

# The Lenoir Topic.

VOLUME X.

LENOIR, N. C., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1885.

NUMBER 20.

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STATESVILLE, N. C.

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August 27th, 1884.

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F. LEE CLINE,  
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW,  
HICKORY, N. C.

ATTORNEY-AT-LAW,  
LENOIR, N. C.

CILLEY & NEWLAND,  
Attorney-At-Law,  
LENOIR, N. C.  
Practice in All The Courts.

## RAILROADS, COUNTY ROADS AND THE PARDONING POWER.

Winington Star.

Gov. Scales makes a calm statement with reference to the State management of railroads. He thinks there are just causes of complaint and that if nothing is done to remedy the evils complained of "the agitation will go on increasing day by day until the people will force from unwilling hands that justice which if voluntarily granted would have been gladly accepted in a spirit of compromise, leaving no sting behind." He does not make any suggestions as to the manner of remedying the evils, but he says the Legislature "has the power to control and regulate these corporations." But he says the railroads "best understand their business, and are certainly best qualified to know what should be done and how to do it." This is the correct view.

The Governor is too practical to overlook the necessity of improving the county roads. The condition of the public roads of the State is a positive disgrace. The money lost in the breakage, and wear and tear of vehicles, and the loss sustained in the carrying business in one year by reason of the miserably roads, would, if the sum could be accurately ascertained, be sufficient to put in good repair every main road in North Carolina. A wagon and four horses can haul more pounds over a good turnpike road than twelve horses could over the roads in most of the upper counties. Governor Scales says:

"If we build great railroads and improve our national water ways, then we must reach them by turnpikes and other good roads in the mountains and elsewhere, until all the productions in every part of the State will find an easy and safe way to the markets of the world. As the arteries to the body, as the rivers to the ocean and as the spring and smaller streams to the rivers, so are the public roads to the railroads and water ways in sustaining the trade and commerce of the world. Our system is old and sadly defective and through all these years have been most sadly neglected. There must be amendment. The people will demand it. Communications have been received from some of the wisest and most experienced of our statesmen urging attention to the question."

He makes no suggestions as to the best plan of meeting this great drawback upon the development and progress of North Carolina. Within a year, we remember to have seen it mentioned in one of our State exchanges, that some Northern man had visited a section of North Carolina and after travelling over the roads he declined to invest in any State where the public highways were left in such a fearful, such a reproachful condition. How the people of at least forty counties have been willing to bear the curse so long would be singular if we did not know that in England our ancestors bore with such roads for hundreds of years, and that in the last century they were not only almost impassable but were beset with dangers from highwaymen. The legislator who can devise a judicious, economical, efficient, equitable plan of putting in good order the public roads of the State will deserve the thanks and honors of a much distressed and hindered people. The Star thinks that the roads can never be made what they should be except by taxation—by keeping a force at work in each county all the year round under a thoroughly competent manager and road builder. Gov. Scales thinks a beginning should be made at once, and suggests "that at least a part of the convict force should be reserved and applied through the counties to this purpose, to be continued year after year until we have a complete network of good roads leading from every neighborhood in the State to the railroads, waterways, and markets of the world." But if this force only is to be relied upon, then it must be ten or more years before some of the counties can receive any benefit. The convict labor should be made to contribute to the wellbeing of the State, but it will not do to rely upon that alone. A tax well expended would aid very greatly. Every main road in each county leading to the Court House should be put in thorough repair at the earliest day possible.

We are delighted to see how wisely and discretely Gov. Scales touches upon the pardoning power. At last there is a Governor who has a proper

regard for the punishment of crime and who looks upon the pardoning power as exercised by one man as not the best and safest way of suppressing crime and meeting the necessities of mercy. He says:

"This power is so liable to be abused, and has been so much abused, that I am inclined to think that such a provision (a Pardoning Board) is wise, and perhaps the best possible safeguard against individual bias, personal weakness and any improper considerations. Under such a law the Board must recommend to the Governor, but there can be no pardon without the concurrence of the Board and the Executive. A pardon always comes in contact with the judgment of the law. The law says the penalty must be enforced; the pardon says it shall not be, and is in fact a nullification of justice as meted out by our courts. As a general thing it is much better that the judgment of the law should stand."

