

New Orleans Republican. OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF NEW ORLEANS

Mississippi State Cases. Attorney General Morris, of Mississippi, has written two volumes of "Mississippi State Cases," the first containing a biography of Chief Justice Sharkey, and the second a sketch of the life and genius of that famous and distinguished orator, S. S. Prentiss.

SEARJEST SMITH PRENTISS. Mr. Prentiss, whose portrait adorns this volume, was born at Portland, Maine, September 30, 1808, and died at Natchez, Mississippi, July 1, 1870. His father, John Prentiss, and his mother, whose maiden name was Mary Lewis, were both descended from Pilgrim stock. Their son, of whom we speak, from the effects of a violent fever in his infancy, became an invalid, and his education, which induced in the minds of his parents and family a special solicitude in his behalf.

His education was commenced at Gorham Academy in his native place, under the tutelage of Rev. John Nelson, a ripe scholar and most exemplary gentleman. At the age of fifteen years he entered Bowdoin College, where he graduated, and commenced the study of law. He spent his early years in the study of the law, and throughout his boyhood, he had been delicate as a girl, and rendered apparently still more so by the infirmity we have named, he early ripened into a robust and healthy man, that when the rugged hills of his native shores were scarcely too hardy.

His parents being in comparatively moderate circumstances, and he ambitious and ardent character, at the age of nineteen years he left the embraces of home and turned his face toward the South-west, resolved to seek fortune and fame among this generous and warlike-hearted people.

In 1827 he arrived at Natchez, and was soon afterward employed as a private teacher in the family of the Hon. John Shields, who had recently deceased. In this position he had the advantages of refined and Christian society, and the use of an excellent law and miscellaneous library. In this period of his life he always attributed much of his success in after years, and he ever alluded to the noble woman who was then his early teacher, in terms of warmest esteem and gratitude.

In the winter of 1828-9 he abandoned the life of a schoolmaster, entered the law office of the celebrated and able lawyer, Walker at Natchez, and devoted all his energies to the study of law. In the June following, alone, on horseback, he made his way across the country about one hundred miles to Mississippi, but let the supreme Court of the State was then in session, and there applied for and obtained an examination as to his qualifications and license to practice in the State.

At that time one of the most distinguished lawyers of the State, and it was then immediately directed to the office of the late Judge, who had devoted to legal study had been years of noble and splendid achievement. Twenty-one years afterward, when the grave had laid its cold and silent arms around his friend and kindred spirit, Joseph J. Brennan, himself a lofty and dazzling genius, alluding to the advent of young Prentiss as an advocate, said: "A break and debilitated body, but the lips supported by a sustaining case, his heart seen stealing away the technical lessons of stern judges, or weaving seductive tales in the corners of great cotillions. Restless as the penetrating breeze, his juvenile eloquence searched every avenue of thought and feeling. The classic page and the varied and elegant literature were stored away in the massive caverns of his broad and fertile intellect. A close train of dialectic reasoning on the most abstruse legal topics, was fit up with the pyrotechnic fire of fancy. The most ordinary incidents of life, the merest common-places, were caught up on the wings of his imagination, and blended and often in the most illustrative oratory, with the boldest and most gorgeous metaphors."

This was no exaggeration, but rather falls far short of the simple truth. Stepping about in his usual attire, he was a house to the arena of the courts, the youthful adventurer, without money, without friends and without influence, forced even the Nestors of the bar to give him the highest place in the very front ranks of their noble profession. With him there were no intermediate stages of experience, no memorable in the lives of other great advocates. He sprang full armed, like the goddess from the hand of Jove, into the conflict, and, apparently without a struggle, to victory, and to the most splendid triumphs of his profession.

From the hour of his debut his fame as an orator, as a logician and as a counselor of profound learning, spread far and wide, not only through the portion which constituted the Union. The memorable epoch of speculation, of inflated credit, of broken banks and of financial explosion was then near at hand in the new and exceedingly wealthy State of Mississippi, and he was called to the bar Mr. Prentiss was the central, and generally the controlling intellect and the leading spirit. In the stormy period which followed he was every where, in every scene, and in every scene an actor without an equal, and the object of universal admiration and applause. His energies never waned; his vigilance never slept; his learning was without limit; his power of retention was never at a loss; his memory retained with indelible fidelity all that he ever knew; his expedients for apparently hopeless cases, his penetration, his sagacity and generosity to friend and foe amazed every beholder; his courage never quailed, and his integrity or his honor was never diminished. In the extent of his civil and criminal practice, in his successful success in the splendor of his pecuniary rewards, in his boundless influence over both the judgments and passions of men of either high or low position, in the respect and veneration of all eyes, without an equal, and without a competitor.

