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THE TEXAS CLEAVER.

Ranbier's rather rollicky



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A Double-Barrelled Explanation.

There was no issue of the Cleaver the 1st of December nor the 1st of January. That was on account of sickness. There isn't much of this issue, and that it is due to the fact that during the month of January most of my time has been devoted to preparing a series of articles for the Dallas and Galveston Newses. Everything I write will not be published in the Dallas News nor the Galveston News. In fact, to get about ninety-eight per cent of it published at all I will necessarily have to keep the Cleaver running.

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A Plain Statement of Facts.

Myself, Mr. Shook, of the Reporter; Mr. Crayton, of the Taylor County News; and Mr. Hicks, of the Farmers Journal, are having considerable trouble about the present condition of the cotton market. It seems that one or more of us is responsible for the regrettable state of affairs, and the difficulty is to place the responsibility. I may be to blame, but if so it is purely unintentional and I regret it very much. Personally I have no considerable amount of cotton on hand at present. In fact none at all. What little cotton I have is on my feet. I think what cotton I have cost three cents per pair, though this may not be exactly correct. The price may have been three pair for a dime. If my buying cheap cotton has aided the bull movement to any extent it was due to the fact that I was caught short and had to meet a postage stamp emergency with what change I received back out of a quarter.

I believe in diversification, and don't know of anything that beats corn and cotton. That is why I wear cotton socks. I find that the

different varieties of corns do well in this country, for with no great amount of physical or scientific effort I have succeeded in growing an immense crop, also bunions and ingrowing nails. I planted my first corn crop about twenty years ago, and drilled it in with a pair of number six shoes, and to this fact I attribute, in a great measure, the excellent stand and prolific yield. I frequently run around my corn with a barlow knife and occasionally break out the middle. After breaking out the middle I generally break out spontaneously and limp off to one side where I can compliment myself in my own way and without being overheard by persons who are averse to hearing people boast of their own achievements, especially in a certain way. I lay by my corn every night and wake up in the morning and find it in the same place. There is nothing like taking good care of anything to which one is so attached. I don't think anybody's corn ever had a more firmly fixed or deeply implanted tap root than my corn has. I had it examined by a corn expert once and he said he was satisfied the tap root pen-

etrated as far as the first stratum of clay, and possibly through the carboniferous and tertiary formations to the cartilaginous vicinity of the toe joint. I do not want to be misunderstood in this matter. I am not trying to dictate to the farmers nor humiliate them by comparisons. I do not claim that my way is the only correct way and that the failure to attain success by other farmers is due to ignorance or mismanagement. I simply believe in a free discussion of the subject and a liberal exchange of ideas. In fact I have a large crop of volunteer ideas that are going to waste and if any of my agricultural friends are out of thought seeds they are welcome to all the ideas they can gather out of my vast field of logic. The only especial request I make of parties availing themselves of this opportunity is that they enclose a postal card containing one dollar, as an evidence of good faith and to recoup any damages I may sustain by reason of them refusing to take prepaid packages out of the postoffice.

I am satisfied the farmers made a great mistake by holding their cotton, and since

cotton has gone down to six cents I have so expressed myself several times. When cotton was ten cents I didn't have anything to say. I was too busy guessing to express an opinion, and hereafter when I feel a wild heterogeneous desire to speculate I think I will buck at some kind of free voting contest. It isn't so expensive as cotton futures. Early in the fall I had an elegant line of cotton futures, but the fall was so severe that they didn't do well. All business propositions are uncertain, unless I get involved. In that event they are certainties. The character of certainties that transform millionaires into section hands. In fact, if I had been a disinterested party it would have been impertinent and injudicious for me to have issued an address advising the farmers in the matter. Had I advised them to sell ten cent cotton and the price had advanced to fifteen cents I would have been justly held responsible and my influence for good would have been completely demolished. Had I advised them to hold I would now be headed for Canada with a guilty conscience. As it is I am in no res-

pect involved and to no degree responsible, and can boldly walk the streets and fearlessly divulge the fact that it was a mistake to hold cotton. I think I did the wise and proper thing in letting my futures go. In fact they were headed in that direction so rapidly that I couldn't head 'em off. I had twenty-five dollars worth of futures, and if I had been able to put one million, four hundred and eighty-two thousand dollars worth of margins I could have them yet. There is good money in the margin business, and I had rather have a good stock of second hand margins than a train load of raw material futures.