He says the pardoning power must not be regarded as an appellate court. He quotes from Leiber on "Civil Liberty and Self-government" as follows:

"Whenever, in the peculiar combination of circumstances, pardoning militates with the true end of the State, that is with justice itself, in such cases pardon may be granted; but even then it should be done after the most patient and thoughtful investigation. The arbitrary, frequent and loose exercise of the pardoning power would be disastrous in the extreme, impairing in its consequences the love of justice, confidence in the courts, respect for the law and our high veneration of the trial by jury."

## LETTER FROM THE SEASIDE.

Science and Religion.

It was on a New Year's morning dark and cloudy that I was hastily called from my couch of sleep and dreams in the clever and classic town of Statesville, N. C., to turn my heart and face from the desire of home and toward a strange land, for it seemed that the quiet yet forceful echo of "a still, small voice" like unto that which spoke to Abraham in the ancient days had spoken to me in the same commanding tone, saying: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land which I will show thee: Gen. 12: 1. What strong faith it must have required to have obeyed such a command!

Yes, indeed I was severing the silver cords of ardent devotion to my native hill country—the golden cords of the old acquaintance never to be forgotten—the immortal cords of parental and filial love as fresh as the power of steam could dash to the rear of a flying train the chilly air of a wintry morn.

How suggestive is this of the speeding nature of human existence? We are on the eventful wheels of ever rolling time drawn by an omniscient, yet unseen power, hasting from the known to the unknown—from a definite point in the past to a certain yet unknown destiny in the future full of mystery. How could we find comfort, or rest in the ease of quiet sleep on whirling wheels of moving train unless we could place our confidence in the man whose ingenious mind and skillful hand can construct, control, and guide the complex machinery of the engine which so grandly bears us along? The comfort is measured by the confidence. But we are on a revolving, circling, whirling world, drawn by the courier of time, divinely swift, through realms of uncreated space in which lie multitudinous unseen worlds which run in obedience to celestial law, revolving planets, systems and suns against which our little sphere might collide and dash all its historic events into the forgetfulness of oblivion, and scatter all of its immortal freight like atoms on the boundless area of eternity were it not for the infinite intelligence of the mind that designed and created, and the quivering fingers which direct and control the lines of law which go out through all the universe like threads of influence to keep in beautiful harmony all the wondrous workings of God's mysterious machinery.

How could I rest in comfort for a moment on a moving world like this did I not know that God was at the great center, controlling all its workings and directing it to an intelligent destiny. Comfort is again measured by confidence, or faith and that faith not a "blind superstition" but an intelligent power

corroborated and sustained at every step by all the inventions and discoveries of science. With God, science is but common sense and hence is by no means at enmity with him—She is but the entertaining and expert agent by which God is leading genius to ultimate perfection—in other words she is the "two edged sword," keen as possibility by which mind is gaining dominion over matter, thus fulfilling the original command of God to man in the early morn of creation. Thus science, the sprightliest daughter of the intellect, is gracefully wielding her glittering scepter—invention, in this onward march. The spiritual to the final conquest of the material. True science ever has been, is now, and ever will be the brilliant headlight on the train of civilization as she dashes along the straight and narrow way of practical revelation. All guided infidelity has unintentionally furnished many car-loads of practical demonstration to substantiate the plain and simple declarations of our "old family Bibles." Then while we see skeptics and infidels flipping their little grains of mental sand against the granite foundations of eternal truth let us not bring against them a "raiding accusation," but in earnest prayer simply say "the Lord rebuke thee" as he most certainly will do with that mighty truth whose heritage is the "eternal years."

