

# FREE PRESS.

ISAAC H. JULIAN, - - - Editor.

SAN MARCOS, TEXAS.

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The Proprietor consents ALL the Advertising in this Paper, on the INSIDE as well as the Outside Pages, to be

## Prospect of Water Works.

Mr. Holman, superintendent of the Austin Gas and Coal Co., was here the first of the week and made propositions for supplying bar town with water on a new plan and favorable terms. We have not the space this week to go into details. Suffice it to say that the proposition as given by Mr. Holmes is, that if the town will guarantee \$1,000 per annum, to pay for the use of hydrants to be used by the corporation in case of fire and for other purposes, the work will be put through, entirely at his expense. The parties so offering, we learn, have the requisite amount of capital to carry out their plan. The rate to be charged consumers, it was stated would be 5 cents per hundred gallons. \$18,000 is the estimated cost of the works. We learn our town council, which meets on Tuesday next, have the matter under consideration, and we earnestly hope the desired result may be reached.

While at Austin on Monday, we looked in on the Legislature a short time at their house in the temporary capitol, which is about as good as the old one. We thought the "assembled wisdom" made a better show than their immediate predecessors, especially the House, in which quite an animated debate on the road law was in progress during our stay.

We met Col. Swisher while at Austin, Monday, and he presented us some documents on the Greer county question, giving the results of his investigations on that subject. The question is before both Congress and our State Legislature. Col. S. has been the wheel-horse of the investigation on the side of Texas, and we trust may meet the success and the reward he so justly merits.

## FROM AUSTIN.

Legislative Notes--Inaugural Ball, etc.

AUSTIN, Jan 29th, 1883.

Ed. FREE PRESS--The Legislature is in full blast. It seems that each member is trying to introduce the most bills, as yet most of them linger in the committee rooms and have not been acted upon by the houses.

The first bill introduced was for making an appropriation for the mileage and per diem pay of the members and officers.

By Wurzbach, of Bexar--To withdraw the public lands of the State from sale.

By Devan of Clay--A bill to give further protection to the wool growers of the State.

Coersham of Dallas--Concurrent resolution instructing our senators and representatives to vote against any tax on quinine.

Labatt, of Galveston--Joint resolution requesting the Texas delegation at Washington to urge the establishment of a quarantine station by the National Government at St. Louis Island, opposite Galveston Island.

Hill of Polk--The act concerning public lands heretofore surveyed by railroads or corporations for the benefit of free schools.

Townsend, of Colorado--To appoint a committee from both houses to negotiate for the purchase of the Alamo, and to erect suitable monuments at Goliad and to Fannin's men.

Frymier, of Houston--Joint resolution requiring Committee on Judicial Dist., to reorganize and equalize the several judicial districts of this State.

By McDaniel, of Hill--To withdraw from sale all the school, University and Asylum lands, heretofore authorized to be sold by any law of this State.

By Mr. McBride, of Hays--To authorize and require county commissioners' courts to provide for the payment of all claims due teachers of the public free schools, audited as valid claims under acts of the legislature, approved Aug. '76, or April '79.

By Senator Fleming--An act making it the duty of railroad companies to burn the grass of their rights-of-way, and fixing a penalty for their failure to do so.

Senate Bill 81--An act to prevent certain county officers, their deputies and employees from purchasing property at tax sales; was read the third time and passed.

Senator Pfeuffer as chairman of the committee inspected the Governor's Mansion has condemned the furniture and fixtures as "rubbish" and recommended an appropriation of \$4,500 to put the same in a habitable condition. The resolution was at once adopted.

Contractor Smith, who built the temporary capitol, was before the Senate Finance Committee with a claim of \$8,000 for extra work caused by the falling of the building last summer, it is thought to be a just claim and hoped he will be successful.

Chenoweth, chairman of internal improvements, will introduce the celebrated railroad bill in a few days. The bill has already been printed and set as the "order of the day" for one day this week; it will doubtless cause a good deal of discussion in both branches of the House; a great many are of the opinion that if it is not defeated it will have to be modified a good deal before it passes.