I heartily concur in the movement to reduce the acreage of cotton twenty-five per cent, and suggest that the remainder be planted in watermelons and vegetables; and to encourage this movement I am willing to sign an agreement to buy all of my vegetables and watermelons next season, and if every man not actually and actively engaged in farming will sign the same kind of agreement and stick to it, there will be much less complaint among the farmers. A farmer

doesn't object to the hard work necessary to raise and market his vegetables and watermelons, but he does object to working hard to plant and mature them and then have some total stranger come along and raise and market the whole crop via the light of the moon and the back side of the field.

Some people claim that the moon has nothing whatever to do with the results of farming, but these assertions are made by inexperienced and incompetent persons. Any person who will try to raise watermelons when the nights are dark doesn't deserve a particle of sympathy if he lugs a thirty pound citron two miles. I once knew a bright industrious little boy who took a lantern along that he might distinguish the difference between citrons and watermelons. A farmer living about a half mile away saw the light and went out to investigate. He did so in a quiet, unpretentious sort of way. If he had hollered a few times it wouldn't have been necessary for him to have left his house, for the little boy would have known that he was in the wrong watermelon patch and would have gone away, and he

wouldn't have taken anything with him either, not even his own lantern. He might have tumbled over a few obstructions, and have torn his pants in getting over the fence and going through the brush, but he wouldn't have made any more tracks than was necessary and would have been glad for a big rain to come and wash them out before morning. But as I have said the farmer went out to investigate, and just as the little boy was plugging a large Georgia Sweet the farmer came up and plugged the little boy. If automobiles had been invented at that time the little boy would have been able to form a better idea as to what the farmer plugged him with, but by the glimmer of the lantern and the light of the meteors which showered around him he was only able to discern a plank about four feet long and six inches wide. The farmer afterwards made a statement which verified the plank theory. The farmer then accompanied the little boy home. The little boy would have gone by himself, but the farmer seemed to have some business over that way anyhow, so he went along too. Soon after the farmer

reached the little boy's home my father took the little boy out in the back yard, and the little boy had to acknowledge that he was sorry the matter had come up in its regrettable form, that he would not do so any more, etc., and as an evidence of the little boy's sincerity he did penance for three weeks or more by sleeping on his stomach, and he never was again guilty of plugging watermelons by the light of a lantern.

I could say a great deal on the subject of farming, but I do not want to make others jealous by the display of superior knowledge, so I will close for the present.



That Alamo Transaction.

The legislature has purchased an undivided interest in what remains of the Alamo. I don't mean to insinuate that anyone has been sticking parts of the Alamo in his pocket and walking off with it, but the state has for some time owned a portion of the Alamo, and the recent purchase includes the balance of it.

Whether it was or was not a judicious investment is a matter of no special concern at present, but I suppose if the state ever gets tired of the Alamo it can find some curio dealer in San Antonio who will take it off the state's hands at no greater sacrifice than ninety-eight cents on the dollar. The Alamo ought to be preserved as a matter of human pride, but it has been gradually going to wreck for a long time, and now that it has gotten into the hands of the legislature, via the public sentiment route, it remains to be seen what the result will be. By purchasing the Alamo let it be agreed that the legislature has preserved a monument to the world's most illustrious, disinterested and deserving heroes, men whose sacrifice of life made possible the existence of Texas as a republic and eventually as a part of the U. S. government, the Standard Oil oligarchy, civil war and trust complications, but what will this session of the legislature do to perpetuate its own name in history? Will it follow the Alamo purchase act up with a lot of legislation in favor of trusts and corporate wealth, tax-dodgers, etc., and