The christian can with the utmost confidence and without the least nervousness from fear of contradiction or finding of flaw invite all skeptics and infidels to a rigid examination of the natural world of which he has a complete inventory, compendium and record in the "old family Bible." Why should we make ship-wreck of faith tried and true to the last of life for the misty theories of skepticism? To what common understanding have skeptics ever arrived? What regard does it offer to the just? What punishment to the unjust? What rest to the weary? What consolation to the grieved? What balm to the afflicted? What gospel has it ever preached to the poor? What "rod and staff" has it furnished when man was about entering the mysterious "valley of the shadow of death"? What power has it furnished to rob death of its sting? What victory has it proclaimed over death? On all these great questions infidelity echoes no answer to the deeply interested and inquiring humanity. Let us cling to the comforting faith of our fathers and mothers for this

"Faith lends its realizing light,  
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly  
The invisible appears in sight  
And God is seen by mortal eye."

This faith is substantial and sweet, but the theory of infidels knows no certain origin—has no common duty—knows no future destiny for man. With him man comes from nothing and goes nowhere. An incomprehensible effect without an adequate cause. The christian's faith furnishes adequate cause for man's origin, duty and destiny, and let it be our anchor "both sure and steadfast."

At one fell stroke it strikes down the grandest and most comforting doctrines of the Bible—the immortality of the soul—the resurrection of the body. So that "in the flesh we may see God." So long as science finds new and unexplored fields for the exercise of inventive and progressive genius, so long can an intelligent christian world rest assured that an infinitely intelligent creator is still beyond the grasp of his finite, yet intelligent creature.

When man's present environment is the victim of his comprehension then he may claim rivalry with the creator—till then let him follow on as the child followeth the father. When he has equalled his creator in a just conception of the nature, laws and designs of this world then we believe that a voice from heaven will say unto him "tis enough, 'come up higher'" Thou hast been faithful over a few things enter into the joy of the Lord by searching into the beauties of heaven which shall be to thee a source of joy forever. Here with unenvied mind and untiring delight investigate celestial sciences with all the pleasure of spirits redeemed from the hindrances of sin. Trusting child of a just and merciful God trust on. Thy heaven is one of eternal intelligence, joy and love. Infidels are only

"raging waves of the sea foaming out their own shame; wandering stars unto whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." Then take a firmer grasp on the "old family Bible," make its doctrine of faith the conscious experience of thy life and from the "valley of the shadow of death" thou shalt emerge into eternal life. Thus a little entry in my "diary" has grown into a newspaper article. May it benefit somebody.  
D. H. TUTTLE.

## MARRIAGE LICENSE.

Senator Bower's Speech in Regard to Reducing the Price of License.

Mr. Bower said: I look at this matter in the light of public policy and strict justice to the poorer classes of our people. Senators will recollect that most of the civilized countries of the world, instead of imposing restrictions upon marriage license, actually offer premiums to induce it. Some of the continental countries of Europe, especially, have legislated in this direction. In France there once existed a law punishing celibacy at certain ages as a high misdemeanor. We are taking an opposite course. I object to the present law because it is not fixed or uniform in the different counties. The tax may be one dollar, two dollars, or three dollars, pending upon the whims of persons controlling county finances. The present bill remedies this evil. I object to the present tax because it is extravagant. I can well see how a man living in his gorgeous mansion, faring sumptuously every day, with a big income at his disposal, can afford to disregard this tax. To him the happy event of marriage is an era of expenditure. A trip to Europe, or Niagara, or New Orleans, is a part of the programme. To him a three dollar license tax is a mere trifle. But there is another class whose interests we are to look to. To him whose habitation is a log hut in some nook of the mountain, this tax becomes, indeed, a burden. He is often driven to the most desperate expedients to procure his license. I would make the assumption of the marriage relation free and untrammelled. It has been the policy of the greatest countries of the world. Let us not contravene the wisdom of the past as well as the demands of the present, by continuing this anomaly upon our statute books.

## A Shot at the Balloon.

OGDEN, Kan., Jan. 12.

