THE DAILY CRESCENT.

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CITY.

JAMES O. NIXON, WILLIAM R. ADAMS.

BY NIXON, ADAMS & CO.

OFFICE, NO. 70 CAMP STREET.

TERMS:

The Crescent will be regularly served to subscribers in the city, at an early hour every morning, (Sundays excepted,) for $10 a year, in advance; half-yearly and quarterly at the same rates, or 75 cents a month, payable to the carrier.

Advertisements, paragraph—first insertion, fifty all cases, $1; for every subsequent insertion, 50 cents.

Advertisements at the usual page rate charged $1 for every insertion.

Advertisements published at intervals, will be charged $1 per square for every insertion.

Advertisements not marked, will be published one month, for longer, and charged accordingly; no advertisement or subscription will be stopped until all arrearages are paid, at the option of the proprietors.

A Liberal Discount will be made to regular advertisers.

THE DAILY CRESCENT

Has a circulation which renders it a desirable medium for advertisers.

As a FAMILY PAPER it circulates largely, reaching many hundreds of homes at an early hour, and being read before the assembling of business hours, rendering it valuable for family use may be advantageously published in its columns.

THE WEEKLY CRESCENT

Is published every Saturday morning, at $4 a year, invariably in advance. Having an extensive circulation throughout Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Alabama, Texas, and other States, it presents a favorable medium to advertisers of making their wares and commodities known. Advertisements inserted for $1 per square, each insertion.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, DEC. 12, 1855.

☞ The purser of the steamship Texas has our thanks for manifest and Vera Cruz papers. We are also under obligations to the purser of the steamship Louisiana for papers from Galveston and Indianola.

☞ The officers of the steamers Paul Anderson, Falls City and Nashville, have our thanks for St. Louis and Memphis papers.

THE MAILS.—The New York mails due yesterday failed beyond Philadelphia. From that point and other Atlantic cities we have dates as late as due.

BUSINESS.—Since Saturday last there have been received 41,748 bales of cotton, and of the other quantities of produce, by the many steamboats arrived, we have not space to enumerate, as they are hourly placed on our bulletin board, and inserted daily. But that old fogy we met to-day on the levee, with uplifted hands, as he was picking his way among the cotton bales, was almost bewildered at the sight the levee now presents. He really was forced to believe there were sights in New Orleans as well as in Paris. We should not be surprised yet to learn of his having taken a hundred thousand dollars in the railroad bonds. There were about eighteen steamboats preparing to leave last evening; how many depart to-day, our list will say.

ANOTHER LARGE LOAD FROM TEXAS.—The R. W. McRae arrived yesterday from the prolific regions of Texas, bringing 1810 bales of cotton. Not quite so far back as the year 1810, a pair of Indian canoes done all the trade in this river. What little cotton was raised up to within a few years past, was hauled to the Mississippi river.

COTTON.—Its coming; and so long as the dry weather holds, will continue to come; the receipts for the 24 hours ending at 6 o'clock last evening were by the Whiteman, from Yazoo River, 2262 bales; McRae, from Bayou Tensas, 1810; R. L. Cobb, from Camden, 1009; A. W. Glaize, from Washington, 248; Nashville, from Memphis, 2375; Rapides, from Alexandria, 955; Louisiana, from Galveston, 363; Bluff City, from Memphis, 1599; Ed. Howard, from out of Tennessee river, 1814; Total 12,878 bales; Sugar, 701 hhds., molasses, 1279 barrels.

ADDRESS OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.—This address occupies a goodly portion of our columns this morning, and will command, as it deserves, a very general attention. The document is admirably written; and no matter what may result, the Volunteer Fire Department will have no reason to complain of any want of vigor on the part of their committee. Some very strong points are made, and the argument of the production is very well sustained throughout.

We have neither time nor room, nor is it necessary, to refer to the production at length. It is sufficiently interesting to be read by everybody. One point, however, we will advert to. It is this: The figures furnished at the close of the address indicate that the Volunteer Firemen can supply fifteen hundred men and twenty-three companies at a cost to the city of fifty thousand dollars per annum.

Here is a statement accompanied by calculations and figures, altogether worthy the consideration of our municipal economists.

