

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION: THE WILMINGTON JOURNAL is published weekly, except on Sundays and public holidays, for one dollar per annum in advance.

We publish on the first page of to-day's issue, the act recently passed by the Legislature, to amend the Constitution of the State. This act is to be voted on by the people in August next, and every one should make himself perfectly familiar with the amendments proposed.

Amendments

We confess that the anxieties expressed by some of our contemporaries on the subject of "Amnesty" affects us but little. The time was when a graceful act of political oblivion would have awakened all the generous and appreciative emotions of which the Southern heart is so largely capable.

Illustration

There is an interesting article in the December number of this journal, in which it is very properly held, that there is no power, than that of ready and felicitous illustration, which will be a curious enquiry (says the writer) how many men live and die, respected and useful members of society, without once getting off a happy smile.

We will manage, for instance, that there is not an honest man in the whole State of North Carolina, however simple, that cannot expound and fully illustrate the experiences of the past few years, political and personal. He will describe the influx of prowling and thieving carpet-baggers in their hundreds, and after the surrender, as the gathering of cultures around the prostrate and wounded body of a noble and defenseless against their foul appetites.

But to return: The article in the "Illustration," to which we have referred, in treating of the honor of "Illustration," addresses itself, mainly, to that higher degree, which consists in fresh and original coinage—that is, in the creation of new things, not the splicing together of old things, which brings the matter illustrated with sudden force to the reader or hearer.

One of those ancient maxims which have become trite by frequent repetition, but none the less true, is that republican institutions have no solid foundation except in the virtue of the people. Among the impressive lessons of History none is more strikingly proved, and the lessons of the present confirm, in every point, the experience of the past.

The distracted condition of Mexico is a sad example of the decadence of a corrupt and ignorant people. In the last century which has elapsed since her release from Spanish bondage she has seen but two gleams of hope and prosperity. The first was under the Emperor Iturbide, and the second under the Emperor Maximilian.

There is a general feeling throughout the world, and we believe it to be well founded, that the United States, by their interference with Maximilian, destroyed the only prospect that Mexico ever had of establishing a stable government, which would have proved a blessing to her, and a benefit to all the nations which are interested in her prosperity.

We leave the subject, and leave the reader to discover the aptitude of this remarkable illustration.

Wilmington

Civil Service—How the People are Humbugged.

In the early days of the Republic, public officers were less lucrative than the ordinary pursuits of life, and men who sought office could not be accused of mercenary motives. But as the country expanded, so did its budget, and in due time, new fields were discovered in the shape of Indian agencies, land grants, &c.

The evil became so crying that some notice had to be taken of it. We have seen the great municipal revolution in New York, and have been astounded by the relations of fraud and defalcation in every department of the Federal government, civil, military and naval.

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We commend the article to the attention of our readers, as an evidence of the very slight hold that Grant, as President of the United States, has on the political affections of some of the Republicans in the North.

Enough evidence, and more than enough, has already been given in the course of the present issue, to show that the investigation in this city to prove that one of two things is true, either that the President Grant is a thief, or that he is not, is a scandalous proceeding.

It is generally certain that the measure will come to naught. President Radicals and Radical papers have already expressed their opinion that its passage would effect the dissolution of the Radical party, whose only bond of cohesion is the spoils. They are not going to cut their own throats and it is vain to expect any good from that quarter.

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LOCAL

THE SOUTH OF THE CAPE FEAR—VISIT OF THE ENGINEER OFFICERS.

The distinguished U. S. Engineer officers, now in this city, went down the river again yesterday on a visit to the works at the mouth of the river, the revenue cutter H. H. Seaward, with the party on board, leaving the wharf in front of the Custom House at 8 o'clock.

The cutter steamed directly down to the mouth of the river and close to Bald Head, when the party were landed and some time spent in examining the effects caused there by the works above between Smith's and Zeke's Islands. These effects are shown, most forcibly, in the washing away of some 800 feet of the point, and are an important indication of the increasing force and volume of the water now flowing over Main bar.

After a careful inspection of this point, the party re-embarked and were landed on the opposite side, at Fort Caswell, where the ruins of this stronghold were examined, the fort, it will be remembered, having been destroyed by the Confederate forces, in 1865, when Fort Fisher was captured.

From the fort they went to Smithville, where an hour was spent very pleasantly in visiting the post, where they were welcomed by Col. Mendenhall, the Commandant, and in rambling around the village, after which the party returned to the cutter, and started on the return to the city, arriving here about 6 o'clock.

The Commission will probably leave here tomorrow morning, some of them returning to Washington City and others proceeding to Mobile, where they are to examine the works in progress there. Of the result of their visit we cannot, of course, ascertain anything at this time, as it will be some weeks before the report can be made up and forwarded to the head of the Department.

THE ENGINEER COMMISSION.—The party of U. S. Engineer officers who have been here on a tour of inspection of the river and bar, all left yesterday evening. Gen. Foster goes to New York, Capt. Phillips to New Orleans, and Capt. Gilmore and Mr. Wright to Charleston, where they are to examine and report upon works at that point. From Charleston they go to Florida, and from thence to Mobile. Col. Craighill accompanies the party to Charleston, but not in an official capacity.

The Commission were engaged all day yesterday in making up their preliminary report. They labored hard, and only succeeded in completing it in time to take the train. A full report of the result of their examinations is yet to be made, but this cannot be completed until a careful survey of the mouth of the river be made, which is to be done in due time, under the direction of Major Crockett.

TO THE WORK HOUSE.—The following named persons, sentenced at the present term of Superior Court, were sent to the Work House yesterday: Milly Scott, for 1 year; Robert Hill, for 6 months; Jasper Mitchell, three years; Arthur Matthews, for 4 years; Judge Doherty, for 2 years; Hupsey Peterson, for 2 years; Nancy Mack, for 2 years; Jeanie Beasley, for 1 year; Jacob Baker, for 3 months; Romeo Davis, for 6 months; Cornelia Harris, for 1 year. All of the above are colored.

HOUSE.—Debating generally. SENATE.—No session. The Supreme Court of the State, organized by the execution of Mr. Monaghan. The French Consulate has adopted the first clause of the merchant navy bill taxing foreign bottoms 50 centimes per 100 kilograms by a vote of 10 to 8.

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