His manner as an orator, even in his boyish efforts, was simple, unostentatious, artless and sincere. He never drew to himself, and to his cause the interest and the sympathies of every heart, and then, by the most skillful and overwhelming argument, comparisons illustrated and supported by his own consciousness and understandings of all who heard him. His figures and metaphors were drawn from the grand and the beautiful in nature, from the ocean, the clouds, the thunder, the rainbow, the stars, the flowers, the birds, or the glorious sunset, because a thousand times more grand, or a thousand times more lovely, than any thing that the service of his matchless eloquence.

But this was not all. The gorgeous splendor in which he was accustomed to deck the creations of his own fertile imagination, has sometimes led those who only saw and heard him as he careered amid courts and popular assemblies to suppose that he was only a nature, or a creature of brilliant, but any other, but after all, a mere declaimer. But there could be no greater mistake. For his maiden attempt to his last, it is believed that no one in the history of the world has ever observed him closely for twenty years, assert that he was never found deficient in a perfect knowledge of any principle, precedent, analogy or distinctly in any matter in any manner affect the business before him. True, he dealt largely in his own resources—in invention, in refinements, in subtleties—but these always led him up, before he concluded, to the plain and well beaten path of the law, and acknowledged authority; and that path grew brighter as he trod it. True, he did sometimes seem to dwell longer than is customary in the discussion of a matter, and his momentary propensities to wander, and his mind grasped and comprehended these maxims and original principles not merely as such, but in their reason and their far-reaching consequences and never-ending

RAILROADS. HOUSTON AND TEXAS CENTRAL RAILWAY.

Change of Schedule—January 14, 1872. DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL OF TRAINS. 3:30 A. M. Express leaves Houston daily, arriving at Galveston at 5:30 P. M., and at Austin at 10:30 P. M., connecting at Galveston with the Houston and Texas Central, and at Austin with the Texas and Pacific.

Close connection with Morgan steamers via Galveston, Houston and Henderson Railroad, connecting at Galveston with the Houston and Texas Central, and at Henderson with the Texas and Pacific.

Passengers for Northern and Eastern Texas will find this the cheapest, quickest and most pleasant route, being shorter than any other route, and being always as low as by any other route.

General Superintendent, JAMES H. CURR. General Freight and Ticket Agent, J. A. WOOD.

TO THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC. NEW ORLEANS, JACKSON AND GREAT NORTHERN RAILROAD.

On and after December 12, 1871, passengers to all points North, East and West will leave New Orleans from the depot, Calonge street.

Five Hours and a Half Quicker than any Other Line. Baggage checked through to destination, and berths secured in Pullman Cars as usual.

On and after December 12, 1871, passengers to all points North, East and West will leave New Orleans from the depot, Calonge street.

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MISCELLANEOUS. FAIRBANKS' SOUTHERN SCALE DEPOT.

These mills will grind with either horse, steam or hand power.

Dealer in All Kinds of Furniture. Nos. 92, 101 and 103 CHARTERS STREET, New Orleans.

Close connection with Morgan steamers via Galveston, Houston and Henderson Railroad, connecting at Galveston with the Houston and Texas Central, and at Henderson with the Texas and Pacific.

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INSURANCE. LAFAYETTE FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY.

In conformity with the requirements of their charter, the company publish the following statement: Gross premiums on risks for the year ending December 31, 1871, including unearned premiums of 1870, \$18,419 50

Less: Premiums on unexpired risks of 1871, \$15,317 33

Net earned premiums, \$3,102 17

Less: Interest on unexpired risks, \$1,200 00

Net profit, \$1,902 17

Assets. Stock notes, \$31,250 00

Cash, \$1,155 00

Real estate, \$1,155 00

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INSURANCE. NEW ORLEANS MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY.

In conformity with the requirements of their charter, the company publish the following statement: Gross premiums on risks for the year ending December 31, 1871, including unearned premiums of 1870, \$18,419 50

Less: Premiums on unexpired risks of 1871, \$15,317 33

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Net profit, \$1,902 17

Assets. Stock notes, \$31,250 00

INSURANCE. MERCHANTS' MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY.

In conformity with the requirements of their charter, the company publish the following statement: Gross premiums on risks for the year ending May 31, 1871, including unearned premiums of the previous year, \$11,023 64

Less: Premiums on unexpired risks of 1871, \$10,230 34

Net earned premiums, \$793 30

Less: Interest on unexpired risks, \$100 00

Net profit, \$693 30

Assets. Stock notes, \$31,250 00

Cash, \$1,155 00

Real estate, \$1,155 00

Net profit, \$693 30

Assets. Stock notes, \$31,250 00

Cash, \$1,155 00

Real estate, \$1,155 00

Net profit, \$693 30

Assets. Stock notes, \$31,250 00

Cash, \$1,155 00

Real estate, \$1,155 00

Net profit, \$693 30

Assets. Stock notes, \$31,250 00