ORPHAN BOYS OF THE THIRD DISTRICT.—The ladies of the Third District—noted for their loveliness, benevolence and charity, as are, indeed, the ladies of the whole Crescent city—contemplated giving a Fair, the proceeds of which will more to the benefit of the orphan boys of that District. The Fair will commence on Monday next, and will be held in the Orleans Ball Room, and will continue during the day and evening; in fact, from day to day until all the articles are disposed of.

The Fair should be largely attended by liberal purchasers. The cause is a pure and holy one, and appeals directly to the kindliest sympathies. Remember the orphan, cheer the fatherless, help the helpless and the bereaved. This is a duty we all owe, and we hope to see it fully discharged in the present instance.

EQUESTRIANISM.—We would call particular attention to Mr. Herron M. Smith's announcement of his very talented company of Equestrian performers, who are to appear next Saturday (Dec. 15,) at the old circus stand, on the corner of Poydras and Baronne streets. We are the more gratified at this announcement, from the fact of our having been so long without a presentation of this order of amusements, and also from the fine company which we learn he has engaged. We are amongst other names that of Joe D. Rice, who is one of the most witty and versatile Clowns in the world. Most heartily do we recommend our readers to the advertisement under the head of amusements in to-day's paper; they will there find particulars in full.

TOY BOOKS, PUZZLES, GAMES, ETC.—J. B. Steel, No. 60 Camp street, has a fresh assortment of juvenile works, annuals, games, puzzles and other attractions for the present season of the year, when Kriss Kringle and Santa Claus are expected to render their little friends rich in such matters. We would direct attention to the catalogue in another column, and advise all who have little folks around the home hearth, to procure them some amusement of the kind alluded to.

NEW ORLEANS STATIONER'S WAREHOUSE.—J. B. Steel, No. 60 Camp street, has received a very large and fresh supply of illustrated works, souvenirs, annuals and floral offerings, intended and specially adapted to the present season of the year, when affection seeks some pleasant means of making itself known and friendship endeavors to articulate its emotions. Mr. Steel's advertisement catalogues a great number of beautiful and valuable works, fit for presentation, and we commend all who are blessed with friends to heed the announcement.

☞ The ladies and gentlemen of New Orleans are respectfully solicited by Murphy & Nevius, auctioneers, to attend this day at 10 o'clock, at No. 49 Magazine street, the sale at auction of the largest and most magnificent assortment of elegant and costly fancy articles ever before displayed to the public. They are suitable for Christmas and holiday presents. The goods consist of the latest designs and novelties of European art, house-keeping articles, etc. The sale will be continued from day to day until closed.

GEORGIA UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE.—We have received the December number of the Georgia University Magazine, published at Athens, in that State.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.—The November number of Blackwood has been received by us from Leonard Scott & Co., of New York, through J. C. Morgan, the agent in this city. The number is very interesting, although confined almost exclusively to matters in the East.

SOUTHERN FURNITURE ROOMS.—Chas. A. Stewart, Nos. 171 and 173 Canal street, has just received from the manufactory a beautiful stock of mahogany armoire and bedstead—increasing his large stock of household furniture until it equals any in this section of country. Those who wish to make purchases of furniture cannot do better than resort to his advertisement in another column and give him a call.

THE PROLIXITY OF THE AGE.

The present era is remarkable in many respects. In practical discoveries, in the adaptation of the means to the end, in radical progress, in general development, in the multiplication of unwholesome isms and the spread of wholesome knowledge, in the cultivation of the peaceful arts and sciences and the discovery and application of engines of unusual destruction to human life and happiness, in charity and in worth, in hypocrisy and in vanity, in great things and in small things, and in unmeasured liberty and irrestricted tyranny—this era, we unhesitatingly declare our opinion, exceeds all other eras known to the pages of sacred or profane history.

This is a great—we may say, an "immense" era—and this is a great country, inhabited by a great people, wonderful for their annexing proclivities, which look to both the North and South Poles for supplies of ice to cool them off when the universal fit is raging, and who regard the Arctic ocean as a nuisance because it stops their progress in that direction, and the Anti-Arctic as a confounded humbug, because it prevents annexation in another direction—the Pacific as a stupendous waste of water which ought to be filled up and made cultivable for corn, cotton, wheat, rice, sugar and potatoes—and the Atlantic as of inconvenient breadth for a tremendous suspension bridge, over which newly invented locomotives should run at the rate of at least three hundred and sixty-five miles per hour!

