THE OPELOUSAS COURIER.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.

OPELOUSAS, : LOUISIANA.

An English paper says "Queen Victoria now rules 467,000,000 people."

Chicago has at last resorted to a city ordinance to suppress the big theatre hat.

There are more than 17,000 prisons in the United States and nearly as many lunatic asylums.

The "Lord High Executioner" of Prussia get $37 "a head" and traveling expenses, and there is always a rush for the office when it is vacant.

There are many conditions at the present time which suggest great prosperity in the near future, maintains the American Cultivator.

A Denver printing house has just booked an order for 350 placards bearing the words "Don't blow out the gas." The Colorado Legislature evidently is about to convene, comments the Chicago Times-Herald.

In the last fiscal year the receipts of New Zealand railroads, which are owned and operated by the Government, were $5,757,466, and the running expenses $3,?56,709, leaving over two millions profit to the Government.

A Brussels paper relates that not long ago the Prince of Monaco killed a whale on the coast of Africa, and made a present of it to some fishermen, who, on cutting open the whale's body, found a large amount of ambergris, which they sold for $20,000.

Forty-two of the 150 members of the present New York Assembly are lawyers, and four more hope to be, designating themselves in the clerk's manual as "law students." The farmers number twenty, there are six workers at trades, and thirty-eight manufacturers or merchants. The remainder are managers, agents, contractors, etc.

Paris has found it necessary to put a check to the haphazard decoration of her public places. The Prefect of the Seine has appointed a technical committee of artists, architects and other competent judges, to which all plans affecting the outward appearance of the city must be submitted for approval before the Administration officers take them up.

When Congressman Dingley, of Maine, was graduated from Dartmouth College, the suit he wore on the auspicious occasion was a black broadcloth suit, and the trousers were almost more than skin tight. It came from the fashionable tailor's shop in the little town of Hanover, and the fashionable tailor was Levi P. Morton, since Vice-President of the United States.

The decadence of the American merchant marine of late years is strikingly illustrated by the fact that while from July, 1895, to July, 1896, 16,884 ships of various nationalities passed through the new Kiel canal, not one of these, so far as reported, was an American vessel. And yet, exclaims the New York Observer, once the Stars and Stripes were a familiar sight upon the high seas, and in the harbors and estuaries of Europe.

Very few people, probably, ever think of Sitka as an ancient town, and yet it is 151 years since the first white residents of Alaska settled there. They were Russian hunters, who arrived four years after Vitus Bering took possession of all that part of America in the Russian Czar's name. The hunters ruled themselves and a few Indians until 1799, when some Muscovite nobles formed a company on the same lines as those followed by the Hudson Bay Company, and were intrusted with control of as much of the region as they chose to claim. Their local representative was a General Baranoff, who governed the land and all its people for thirty years. He exercised the power of life and death over his subjects, or slaves, rather, and was a drunken man, of considerable shrewdness and ability.

There are sixteen States in the Union, according to the Railway Age, which have no officers or boards specially constituted to supervise the railways within their respective limits and equalize the rates of transportation. These States are Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Maryland, Montana, Louisiana, Nevada, New Jersey, Tennessee, Washington, West Virginia, Wyoming and Utah. In six of these States no reports whatever are required from railroad companies. In the others there are certain State officers who take the matter in charge. The State of Arkansas, for example, has a board, consisting of the Governor, Auditor and Secretary of State, which is styled a railroad commission, but it hardly comes up to the idea of a commission as understood in Georgia and other States. In Colorado and Florida the experiment of having a commission has been tried and abandoned.

Crowding.

Don't crowd! There's room enough for all!
Why push and jostle so?
Why shove your neighbor to the wall,
Or seek to lay him low?
Don't crowd!

Don't crowd! You're just an atom here!
Why hold your brother back?
Go seek a way that's new and clear—
Why keep the beaten track?
Don't crowd!

Don't crowd! Once you strove bravely, too,
Against the odds above!
Think how defeat oft reached you through
Some rival's stealthy shove—
Don't crowd!

