cottage chamber bed,  
And to listen to the patter  
Of the soft rain overhead.

Every tinkle on the shingle,  
Has an echo in the heart,  
And a thousand dreamy fancies  
Into busy beings start;  
And a thousand recollections  
Weave their bright hues into woe,  
As I listen to the patter  
Of the soft rain on the roof.

There in fancy comes my mother,  
As she used to years ago,  
To survey the infant  
Ere she had left them till the dawn,  
I can see her bending o'er me,  
As I listen to the patter,  
Which is played upon the shingles  
By the patter of the rain.

Then my little seraph sister,  
With her wings and waxen hair,  
And her bright-eyed cherub brother,  
A serene, angelic pair,  
Glide around my wakened pillow  
With their praise or mild reproof,  
As I listen to the murmur  
Of the soft rain on the roof.

And another comes to thrill me  
With her eye delicious blue;  
I forgot, while gazing on her,  
That her heart was all untrue;  
I remember that I loved her,  
As I never may love again,  
And my heart's quick pulses vibrate  
To the patter of the rain.

There is naught in art's bravuras  
That can work with such a spell,  
In the spirit's pure, deep fountain,  
Whence the holy passions swell,  
As that melody of nature—  
"That subdued, subdued strains—  
Which is played upon the shingles  
By the patter of the rain."

THE COST OF WEEDS.—The most expensive crop grown by farmers is weeds. It is not easy to estimate their cost, but we know that it amounts to many millions of dollars annually. If their value is anything, the farmer has seldom been able to appreciate it. The question of weeds becomes every year more serious, and their spread more appalling. Some of the best farms of the country have become so infested with weeds as to yield but poor returns. If our present system of culture is to continue, no one need expect to rapidly grasp a fortune at farming.

The eradication of weeds, when they once get possession of the soil, is somewhat discouraging to the farmer, especially when neighboring farms are growing weed crops that furnish innumerable seeds to be wafted by the wind and deposited upon the land. There is scarcely a farmer but fully understands that a large crop of useful plants cannot be expected from ground overrun with weeds, and yet many pay but slight attention to subduing these pests. They increase from year to year, until the land becomes so foul that even this very condition of things is deemed a sort of excuse to let them take possession of the soil. They become formidable and men dread to make the attack, knowing that no weak opponent is to be encountered.

—A lady correspondent of the Milwaukee Sentinel, who, writing under a nom de plume, had attracted considerable attention, received a note from a gentleman admirer, recently, who said that a lady who could put such beautiful thoughts on paper must be equally gifted in person, etc., etc., and wanted to meet her "by moonlight alone," to which she wrote an assent. She came to the rendezvous veiled, they walked, he talked, he made love; finally gained consent to take a little kiss, the veil was raised for the purpose, and the stricken gentleman gazed upon the comely features of his own wife!

PRESERVING POTATOES.—A correspondent of the Scientific American says that he has tried the following method of keeping potatoes for years with complete success, though in some instances the tubers were diseased when taken out of the ground: "Dust over the floor of the bin with lime, and put in about six or seven inches deep of potatoes, and dust with lime as before. Put in six or seven inches of potatoes and lime again; repeat the operation until all are stored away. One bushel of lime will do forty bushels of potatoes, though more will not hurt them, the lime rather improving the flavor than otherwise."

—A baggage-man on the Pittsburg, Fort-Wayne, and Chicago Railroad, known throughout that region as "Jim," occasionally indulges in remark of a jocular nature. During the rebellion, when Western pulpits were too generally made political rostrums, Jim met some old friends traveling on the cars. After inquiring about old acquaintances, and talking over old times, one of the party asked, "By-the-by, how's politics around here?" "Well," replied Jim, "I'll be darned if I know, for I haven't been to church in more'n a month."

—A bashful young man escorted an equally bashful young lady. As they approached the dwelling of the damsel she said, entreatingly: "Zekiel, don't tell any body you-bean'd me home." "Sary," body you-bean'd me home." "Sary," said he, emphatically, "don't you mind, I'm as much ashamed of it as you are."