"Young America" has taken all these things into profound consideration, and there is no telling what he will not do before he stops.—Whether he succeeds or not, one thing is certain: he will write out and publish a tremendously long story, with out regard to expense—to others—which will make the printers sorrow over sprightliness misapplied, and the publishers—those unfortunate fellows, who are compelled to pay up every Saturday, no matter what the weather—almost weep for sheer vexation.—"Young America" is always prolix.

But the prolixity of "Young America" is cast entirely into the shade by the interminableness of "Old America." The old gentleman has nothing to do but spin out long yarns and fight all his battles, real or imaginary, over again. He, therefore, makes prodigious use of the longest and most unfathomable words of the English language. The fact is, the habit has obtained to such an extent that plain, common people, cannot understand either the old fellow or the young fellow, without the aid of a whole library of dictionaries.

This pernicious example has prevailed to such an extent that Governments, National and State, politicians, aping the statesman, local and general, obscure what charity supposes they mean to say under such a cloud of words, that the *animus* of their effort is altogether indescribable. The groundlings are captivated with their "words of learned length and thundering sound," but the intelligent and patriotic look upon such balderdash, coming from high places, with pain and mortification. So must all men, capable of judging base metal and true metal. Look at the President's message, and the reports from the various Departments of State. It is almost impossible to get hold of the few grains of wheat amid the enormous quantity of chaff. Look at the debates in the Senate and House of Representatives, and the official reports of the same, and the proof will be clearly apparent that nine-tenths were made for "Buncombe"—not for the good of the country or the enlightenment of mankind. A useless, hurtful prolixity pervades them all. The quantity, not the quality, is the end aimed at. Then, let us come down to the proceedings of our State Legislature—here in Louisiana. These are really enormous in bulk and incomprehensible in volume. Our statutes and journals baffle even the keenest witted of our lawyers, and throw doubt, uncertainty and contempt, over all. There is not now, and never will be, in the State of Louisiana, a man, or a body of men, possessing a versatility and grasp of mind, memory, intellect—no matter what it is called—sufficient to keep up with the astounding progress of our lawmakers. They travel too fast, and in too many directions, even for this swift generation.

But, prolix, tedious and unprofitable as Presidents, Heads of Departments, Congresses and State Legislatures have been and are, the prolixity, tediousness and unprofitableness of the Common Council of the city of New Orleans, surpasses them all. The proceedings of the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain are brief in comparison. The journals of the General Congress of the United States are full of refreshing brevity by way of contrast. And even the Legislature of the State of Louisiana—ponderous and meaningless, and unworthy as are many of its actions—"hides its diminished head," and has'nt a word to say. The Common Council throws them all so deeply into the shade that rivalry is out of the question.

If anybody has curiosity sufficient to prompt the examination, we would refer to the files of the Crescent for the past ten days for proof. The Imperial Parliament is the actual Government of England, a country upon whose domains the sun never sets, and which is now engaged in a war of terrific magnitude. We question, however, whether the proceedings of Parliament occupy as much space as the proceedings of the New Orleans Common Council. The Congress of the United States—composed of bodies of unquestionable prolixity—has to attend to the general legislative business of thirty-one independent sovereignties, yet it rarely requires as much paper and ink as our Common Council. The State Legislature is known and feared for the interminable prolixity it inflicts upon the innocent inhabitants of the commonwealth, yet it is as harmless as a sucking dove when contrasted with the legislature of the Crescent City!

The fact is, the proceedings of the Common Council, ordinances and all, might be compressed within one-third the space they now occupy, to the general advantage of all concerned. There is no use in having the ordinances as long as the Constitution of the United States, without any part of its significance or directness, or the proceedings hampered with useless reports of committees, which only tend to make equivocal that which otherwise would be plain. Then, again, half the expenses of printing might be saved, while the people would be correspondingly enlightened.

Thus ends our discourse on "The Prolixity of the Age," and if anybody is benefited, well—if not, there is no harm done, as we have to pay all the expenses of publication, to say nothing of the labor of writing.

ORIGIN OF THE "DARK LANTERN" PARTY.—In the "School History of the United States," by A. Derald, a new work, highly recommended by Bishop Potter and other eminent scholars, we find the following on page 121. It occurs in the account given of the battle of Bunker Hill:

It was rumored in the American camp that on the night of the 18th of June, General Gage intended to seize and fortify Bunker Hill. The Americans determined to anticipate him. On the evening of the 19th of June, a party of troops, commanded by Col. Prescott, assembled at Cambridge, ready for the work. After a prayer from the President of Harvard College, (with working tools, muskets and DARK LANTERNS,) they silently proceeded to the peninsula of Charlestown.