Don't crowd! Ah, might I just as well
Address the drops that make the sea!
Wherever men or mice may dwell
There will the jealous ever be
To crowd!

—Cleveland Leader.

The Keeper of Cragie's Cut.

Baxter, the new inspector of the Evansburg & Sauk Center railroad, was not the only person who had been astonished at the first sight of the Cragie's bridge and the rock cut beyond. "L. C. Dolby, Section 27" he had read in his little book with the thumbed blue cover, and he had expected to see a grizzle-bearded man with a rough, red face and a stubby black pipe. For Cragie's was known to be one of the worst sections on the line. Its keeper was required to walk the mile from the end of the long bridge and through the cut twice every day, winter and summer, and it often required a cool head and a vigorous body to dodge the tramp freights that thundered back and forth with seeming disregard for time cards and running rules.

The new inspector had come down from Cragie's walking the whole length of section 27. He had found everything in the best of order, not a bolt loose nor a spike gone and he felt after the manner of new inspectors, like complimenting the vigilance of the keeper.

"Is L. C. Dolby in?" he asked when he reached the keeper's house on the hill.

"Yes, sir, will you walk in?" asked the rosy-cheeked girl who came to the door.

He stepped into the neatest of little sitting-rooms. There were flowers in the windows and a cheery fire on the hearth in front of which a lazy tabby cat yawned a good-humored greeting.

"My name is Baxter, the new inspector, and I wish to see L. C. Dolby, the keeper of 27," he said.

The girl flushed slightly. He observed that her hair was cut short like a boy's and that her chin was firm and sharp.

"I am the keeper," she answered; "my name is Lettie C. Dolby and I've had the place since father was injured last winter."

"That's right, and as good as a man she is, too!" came a gruff voice from the other room.

Lettie flushed again.

"It's father," she whispered; "won't you step in and see him? He's very glad to have visitors."

Baxter had not yet recovered from his shock of surprise at finding that the slim, blue-eyed girl who stood before him was really keeper of Craigie's cut, and he allowed himself to be led into the other room. There, at a big, bright window, sat a man in a rocking chair. His face was of the chalky whiteness that comes from being always indoors, and his lap was spread with a plaid comforter. He looked prematurely old and worn.

"How are you?" he asked. "I'd get up, only—" and he motioned to his crippled legs with a faint smile.

"That's all right," responded Baxter, sympathetically; "keep your seat."

And Baxter, sitting there, heard Lettie explain the condition of section 27, and make her reports as promptly and very much more clearly than any of the keepers he had ever met. She spoke in a frank, almost boyish way, and she understood her words as well as Baxter himself did. Her father sat watching her quietly, adding a word here and there. Presently the clock in the further room struck three, and Lettie started to her feet.

"It's time for me to make the rounds of the section," she said, and a moment later Baxter saw her little form, wrapped in a stout, dark coat, disappear over the brow of the hill toward the tracks.

As he looked back he found Dolby watching him intently. When he caught his eye the cripple leaned forward and touched Baxter's knee.

"There isn't a pluckier girl between St. Paul and Montana buttes," he said, "even if I do say it; who shouldn't?"

"I don't see how she can manage the section," replied Baxter.

"That's what I say," exclaimed Dolby; "it's wonderful," and his pinched face lighted up with a smile that was beautiful to see. "It would go hard with all of us if it wasn't for Lettie."

"How did a girl happen to be appointed to such a place, anyway?"

"She's deserved it," Dolby answered, energetically; "she deserved it. They ain't many people that know all the facts excep' the superintendent—he knows, and he says Lettie can be keeper as long as she wants to."