Mr. Editor: If you will allow me a little room in your columns I would like to say something in reply to the gentleman who speaks of the two French engineers who have invented what he called the "cigar-shaped" balloon, and went on to discuss its merits as though it were a great monster that could take on board large bodies of men and come over and make our homes desolate.

Now, if the gentleman thinks that France is going to turn out to making cigar balloons and come over and offer battle then he can get on his ear and try to stir up the statesmen so that they will tax the people to raise money whereby to get ample funds to prepare for our defense, for I think taxation would be the only way to raise the millions he spoke of. My idea is that the people are taxed already to enormous extent without any heavier tax being put on them for the purpose of meeting France in the elements and offer her battle.

Now, I hope Mr. Castle will study over the matter a little before he goes any further with it, for don't he know that France came out bravely and fought for our defense? And I believe if our country were in a helpless condition today that the Frenchmen would volunteer and come over and fight for us as they heretofore did. So I hope he will let the two little Frenchmen amuse themselves without trying to get the United States to raise funds to keep them within their lines, for I would like to have them visit us so that I could get a view of their balloon.

I hope these few lines will not cause any hard feelings, for I have not written them for that purpose. I have only done it that the gentleman might think what he was recommending our statesmen to do as a wise thing to be done. Respectfully,  
X.

## AN HISTORIC TOWN.

The Capital of the State of Wilkes Awakes Like Rip Van Winkle from a Long Lethargy and Sees a Railroad Nearing her Borders.

Located in a beautiful spot on a bluff overlooking the placid waters of the romantic Yadkin River; surrounded by broad rich bottoms, fine tobacco land, great corn farms and many very unusual advantages generally, especially the central location, with the Blue Ridge grand and solemn 20 miles to the north and west, and the fertile and far-famed fruit region of the Brushy Mountain Range on the South, sits with almost motionless pulse just now the old town of Wilkesboro.

Boasting of a history and record of more than one hundred years; justly proud of herself as the cradle of some of North Carolina's noblest sons and most beautiful and charming daughters, she has gently gone to sleep. The Stokes, the Gordons, the Waughs, the Finleys, the Barbers and some others who were among the earliest and best citizens were in their veins the purest, the bluest and the best of blood. In individual wealth, in culture and in vigor and beauty of form and person, some of them carried off the palm of the State.

Like the early and festive days of Pompeii; she was a gay town and they said to each other, "Home of my childhood that beautiful spot, which memory retains, when all else is forgot." Let us rejoice! They rejoiced in the fair land that Nature's God had given them. But like the ancient Pompeii, she was buried not by the eruption of Vesuvius and a rain of death dealing ashes, but worse still, by the reign of Republicans and sinners.

"Like a banquet hall deserted" she now sits breathing the pulseless calm of stagnation. Whence the change? The great civil war that shook all institutions to their solid centre, carried from their civil duties and our midst, our brave, gallant, peerless and patriotic Gordon, Stokes, Barber, Brown and others, many others, brave and true and from the blood-flooded battle fields of the east to Heaven.

Robbers of helpless women and children and blind men got into office, and upheld by the Republican party, robbed the county and ran her in debt. These saintly leeches in cahoot with the Revenue Department and officials dominated her for a long time and still hold seemingly the balance of power.

But behold the star! The good and true men of Wilkes are not all dead. Slowly, it seems, but certainly sure the day for a glorious resurrection of the dormant powers that begin to stir, is close at hand. Already we sniff with keen eagerness of a healthy appetite for a better state, the coal-laden fragrance of the iron horse. Verily do we believe the last obstacle will soon be overcome and the pall of oblivious inaction will be lifted and the dark visaged emissary of misfortune, who seems with a greedy grip to have claimed Wilkes as his own, will take flight at the musical snort of the steed of iron and flee to the land of Ashé or some other seaport town.