So it seems, says the Louisville Journal, the "Dark Lantern Party" bears even date with the Revolution. The Dark Lanterns in use by this generation of Americans are perfect models of the Bunker Hill patent.

Telegraphed to the Daily Crescent.

NO SPEAKER YET.

BY THE NATIONAL AND SOUTHERN LINES.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 10—There was nothing of importance done in the Senate to-day. In the House seven ballots were had for Speaker without success. The following is the result of the last ballot: Banks, 107; Richardson, 76; Fuller, 28.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11.—Nothing of importance done in the Senate. Six ballots were had in the House for Speaker with the same result as yesterday. There seems no prospect as yet of an organization.

More Filibustering.

The President has informed the District Attorney of New York that another filibustering expedition is on foot, the purpose of its progenitors being to invade Nicaragua. He also recommends that prompt measures be taken to suppress it.

Kansas.

We have nothing later from Kansas, and it is now generally believed that the accounts previously received were exaggerated.

New York Market.

NEW YORK, Dec. 11.—Cotton quiet; Orleans Middling, 8¾. Flour is lower; sales of Ohio at $8 87½, and State at $8 62½; Southern, $9 62½. Lard, 12¾. Whisky quiet.

Cincinnati Market.

CINCINNATI, Dec. 11.—Flour is selling at $7 51 to $7 85. Sugar 7½ to 7¾. Molasses, 30 cents. Coffee, 12¼.

River Intelligence.

LOUISVILLE, Dec. 11.—The river is rising, with 9 feet 5 inches water in the canal.

The Eclipse arrived on Saturday from New Orleans and the Niagara left on Saturday, and the Buckeye, Antelope and Glendale on Monday for that port.

Later from Mexico.

The steamship Texas, Capt. Forbes, arrived yesterday afternoon, bringing the mails from Vera Cruz and the city of Mexico. We have files of papers from the latter city to the 30 inst., and from the former to Saturday last.

El Veracruzano of the 8th states that, according to its correspondences from the capital, the best understanding does not exist between the President and his Ministers, and that the programme from the Cabinet of their course during the interregnum previous to the time when the nation shall be regularly constituted through its representatives, was looked for with much anxiety.

At last dates from the capital a law regulating publications was under consideration of the Supreme Council of Government.

Senor Jose Duran has been appointed Consul at New York.

Don Manuel Robles Pezuela has been appointed Ambassador to the United States in place of Senor Almonte.

The supporters of the project of erecting a new State, to be called Iturbide, have abandoned the idea.

The *Trait d'Union*—the French paper published in the capital—recommends Senor Reibaud, commander of the Mexican naval forces in the Pacific, for Consul at New Orleans—"principally," it says, "because Mexican interests have for a long time been deplorably neglected in that city, and they require a man like Senor Reibaud, with a knowledge of the things and the people of the United States; but more particularly, as in that city are organized all the operations of the filibusters." Very complimentary to our spirit of enterprise, indeed!

In accordance with the decision of the Supreme Council, the order reducing certain Government employees to half pay has been abolished.

In regard to the troubles in the State of Tamaulipas between Generals Garza and Traconis, we have nothing very definite. The papers state that in consequence of the latest news received by the Government from that State, Garza has been ordered to proceed to the capital and the hope is fervently expressed that this step may produce the re-establishment of peace in Tampico and in the Department. A letter from General Traconis to Vidaurri, dated the 19th of November, is published. The General prefers many charges against Garza and against other persons in Tampico, professing his fidelity to the Government of Alvarez, and his readiness to submit his course of conduct during the troubles to his commander-in-chief, Vidaurri.

At the time this letter was written, Tampico was in a state of siege, declared by Traconis for the defence of the town against an expected attack by the forces of Garza. In his letter, Traconis stated that to defend himself he had but 500 men, more than 200 of whom were in the hospital, and he asked a reinforcement of 500 or 600 men expressing the assurance that with that aid he could put an end to the difficulties by which he was surrounded. It is probable that the demand for Garza's presence in the capital brought the question of his loyalty to the Government directly to issue.

