

The Charlotte Town Herald.

NEW SERIES.

CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, WEDNESDAY, FEB. 20, 1901.

Vol. XXX, No. 8

Calendar for Feb., 1901.

MOON'S PHASES.
Full Moon, 2nd, 11h. 30m. m.
Last Quarter, 11th, 2h. 12m. evg.
New Moon, 18th, 10h. 45m. evg.
First Quarter, 25th, 2h. 25m. evg.

Day of Week.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Friday	3 58	6 21	21 21	21 26			
2 Saturday	25	6 11	48	23	14		
3 Sunday	24	6 11	48	23	14		
4 Monday	23	6 11	48	23	14		
5 Tuesday	21	6 11	48	23	14		
6 Wednesday	20	6 11	48	23	14		
7 Thursday	18	6 11	48	23	14		
8 Friday	17	6 11	48	23	14		
9 Saturday	16	6 11	48	23	14		
10 Sunday	14	6 11	48	23	14		
11 Monday	12	6 11	48	23	14		
12 Tuesday	11	6 11	48	23	14		
13 Wednesday	10	6 11	48	23	14		
14 Thursday	9	6 11	48	23	14		
15 Friday	8	6 11	48	23	14		
16 Saturday	7	6 11	48	23	14		
17 Sunday	6	6 11	48	23	14		
18 Monday	5	6 11	48	23	14		
19 Tuesday	4	6 11	48	23	14		
20 Wednesday	3	6 11	48	23	14		
21 Thursday	2	6 11	48	23	14		
22 Friday	1	6 11	48	23	14		
23 Saturday	0	6 11	48	23	14		
24 Sunday	0	6 11	48	23	14		
25 Monday	0	6 11	48	23	14		
26 Tuesday	0	6 11	48	23	14		
27 Wednesday	0	6 11	48	23	14		
28 Thursday	0	6 11	48	23	14		
29 Friday	0	6 11	48	23	14		
30 Saturday	0	6 11	48	23	14		

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

MARK TWAIN AND OTHERS.

At a recent meeting of the Nineteenth Century Club Mark Twain delivered himself of some observations upon the subject of Sir Walter Scott as a novelist. He said that Scott can be read with interest by a boy of sixteen and can be re-read with interest by the same person after he has reached the age of ninety, but that between one's first and second childhood Scott is hardly to be reckoned with. It would have been well had Mr. Clemens extended his observations a little further in order to inform his audience as precisely what age his own historical novels may be regarded as interesting any human being. It is a subject on which we have ourselves endeavoured to secure some first-hand information and have ingloriously failed. We know of one gentleman who succeeded in reading Joan of Arc to the end; but he was a book reviewer and had to do it because he was a conscientious man. We tried it several times, and then gave it up because of its egregious dullness. We should like to know whether Mr. Clemens supposes that the various beautiful editions of Scott's works that have lately been issued in England and in this country have been issued solely for the benefit of boys and dotards. Then there is the sumptuous reprint of Lockhart's Life of Scott, published in five large volumes by the Macmillan Company. This appears to show that not only do very many persons thoroughly enjoy the reading of what Scott wrote down himself, but that they also like to read about him—a liking that has been further gratified by the publication of a smaller life of the great romancer composed by Mr. James Hay. There does not, therefore, seem to be any reason for serious disquietude with regard to Scott; but we fear that we cannot say as much for Mr. Clemens.

Mr. Clemens has of late and since his return to the country of his birth been very conspicuously in what one of our magazines delights to call "the public eye." He has succeeded in beating down a cabman's charges to the extent of a quarter of a dollar—which, of course, was a public-spirited thing for him to do. He has attended innumerable dinners and other functions, and has made innumerable speeches at them. He has said some things about the responsibility of our leading citizens for the present condition of our municipal government, and thus has pleased the city newspapers. The speakers who have introduced him to his audiences have invariably belauded him with praise, and life has been to him of late what Mr. Grover Cleveland many years ago described as just "one grand sweet song." Mr. Clemens himself, with certain exceptions which we believe to have been sincere, has from time to time requested these perfervid gentlemen to change their note and to say something that should be an antidote to indiscriminate eulogy. None of them complied; and, therefore, Mr. Clemens will not doubt be doubly grateful that we are not possessed of a mind of such obliquity as not to take him at his word. Putting aside all prejudices and looking at his work in a purely scholastic way, a critical and truthful judgment upon Mark Twain can be summed up in a very exigent space. Mark Twain is first and last all the time, so far as he is anything, a humorist, and nothing more. He wrote The Jumping Frog and Innocents Abroad and Roughing It, and these are all the real books that he ever wrote. He set forth the typically American characters of Colonel Sellers and Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, and these are all the real characters that he ever drew. His later publications that are humorous in intention contain many gleams of the old Mark Twain; but, taken as satires, you cannot read them from beginning to end. Some unduly optimistic persons who are fond of literary cults grown under glass have tried very hard to make the world believe that Mr. Clemens has great gifts as a serious novelist and romancer. By dint of iteration the world, perhaps, has temporarily

come to think that this is true; but all the same, it will not read these novels and romances, and it thereby shows that common sense and real discrimination may exist in practice even while they hold no place in theory. A hundred years from now it is very likely that The Jumping Frog alone will be remembered, just as out of all that Robert Louis Stevenson composed, the world will ultimately keep in memory the single tale of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