The Inaugural Ball was a failure as a ball, but was one of the grandest dress parades Austin has ever witnessed for a long time, consequently your correspondent is unequal to the task of describing it; the supper also was complete in every particular, taking into consideration the vast number present to be served. Among those in attendance from San Marcos, were Hon. J. V. Hutchins and lady, Capt. E. B. Martin and lady, Judge Kone, and others.

Dr. Denton has moved his family out and taken charge of the Lunatic Asylum. Glad to see the FREE PRESS agitating the subject of giving a ball at the court house.

J. E. LAMB.

We are glad to be able to announce to our readers that our Austin correspondence, begun in another column, will be a regular feature of the FREE PRESS during the session of the Legislature. The writer, a gentleman well known "in these parts," is in a position to be well informed as to the topics upon which he writes.

## Washington Letter.

(From our Regular Correspondent.)

WASHINGTON, January 22, 1883.

Just at present it is the Navy that Congress is talking about. The Navy, mark you, the Navy, wants itself increased because forsooth, it is the "laughing stock of Europe." If there is any role the Navy cannot endure it is the role of a laughing stock, hence every year is repeated this catapult argument: "our Navy is the laughing stock of Europe." From a naval point of view the Navy of the United States lives, moves and has its being as the cynosure of European admiration. And to be laughed at by Europe. Oh! horrors. It is fortunate for the United States that this morbid love of admiration is confined principally to the official personnel of the Navy. All of them have been to Europe at Government expense, and the most that their travels has taught them is to be ashamed of their country because it does not live for war, and has fewer and less imposing ships and guns than the monarchies of Europe, which live to fight and fight to live. If the United States should endeavor to remodel itself in every line in which it is the laughing stock of Europe it would have a stupendous task before it and our naval Bunnhorns may as well face their share of European derision. But there is a lesson that both the Army and Navy official personnel should begin to learn: Our traditions are not warlike; our chief industry is not war; the flower of our population is not under arms; we have not and cannot have a personal interest in the armed balance maintained by the colossal demoralizing life and treasure sapping establishments--removed from us, thank heaven, by three thousand miles of heaving sea. If our army and navy officers feel themselves *de trop* without war ships and armies for a setting so much the worse for their profession and so much the better for the country. The United States can well afford to be laughed at for beating swords and spears into implements of husbandry, and if we have fewer iron clads and guns than any great European power, we on the other hand have more threshing machines than all of them combined.

There are at least three branches of the public service for which we pay a great deal and for which we have very little use. They are the Diplomatic, the Military and the Naval establishments. It may be well to keep skeleton military and naval establishments as a nucleus of National defence, but the diplomatic corps is an antiquity, utterly useless in modern times. We find no use for it before the laying of the first Atlantic cable, but since then it has had no shadow of excuse for remaining above ground.

There was a spirited debate in Congress on Saturday relative to the Naval bill and the discussion will be continued to-day, but no real reform need be expected until another party has control of legislation, and executive matters.

During the course of the debate Mr. Knott of Kentucky said there were in commission thirty steaming vessels, for them were 203 engineers officers at an aggregate pay of \$642,000 for sea duty. Though these gentlemen understood their duties theoretically, he undertook to say that with the exception of a few men like Melville, none of them ever had a monkey wrench or an oil can in their hands since they had been in service. Twenty-five officers of this engineer corps were so loaded with rank and dignity that there was not a ship in the Navy big enough to hold them. If some indiscreet secretary of the navy should order a chief engineer, a pay director, and a medical inspector for duty on the same ship, the vessel would inevitably sink.

There was another corps of which the country has heard a good deal--the marine corps--which had a long list of officers. The duties of every one of these officers could be as well performed by an officer detailed from the line of the Navy; and if he had an opportunity he would offer an amendment looking to that result. He would also offer amendments for the gradual abolition of the pay corps, and for a reduction in the engineer corps.

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