Our Minister, Mr. Gadsden, had written a letter to Vidaurri, denouncing the recent invasion from Texas, and pronouncing Capt. Callahan and his men a band of vandals.

An organized band of robbers, said to number not less than fifty, were committing many excesses along the roads between Puebla and Orizaba.

AMUSEMENTS THIS EVENING.

GAIETY THEATER.—"The Double Bedded Room," "Giralda," and "Crimson Crimes."

ORLEANS THEATER.—Halevy's grand opera of "The Jewess."

ST. CHARLES THEATER.—"The Betrothal," and "Grandfather Whitehead."

PEEL'S SOUTHERN OPERA HOUSE.—The Campbell Minstrels in a great variety of Songs and Dances.

VANNUCHI'S MUSEUM.—Wax statuary and cosmoramas, at 107 St. Charles street.

FRANKLIN MUSEUM.—Statuary, reptiles, etc., at 105 St. Charles street.

FOR YAZOO CITY AND VICKSBURG—The splendid passenger steamer, Lewis Whiteman, J. S. Wallace, master, is off as the regular boat, this evening for Yazoo City, Vicksburg and all way stations. T. B. Smith, No. 12 New Levee, is her agent.

FOR FORT ADAMS.—The fine steamer P. F. Kimball, Orr, master, leaves this morning, at 10 o'clock, for Fort Adams, Donaldsonville and Coast. Speake and McCreary, 3 Tchoupitoulas street; Oakey and Hawkins, 90 Gravier street; Payne and Harrison, 112 Camp street, are her agents.

FINE FRUIT TREES, SHRUBBERY, ETC.—A fine collection will be sold at auction, at 10½ o'clock this morning, in the passage of Banks' Arcade, by L. A. Levy, Jr., auctioneer.

FOR CINCINNATI.—The fine passenger boat Hungarian, Collier, master, leaves for Cincinnati at 5 o'clock this evening. Those going up river will find the Hungarian a safe and comfortable boat, well officered and well regulated. John E. Hyde & Co., 66 Poydras street, are her agents.

FOR ST. LOUIS.—The new and light draught steamer Adriatic, Capt. Charles Stone, takes her departure this day at 12 o'clock, for St. Louis and intermediate landings. John E. Hyde & Co., 66 Poydras street, are the agents.

FOR NAPOLEON, ETC.—The excellent steamer T. P. Leathers, C. P. Bennett, master, leaves this morning, at 10 o'clock, for Napoleon, transacting all business along the coast which may be entrusted to her. Lewis Snapp & Co., 37 Front street, are her agents.

FOR CINCINNATI.—The regular passenger steamer Delta, James Ford, master, leaves for Cincinnati and intermediate landings, at 5 o'clock this evening. John E. Hyde & Co., No. 66 Poydras street, are her agents.

ALABAMA RIVER.—The new light-draught passenger boat C. Bealer, Shaw, master, will leave for Montgomery and all other landings on the Alabama river, this afternoon at 5 o'clock. Agents, John E. Hyde & Co., No. 66 Poydras street.

FOR MEMPHIS.—The steamer Gem, Capt. Clinton Heslip, with Capt. Edward Phelps, clerk, having been thoroughly repaired, to the satisfaction of the Board of Underwriters, leaves for Memphis and all way and plantation landings, this evening, and attending to all business entrusted to her with promptness and dispatch. She is now receiving freight foot Lafayette street.

FOR OPELOUSAS.—The new and fine steamer Alice W. Glaize, Johnston, master, puts out at the usual hour this evening for Opelousas, taking freight for Old River and all the landings on the Atchafalaya. J. M. Johnston & Co., No. 3 Front Levee, are the agents.

☞ We have frequently heard the celebrated German Bitters, sold by Dr. C. M. Jackson, 120 Arch street, Philadelphia, spoken of in terms of the highest commendation, and we believe that it is one of the best medicines advertised for the complaints for which it is recommended. They are pleasant to the taste, and can be taken under any circumstances by the most delicate stomach. The press, far and wide, have united in commending this invaluable remedy for dyspepsia, debility, etc.; and such are the healing effects of this panacea, that we hope it may be introduced to every family where dyspepsia has or is likely to have a victim. See advertisement. d4 1m4dW

☞ CIRCUS COMPANY COMING!—HORACE M. EUSTIS'S American Circus Company will be in town in a few days, and the lovers of Equestrian Exercises may expect a rich treat, as this Company comprises some of the best talent in the world, consisting of superb Riders, Vaulters, Vocalists, Tumblers, Clowns, Comedians, Acrobats and Dancers, etc.