The dear "old city" sits in the same position, in the centre of the Yadkin Valley. She is still surrounded by the broad rich corn lands. She still boasts of a close proximity to the finest fruit region on earth. She is still the capital of the county that produced the tobacco that took the premium at the great World's Fair at Vienna. She still has more advantages than any one feeble pen can portray in a short article, and she is still "unwept, unhonored and unung" and ought to see more of THE LENOIR TOPIC.

OBSERVER.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO.

The Difference in the Code of Manners Then and Now.

The parents ruled the family; the children were in perfect submission and were not men and women until about 21 years of age. The boys wore tow cloth, or flax and cotton—"Coppers" pants were common. Cotton cloth was then 25 cents per yard, calico the same. Palm leaf hats turned up behind and a red bandana kerchief out cornerwise made neckties for two boys, who

went barefoot to church until 18 or 20 years of age.

The girls would walk to near the church in their every day shoes, turn aside to a suitable log and change, putting on fine slippers which the beau would carry, ("toot" he called it), in a "reticule" made of striped cotton cloth.

The boy that could afford a ruffled or pleated shirt bosom was considered stylish. The girls then wore their hair in the form which Nature pointed out. Now all the front must be cut short, put in press over night so as to look at Church next day like the top of a buffalo head. Then they used no paint, they were painted by the warm, pure blood coursing through their veins, caused by early rising and proper exercise and by not lying in bed till 8 o'clock. It might be best for me to say no more in regard to the women's dress of today lest I get into trouble.

Then boys remained with their parents until they were about grown. Now they are men at about 10 years of age, must go about or get into "business." He gets a \$3 watch with a ten cent curb chain attached, puts a ring on and starts out. Everything must yield at his approach, he is "monarch of all he surveys," goes off, spends all the money he can get, returns and takes board at home again; takes command of everything in the whole concern, is the Legislative, Executive and Judiciary, Minister Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary wherever he goes.

Watch him at church, enter just as the text is being read, stamping his heels on the floor as he goes, hat on until he reaches a vacant seat. He jars the whole house as he drops himself down. Gazes around the congregation to see if there is material there for another "snob." If he can't satisfy himself he waits till the congregation kneels in prayer. Then he is enabled to make his selection. If he can't bring himself to notice during the services, then before the benediction has left the minister's lips he slams his hat on his head and starts in a half trot, runs over every one that don't give way to him, stops just in the centre of the doorway to look at his watch (which never did run) and says, "Ah! my watch has run down."

Go to the postoffice and see him jam his head in the delivery box until the mail is opened. The postmaster must attend to him first to get him out of the way.

I went into a store one cold day some time ago and found six chairs around the fire, occupied by 6 African "snobs," in a circle around the fire, talking large and loud. Several old gentlemen of the Anglo-Saxon persuasion were standing around at their backs waiting for an opportunity to get at the fire.

PINE BURR.

## Our Mount Zion Letter.

JANUARY 26, 1885.

EDITOR TOPIC.—Our Mt. Zion school is still in session and now numbers forty-two students, all of whom seem to be making excellent progress in their studies.

The weather in this locality has been quite disagreeable for some time past, but it is delightful now.

The farmers have commenced repairing their fencing and preparing to set another crop. There was quite an interesting show at our school house the other night. The Indian performer, performed one feat in legerdemain which was not down on the programme, by dexterously jumping behind the canvass and smashing the lights out of one of the windows with his head; but he made it all right by paying for the damage.

Why is it that we cannot always receive THE TOPIC on time? Sometimes it is more than a week old when it reaches this office. Surely some postmaster between here and Lenoir must fail to do his or her duty. We do hope that something will be done to enable us to get THE TOPIC on time, for when it fails to reach us, we feel like we had lost our dearest friend.  
J. C. L.

After General Grant's refusal of Vanderbilt's gift Colonel Grant refuses Arthur's tender of a quartermaster's soft berth. Sons of great men follow their fathers a long way off.

Bob Ingersoll sneers at free seats in churches, and charges 50 cents a head for his lectures.