This spasmodic and ephemeral outburst of enthusiasm over Mr. Clemens emphasizes for the twentieth time a melancholy truth about contemporary criticism. When a writer is doing good and forceful work and winning readers and laying the foundation and erecting the superstructure of an enviable reputation, our critics, even though they may admire him, have not the "sand" to say so. They are poor dumb sheep that never dare to take the lead in anything; but they stand around with unintelligent and foolish blessings until some one whom they are not afraid to follow shall tell them what they ought to say. When Kipling was doing his finest work, such as he has never equalled in these later years, the critics did not dare to take him seriously. He was so unconventional and rough and strong that he frightened them; and so they slunk timidly behind their inkstands and said little feeble nothings and joked a little and called him a mere journalist, and then looked around to see if any one was going to hit them. After they had found out that his work was instinct with true genius, and that he was in reality the one real literary phenomenon of the last quarter of our century, they all rushed in at once and spattered him with praise and daubed him over with their flattery and did their very best to make him seem absurd. By this time, as it happened, Kipling's best had all been done, and he was entering upon a period of a decline which may or may not turn out to be temporary. But the critics were as blind to his decadence as they had been previously blind to his great power; and therefore, all the things they should have said about his early work they said about his later, so that he has been going on for the last two years receiving praise and admiration that are clearly a misfit. The same thing is quite true concerning Mr. Clemens. In the speeches that he has lately made he has said some things that recalled his earlier humor, but in the majority of his utterances the humor has been forced and the laughter which it has evoked has been extremely hollow. Yet just because it was Mark Twain, and because Mark Twain, was once a true, spontaneous and original humorist, the poor creatures who now write about him believe that everything he says must be amusing and delightful. If they do not feel the fun of it themselves they think

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A DEED OF CHARITY.

The following incident is related by Father Berthiaume, of Jacksonville, and may edify the readers of the Sentinel.

Last Sunday night was a specially stormy and wet night. One felt good to be inside a well-heated and cheery home, comfortably reading the Sentinel. Suddenly I heard the door-bell ring and opening it I beheld before me a man about forty years of age, all wet and covered with mud.

"Father," he said to me, "I came from Medford, North, eight miles from here. I came on horseback to bring you a message from one of your parishioners, whose home is at Big Butte, thirty miles from here. The man was struck with apoplexy and he is in a dying condition. He could only make some signs for somebody to go for the priest at once. Being a friend of the family the wife sent a message to me with request to come for you at once, and here I am. If you will come Father, I will hire a rig here and drive you there myself, that is if you are not afraid of a Protestant for I am not a Catholic."

"Well, my good man, I said to him if you are not afraid of a Catholic priest, I have no dread of a Protestant, especially of one who has so much pluck as to undertake such a journey in such a gloomy, dark and wet night, and all this for sweet charity's sake. Get your rig ready, and I shall accompany you even to the end of the world."

The poor man, full of joy, hurried away to procure a rig, and by ten o'clock on that dreadful night we started on our painful journey. It was not simply dark, it was pitch dark. We could not see a yard ahead of us. Up and down hills, and through valleys and marshes, in deep water and sticky mud, across ridges and swollen creeks we travelled until we reached a desert eight miles wide, a desert full of cross and deviating roads, which hardly anyone would attempt to cross. But my Protestant companion was so anxious to get the priest to the sick man's bedside before it was too late, that he didn't mind any danger. So I simply shut my eyes and left everything in the hands of God's holy providence. So ahead always ahead we went. All at once we came on the bank of a

deep roaring creek, and of course not caring to get drownded just then, we had to stop to find that we had completely lost our way. It being out of the question to find our way in the pitch dark, we concluded that the only practical plan was to stay still, right there and wait for daylight. It was then two o'clock. The prospect of waiting in the cold rain until seven o'clock was not particularly cheering. However it was the only thing possible and we did it. At seven we started again, found our way, and after much hardship, our rig severely damaged, the horses played out, we reached our destination by noon Monday, having been fourteen hours on the road. But we were in time. Upon hearing that the poor man, my friend, was still alive, my good Protestant companion wept for joy, and I must own that I could not retain my tears.—Catholic Sentinel, Portland, Oregon.

The discovery of the Church of S. Maria Antiqua in the Roman Forum is the sensation of the hour among archeologists in the Eternal City. The Liber Pontificalis records that this church was decorated with paintings in the middle of the seventh century. Among the frescoes already brought to light is a representation of the Blessed Virgin, surrounded by SS. Peter, Paul, Quirinus and Julitta, beneath a Crucifixion of extraordinary brilliancy. Scenes from the Old Testament cover the side walls of the church. It is conjectured that it was abandoned probably after an earthquake, which filled the building with debris, and sealed up the paintings which have just been discovered by Commendatore Boni.—Ave Maria.

The Illustrated Catholic Missionary gives an edifying account of the circumstances attending the death of Bishop Hamer, who was murdered by the Boxers in South Mongolia. When the danger became acute—The Bishop assembled most of his missionaries to see what had best be done. During the meeting he asked leave to go to the church for a few minutes, and after a short interval returned, saying that he had resolved to stay with his flock. All the missionaries desired to remain with him, but he commanded them to subpone peccati to go to a safe place. One Chinese priest was allowed to remain. The Bishop held out, with his Christians, against the Boxers for a while. At last they caught hold of him, bored a hole through one of his arms, put a rope through it and dragged him to the place of execution, a long way off. The Bishop still had strength enough to address the crowd. The accounts as to the way he was executed differ. One says that he was sawed in two, the other that he was burnt alive.

1901 Diaries

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