☞ They will be located at the old Circus stand, corner of Poydras and Baronne streets. d11 2p

THE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT of New Orleans, to their Fellow-Citizens.

The duty we owe to ourselves—the respect we have ever entertained for public opinion, and a proper regard for the truth of history, impels us to lay before our fellow-citizens an impartial relation of the causes which have contributed to the dissolution of our organization, and at the same time to set forth a history of wrongs and grievances entailed upon us by the Common Council of New Orleans, as burthensome in their nature, as they have been cruel and ungrateful in their infliction.

In the performance of duties voluntarily assumed by us, involving as weighty a responsibility as perhaps ever fell to the lot of any body of men banded together for the public good—that of protecting (in this large city) the lives and property of our fellow-citizens—we have labored with unremitting zeal—devoted our time—lavishly expended our money—impaired our health, and sacrificed valuable lives—all without aims. Ease and comfort were name without a place in our vocabulary, and men's usual hours of repose were passed by us in weary watchfulness. Ours was no menial service—we were not the paid mercenaries of *experimentalists*—we were no hired scribes—no! we labored in a field, whose only fruit was the public weal, and we obtained but one reward—the good opinion of our fellow-citizens.

The responsibilities assumed by us (as grave as they were) we had no desire to evade, but we asked (and we think our demands were reasonable) to be placed in possession of the necessary appliances to be enabled at any moment, and on every occasion, to successfully discharge those responsibilities. The Government or the General which would send an army to the battle-field inefficiently armed, against an enemy proverbial for his prowess, would be as certain of defeat as it would be deserving of public censure; and the municipal body which would expect from a volunteer organization the successful combatting of the most dangerous enemy known to man, and yet neglects to place in its hands the necessary weapons to do battle with, cannot fail to receive, even by ingenious legislation, a full share of popular execration.

The responsibility of our dissolution rests with the Council, and not with ourselves, *nor can this responsibility be shifted*. We are aware that to a certain extent we placed ourselves in a false position, in the memorial we submitted to the Council, but this was more the offspring of a natural feeling, engendered by the long neglect and studied indifference of the Council, than from any want of respect or proper obedience to that body. The memorial was submitted to the Council on the 30th of October, and it urged the propriety of immediate action, as the members of the department no longer desired to remain in a position, which, from its very nature, was continually subjecting them to public censure. What course did the Council pursue? Did it go to work and examine, and ascertain if the complaints set forth were just, and the demands exacted reasonable? Did they appoint a committee to meet us, or invite the appointment of one from our body?—a measure, which, if carried out, would have resulted in the satisfactory adjustment of all difficulties. Did they manifest, in any manner or by any act, the slightest desire to do us justice? No! for no such desire existed; the memorial was eagerly seized upon as a *plausible pretext* to give effect to a measure, which was conceived by members of *another Board*, and simply incubated in the hot-bed of experimental reform. A radical change uncalled for by public opinion, not treated of or discussed by the public press, (the presumed exponent of public opinion,) was thus *secretly concocted*, and abruptly ushered upon the community, and every principle of justice, respect, and gratitude to a large and self-sacrificing body of our citizens trampled under feet. It must be borne in mind, that we claimed nothing from the Council *ourselves*. We did but seek them to bestow upon us office, or to create offices for us. The public crib, from whose ample stores so many are enriched, we did not desire or demand to enter. We simply asked that our self sacrificing labors be relieved of those burdens which were crippling our usefulness and the removal of which would enable us to labor the more efficiently in the public service.

But let us here set forth, before proceeding farther, some few of the grievances under which (for some time past) we have labored.

A Chief Engineer was elected by the Council, and placed over the Department, without consultation with it—in direct defiance with its wishes, and without permitting it to have any voice in the selection of said officer—and as repugnant to the fifteen hundred members of the Department, as it was contrary to the very genius and spirit of our institutions. A republican government may appoint and place its officers over the paid retainers of a standing army; but volunteer soldiers should be permitted to elect their own immediate commanders. By such legislation, we may be made to bear the inefficiency of the Chief—the very nature of his office, to a certain extent, shaping our duties—and yet have no voice in his selection. Were not our remonstrances against this act reasonable?