"Course you remember the big blizzard that we had last winter—the one that snowed in Evansburg and Brockton and Collinville and killed all the cattle on the Puddin' Bottom ranch. Well, it struck the Cragie country too. Come up over the hill from back of the house early in the morning, and long before 10 o'clock there wasn't a fence to be seen in the country. Lettie's mother said I better not go down to the cut. She was afraid I might get lost. But I'd been to Cragie's on an' on for more'n eight years, and I thought I'd seen the worst the weather could do. So I went down the hill, and before I was ten rods from the house the snow had wiped it out, and all I could see were the whirling drifts and the path for a dozen feet ahead of me. And when I reached the cut there wasn't any cut there. It was filled to the top with snow. I wondered what the limited bound down for Cragie would do. It was pretty sharp and cold when I reached the track this side of the bridge, and I had to get down on my hands and knees and crawl along from tie to tie just like a baby. I was strong in those days, too, only the wind and snow were so terrible that I couldn't stand up. And first thing I knew I had crossed the bare knoll at the bridge approach, and there I was hanging over the edge of the embankment like a bat to a rafter. Slipped before I knew it.

"You're done for, Dolly," I said to myself when I saw how little held me from falling into the chasm. It was 100 feet to the bottom, and jagged rocks all the way down. But I had grit, if I do say it, and I hung there for grim death, with the wind kicking, and beating me about like a dead limb. I knew well enough there would be no one to help me, and that I couldn't help myself; but still I hung there. A man doesn't like to be dashed to pieces on a ledge of rocks unless it becomes absolutely necessary.

"Pretty soon I heard the limited squealing down the cut. I knew that Jim Crosby, the engineer, was floundering in the snow. I said to myself that if Jim succeeded in rooting through with his engine I might be saved, but I knew well enough he wouldn't succeed. It would take four engines and two rotary plows to drive a tunnel during such a blizzard. And there she squealed and shrieked for hours, it seemed to me, while my hands and arms grew as numb as clubs.

"And Lettie—what was she doing all this time? When the snow covered the woodshed and began to creep up on the windows she was frightened. 'I'm afraid that father'll never come back,' she told her mother—I heard all about it afterward—and her mother, who's always been fidgety and nervous like, began to walk up and down and wring her hands, not knowing what to do. Twelve o'clock came, and then one. Lettie started up and said: 'Mother, I'm going out to see if I can't find father,' and in spite of all her mother could do she bundled into her cloak and hood and opened the door.

"The snow was up to her waist, but the wind had mostly gone down. In the cut Jimmie Crosby's engine was callin' and screachin' for mercy, and Lettie, when she looked over the cliff couldn't see the train at all—only a big black hole where the smoke from the stack had melted the snow. But Lettie wasn't strong enough to get down to the tracks, for the path was drifted full, and a slim girl like her couldn't venture it without losing her life. She knew well enough that I was down the section somewhere—perhaps out on the bridge. But she didn't give up—not Lettie. There wasn't a man around the place to help—only in the train, and the train was at the bottom of the cut buried in the snow. She thought if only she could get word to Jim Crosby he'd help her, for she knew him well. So she ran and got a coil of rope and tied one end of it to that stubby oak—there you can see it at the edge of the hill—and then she took hold of it and slid into the cut. That took grit—there aren't many men who would have risked it—let alone girls. Of course the snow got into her eyes and nose, and the rocky ledges cut and bruised her, but she never stopped until she was at the bottom. Jimmy Crosby said he saw something floundering in the snow outside of the cab, and then somebody called:

"Jim, oh Jim."

"It was Lettie. They dragged her into the cab, and as soon as she could talk she told Jim that I was lost in the blizzard.

"'We'll save him,' said Jim, and the fireman agreed to help, and so did a dozen other men who had come down from the train. And Jim, bein' a good climber, went up the rope hand over hand and helped a dozen or more men to follow him. By this time it had stopped snowing, and the sun shone bright in the west. They wallowed down through the drifts to the bridge, Lettie following. They tried to leave her at home, but she wouldn't say. 'If father's in danger,' she said, 'I'm goin' to help find him.'

"I heard 'em when they reached the bare knoll this side of the bridge. I had hooked one leg around a sleeper and I still hung there over the chasm. I don't believe I could have let go. I guess that I was frozen there. I tried to shout and let them know where to find me, but I couldn't get my mouth open. It was clean suffering that. For there was help within reach and I couldn't make a sound.