present the general public with the Alamo bill as a justification of everything it does to enslave the people whom the heroes of the Alamo sought to liberate? I was not personally acquainted with any of the heroes of the Alamo, but from what I can glean from history they were an excellent lot of gentlemen, fighting for what they believed to be right, willing to die in the interest of the cause they represented, if there was no other honorable way of getting out of it, and surrounded and overwhelmed as they were, by the ignorant, barbarous, half savage army of a murderous, merciless tyrant, their fate was pathetic, their heroism unsurpassed. They really needed no act of the legislature to perpetuate their memories, unless it should have been in the nature of broad-guaged legislation and statesmanship; something that would redound to the prosperity and peace of all, and make future generations glorify the name of those who founded the state of freedom north of the Rio Grande. There are a great many legislative acts the people need a great deal worse than they do the purchase of the Alamo. Will the

legislature be as generous in regard to at least a small portion of them?



Rankin's Rather Rollicky.

Parson G. C., or Got Crushed, Rankin is a mad man. He is awfully mad, and it all came about because he got walloped in his race for chaplain of the lower house of the legislature. I am satisfied that somebody put up a job on the Parson, but it was a first class job and seems to be giving very general satisfaction. The truth of the business is this modern Varuna, or cold water deity, was getting too important politically for the capacity of his mental calibre, and he needed something that would temporarily attract his attention to the fact that he was not the only daisy in the shrubbery patch. Rankin's defeat has nearly convinced me that there is really such a thing as divine intervention. This conviction comes, not so much because of Rankin's defeat as because of his actions, threats and tirades since. The Lord doubtless realized that He

had as many tough customers in the legislature as He could profitably handle without Rankin in the bargain. The Lord didn't want Rankin trying to work a flim flam game on Him every morning at five dollars per, and then lobbying with legislators all day. Besides it wasn't just right for Rankin to scab for a blind man's job. I think it was the will of the Lord, but Rankin says it was a put up job by a different bunch. He says it was a shame. If he had been elected he would have consoled the blind chaplain with the assurance that it was the will of the Lord and then he would have gone off to a bunch all alone by himself and have delivered an oration something like this:

"G. C. Rankin, you're a genius. You're the greatest statesman and political power of the age. They can't down you old boy, not much. No telling where you will land. You are certain to be the political dictator of Texas, to say the least of it. Old boy, you are a wonder, and I am proud of you. Any time the Lord consults ME I'LL just refer him to Rankin, and any time Rankin consults any-

body it will be a cold day."

But the Lord and a small majority of the legislature willed it otherwise, and now Rankin is mad, oh, so awfully mad. If he was a whole crew of Mississippi river steam boat hands he couldn't cuss long enough, strong enough, and loud enough to half way express his thoughts. Rankin is mad but he hasn't made a fool of himself. He has merely evidenced the fact that he always was one. He says he can do a good deal more good as a private citizen than he could have done as a chaplain of the legislature, which is equivalent to saying that he was willing to be corrupted for five dollars per day and the honor of being chaplain, carrying with it the distinction of having got a blind man's job. Rankin thinks he is the whole campmeeting and the political issue of Texas. He is a political blatherskite. That's what he is, and the people should feel under obligations to him for making the fact notorious. Think of a great and holy "it" like old Rankin indulging in a dirty scramble for a five dollar per day job at the hands of the legislature, and

then claiming that he would have been in a position where he could not have done any good because of the fact that it would have been improper for him to have worked for any kind of legislation had he been elected chaplain. What about his powerful prayers? Couldn't he have had things properly managed in that way? If a chaplain can't vote nor lobby nor influence legislation personally nor by prayer nor assist the janitor what's he good for anyhow? Looks to me as though he is a useless appendage to the expense account.

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