The quarterly appropriations absolutely necessary for the maintenance of companies, have not been regularly paid. This evil, in the knowledge of many members of the Council seriously impairing our usefulness, forcing many of us to advance money and contract debts, appears to have been one of those abuses which the besom of reform was not to reach.

The annual supply of hose, 300 feet, for which warrants were issued in January, many of the companies have not yet received. In many instances none have been furnished for two years. We shall show presently, that in 1854, the year so much harped upon for its unusual expenditure for the support of the Fire Department, that the *enormous amount of sixteen hundred and sixty-five dollars* (1665) was paid for hose. It is thus seen that the article, second in importance to water only, hose, is doled out in apothecaries' doses to the companies.

We have complained, time and again, of the insufficient supply of water. Has any remedy been applied, or any attempt made to apply one? The fact is well known to every fireman, and to every citizen who has taken the trouble to examine the subject, that all our large and disastrous conflagrations have been occasioned more from an inadequate supply of water than from any other cause. And if there is one charge more serious than another, which can be successfully maintained against our Councils, it is their tame and extraordinary submission to this evil. And here let us refer to three or four of the large fires which have taken place in the last two years, and for which the Department has been censured. We will show with what justice.

The great fire in Tchoupitoulas street in August, 1854, has been frequently adverted to and cited as an instance of inefficiency. Now, we contend that the Fire Department, on that occasion, did all that any human organization could have accomplished under *similar circumstances*. Despite the intense heat of the day, (the thermometer 95 deg. in the shade) the combustible character of the material (liquors) among which the fire originated, the inexcusable delay in giving a general alarm, and the rapidity with which the flames spread, the fire, even with these serious disadvantages, could have been checked with the destruction of two or three buildings, but for one insurmountable difficulty—for fifteen or twenty minutes after the fire broke out, most of the engines *were without water*! and at so period during the conflagration was there an adequate supply. This was a fact well known to every one at the time. Upon whom then, should censure have fallen? Certainly not upon the Fire Department. They have no control over the Water-works, and they have not yet learned to extinguish fire *without water*. The Commercial Water-works Company were the parties to be censured; and if the Council had done *its duty*, they should have instituted proceedings against said Company for a forfeiture of its charter.

The fire on Magazine street, in March, 1854, gained headway and became for a time unmanageable, from two causes—an insufficient alarm, and an inadequate supply of water.

The fire in Chartres street could have been easily checked, and possibly confined to the building in which it originated, had the Department at the time had in their possession a sufficient supply of hose, and had not what was brought into requisition by the first companies arrived on the ground proved (*somehow*, as soon as the engines attempted to force through them.

The peculiar construction of the Verandah, the difficulty of leading hose through the building, and the usual inadequate supply of water, baffled all our efforts to save it.

We have thus hastily and briefly adverted to *these fires*, to show how powerless the Department has been in many cases. Let us go on again to enumerate other abuses, of which we have complained.

We have frequently called the attention of the Council to the gross mismanagement of the fire alarm bells; and we have asked, as a matter of public usefulness and necessity, as well as an important adjunct to our own organization, for the erection of a central tower, from which an alarm could easily be heard throughout the city. Our petitions have slumbered in the surfeited portfolio of a committee, and fires have been permitted to burn before alarms have been given, until their very smoke had almost suffocated the sleepy watchman, whose duty it was to ring out the peals of danger. The Council cannot urge as a reason for refusing to furnish the necessary means of alarm, that the city had an exhausted treasury; for, if *one half* of the amount squandered upon the steam engine had been devoted to this object, we should have a permanent, important and efficient ally to any fire organization, instead of an exceedingly doubtful experiment.

We have asked for the repairs of our Engine Houses. That they stand in need of it, is evidenced by the report and estimate of the Surveyor, in answer to a resolution of the Council. That officer stated that it would take $6,500 to place the houses in good condition. To this reasonable request an unwilling ear has been turned. And, while upon this subject, let us refer to the manner in which these repairs are made under the contract system. In many cases contracts are sold to irresponsible parties, the work is half or badly done, and even where the Surveyor has refused to approve the work, the contractor has succeeded in obtaining his money from the Council. In this way a large amount of money is squandered, and the defiled up against the Fire Department.