"But Lettie knew the path I usually took and the first thing I knew she was on her knees at the end of the bridge crying:

"'Here he is; oh, father, father.'

"After that I don't remember much. Jim said they carried me to the house and laid me on the bed, but I didn't get back to my senses for two or three days.

"I almost forgot to tell you that one of the men who helped was Bradley, the superintendent. When he saw Lettie and heard of what she had done he just took off his hat, this way, and held it before him.

"'You're the bravest girl I've ever met,' he said."

Dolby paused as if he liked to remember this part of the story.

"The passengers, oh, they escaped by Lettie's rope and were driven into Cragie's. And that night when the superintendent was talking about who should be keeper of section 27, Lettie spoke up, timid-like:

"'Mr. Bradley, let me watch it; I can do it almost as well as father.'

"The superintendent looked at her for a moment, and then he said:

"'I believe you can, Lettie.'

"From that day to this L. C. Dolby has been keeper of 27. I've never recovered—my legs and my back—but the doctor still gives me hope. And I couldn't get along without Lettie——"

But the old man's voice broke. Baxter, shaking hands with him silently, went out towards Cragie's where he sent a glowing report of the excellent condition of section 27, L. C. Dolby, keeper.—Chicago Record.

Training the Deaf.

The first few months of the school life are devoted chiefly to exercises for the development and training of those senses still possessed by the child, which must do the work of the missing sense in addition to their own, and in cultivating in him the habits of obedience, attention and concentration, without which he can make no progress. The attention on the part of the deaf child in the class room must be closer than is required of a hearing pupil; for if his eyes wander from the teacher's lips he immediately loses the connection, since his ears do not tell him what is being said. The habits formed in the earliest classes are of fundamental importance, and a great responsibility rests upon the teachers of the lowest grades.

Before the actual teaching of speech the attention of the child must be aroused, his interest awakened, the spirit of observation, imitation, and obedience cultivated, and the senses of sight and touch rendered alert. This is attained by a series of introductory exercises nearly in the form of play. The games are arranged to train the sight to rapid and accurate recognition of objects, colors, number, forms and movements, and to develop in the sense of touch a swift and delicate discrimination between forms, surfaces, textures, weights, and finally vibrations. The eyes must do the work of the ears in comprehending the speech of others, and the tactile sense must come to the rescue in the training and guiding of the pupil's own organ of speech. The ability to distinguish differences of vibration by touch is the objective point of all tactile training, and the exercises bearing directly upon this are conducted with musical instruments such as the guitar, zither, and piano, and then applied to the vibrations of the voice as felt in the chest, throat, and head.—The Century.

An Unnecessary Expense.

Chief Justice Waite, according to Eli Perkins, used to tell this story about Evarts and Conkling. All the newspapers are telling it substantially as follows:

Roscoe Conkling came into Mr. Evart's office one day, when he was a young lawyer, in quite a nervous state. "You seem to be very much excited, Mr. Conkling," said Mr. Evarts. "Yes, I'm provoked—I am provoked," said Mr. Conkling. "I never had a client dissatisfied about my fee before." "Well, what's the matter?" asked Mr. Evarts. "Why, I defended Gibbons for arson, you know. He was convicted, but I did hard work for him. I took him to the Superior Court, and he was convicted; then on to the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court confirmed the judgment and gave him ten years in the penitentiary. I charged him $3,000, and now Gibbons is grumbling about it; says it's too much. Now, Mr. Evarts, I ask you if I really charged too much?" "Well," said Mr. Evarts, very deliberately, "of course you did a good deal of work, and $3,000 is not a very big fee; but, to be frank with you Mr. Conkling, my deliberate opinion—is—that—he—might—have—been convicted—for—less—money."

Long and Short of It.

Simkins—Professor Pederman says that, "as a rule short men are early risers." I wonder why that is, Jimkins?

Jimkins—It's because they can't lie long in bed, I suppose.

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