But let us now turn from this branch of the subject (although it is by no means exhausted) and refer to another.

It is contended by the advocates of a paid Fire Department, that a large amount of money will be saved to the city by its adoption, and that the volunteer department has been extravagantly conducted. These assertions cannot be sustained by evidence or statistics. It is true that the items charged up against the Fire Department in 1854, make up a large aggregate, but if the members of the Council had taken the pains to examine, analyze and classify these items, they would have found that the *greater proportion* of the amount was far from being an annual expenditure. Some of the items are permanent investments, and others cover a period of *four years*.

The whole amount of expenditure in 1854, debited up against the Fire Department, (see Comptroller's Report,) was $94,425 58; of which, in the shape of annual appropriations to the companies, is only $29,451 68. The balance was, for

10 new Engines, (will last four years)	$9,900 00
4 " Trucks, " "	3,400 00
2 " Hose Tenders, " "	600 00
7 " Engine-houses	34,150 00
Repairs to ditto	10,881 80
Rents of ditto	1,960 00
Commercial Water Works for pipes	560 58
Fire-alarm bells	584 25
Hose furnished Companies	1,665 00
Back appropriations of 1853 to Louisiana Hose and Crescent Company No. 24	1,284 46
	$64,974 89

Thus it will be seen that $45,000 was invested in new engine houses, or in the repairs of others—*all the property of the city*, and as indispensable as markets, watch-houses or jails—and $13,700 for new apparatus, which covers an expenditure for *four years*, and not for one, as charged.

That engine houses are property, and useful property for other purposes than the one for which they are built, is illustrated by the fact that out of the buildings taken possession of by the city, from companies disbanded last summer, *three are now used as school houses*. Another fact, that may be noted here, also, that although all expenditures made for or in connection with the Fire Department are debits against said Department, that the Council, when it *disbands six companies*, and takes possession of their property, houses, etc., *no credit* is given to said Department.

But the Council, unmindful of the facts set forth in the foregoing address, although attention has been frequently called to them, obstinately adheres to the mistake made, in endeavoring to create a paid Department, and stubbornly determines to carry out the experiment, let it cost the city even twice as much as the volunteer system. In compliance with the ordinance, the contract was sold, and was purchased by two competent and experienced gentlemen, who have thoroughly and carefully calculated what an efficient Department could be conducted for under the complicated ordinance—their bid was one hundred thousand dollars. Now it is to be presumed, that this bid would have been confirmed by the Council, for as it was a well known fact, that the ordinance was got up for *certain special parties*, and that the gentlemen who made the bid, were to be merely the representatives of those parties, such a presumption was reasonable. But the bid was not confirmed, for it appears that the high contracting parties had not contracted as all, and that the Council, in its eagerness to rush this matter through, had taken the favorably expressed opinions of a few members, as the official action of the Board, and that accordingly by its own admission, had *sold itself* along with the contract.

The volunteer firemen can furnish a force of *fifteen hundred* men and *twenty-three Companies*, for an annual appropriation of *fifty thousand dollars*. The Council is anxious to organize a department of three hundred and fifty men, with seventeen Companies, for about $85,000. An efficient volunteer organization with the above force, (1500 men) can be simply maintained by an appropriation of $50,000, as we will show—

23 companies at $1200 per annum	$27,600
300 feet of hose per annum for 19 companies, at 55c. per foot	4,560
Annual appropriations to companies for new engines, hose tender, once in four years	6,750
The same for four trucks to Hook and Ladder Companies	1,600
	$39,910
Leaving for repairs of engine-houses and contingencies	10,090
	$50,000

The Committee have thus, as briefly as they could, summed up the evidence in the case; they have no fear in submitting it to a jury of the people, and awaiting a verdict.

In the meanwhile, the Department will endeavor to preserve so much of their organization as will enable them to continue the existence of the Firemen's Charitable Association. The Council, by its rash and uncalled for legislation, has imperilled the existence of the Association, but the claims of the widows and orphans of our deceased brethren demand from us every effort in our power to rescue our useful and time-honored institution from destruction.

ALFRED BELANGER,
J. BENJ. CHANDLER,
DAVID ADAMS,
Committee on behalf of the Convention of the Fire Department.

New Orleans, 12th December, 1855.

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