THE CONTEMPT CASE.

The Mayor and Administrators Appear Before Judge Whitaker.

The rule for contempt against the City Administrators for their refusal to pay the bills of the Criminal Sheriff, came up Saturday morning before Judge Whitaker, the Mayor and Administrators being present to respond.

The City Attorney sets up as a defense a denial of the jurisdiction of the court, claiming that it was not within the province of that tribunal to collect the sheriff's bill by a rule for contempt, but the court overruled the objection and took up the rule on the issues presented.

C. H. Luxenberg, on behalf of Sheriff Houston, read the rule and stated that the proper authority of the State had certified to the bills of January, February and March as correct. He read authorities from the United States Supreme Court, showing that the certificate of the Judge was conclusive in the case, and no one could go behind or inquire into it. He argued that the certificate of the judge was in the nature of a judgment, and could not be examined into when final. A number of State court authorities were also read, going to show that the approval of bills by the judge has all the sanctity of a decree, while the City Council took upon themselves the privilege of a Supreme Court and sought to revise and reverse the decision of the court.

Mr. Luxenberg then explained the jurisdiction of the Superior Criminal Court and its right to enforce decrees.

Bishop, on Criminal Law, was cited to show that criminal courts have power through process for contempt to secure obedience to their orders; and other leading authorities in support of the doctrine were read to the Judge.

He said the administrators had assumed to themselves the right to cut out items in the bill in contempt of the certificate of the court.

Mr. Jonas, for the Council, said that the authorities read applied more to the question of mandamus than to contempt. It was alleged that certain bills of the Criminal Sheriff were due; that they had been duly certified; and that the city had refused to pay them. He argued that this mode of collecting debts through rules for contempt was unknown, and would completely set aside the ordinary processes used in the civil courts.

He said that the Superior Criminal Court had the highest criminal jurisdiction, but only that, and no criminal court ever attempted to enforce civil jurisdiction. The court has a right, he said, to enforce the presence of witnesses and of jurors to compel the presence of those who may be called before it, but it could not issue writs of mandamus or collect a civil debt.

The proper remedy for the Sheriff is to go before a civil court and take out a writ of mandamus and have the city authorities ordered to audit the bill; but for a criminal court to attempt to effect the collection of a debt through a rule for contempt, would be to give it a jurisdiction far greater than was ever yet given to any criminal tribunal.

The act, he said, making the judge's approval of a bill equal to a judgment, made its execution like that of a civil judgment, and not enforceable through rules for contempt. The manner pointed out by law for enforcing the payment of debts from the city was pointed out by this act. No courts had jurisdiction to mandamus the city, but it was only by ordinary action, and no execution could issue against the corporation. He read the statute showing that the signature of the judge was only prima facie evidence of the correctness of the bill.

Judge Whitaker interrupted him and asked when the statute was passed, and was informed in 1870. The Judge said that he thought it was a slur upon the court for the Legislature to pass an act giving to a judge's signature only a *prima facie* weight, when such signature was required by law. He was asked by law to certify a bill, and then a law is passed making his signature of only *prima facie* weight.

Mr. Jonas said the Court could only interpret the law as the Legislature made it. He closed by saying there was nothing known in the law such as collecting debts by rules for contempt, and he was satisfied the court would not, on this occasion, do it.

Gen. Sheldon followed, arguing the question of the right of the court to compel obedience of its orders in this case.

He said a corporation had no soverign power; the only power they had was that given by the Legislature, and they could not assume to themselves perrogatives not given to them. After a long dissertation upon the powers of courts he closed, and the judge took the case under advisement.

WHAT TO EAT.

Information for Those who Want to Live Well and Prudently.

Now is the season which perplexes housekeepers in their marketing and in the procurement of the articles of food and luxury for the delight of the gustatory organs. This perplexity arises from the capricious character of our climate which through a remarkably cold and protracted winter, has delayed the maturity and development of the customary material of food at this season of the year. Both vegetable and animal food have suffered to a degree by this phenomenal season. Vegetables and fruits do not exhibit the usually fully matured condition which in our semi-tropical clime they usually present in the early summer. They have been greatly retarded in their growth. They have not had their full share of solar heat, which expands and fructifies the whole vegetable world. This remark, however, does not apply to fruit which are of Northern origin, like strawberries and blackberries. These have never been better or more abundant than now; but it does apply to peas, potatoes, cabbages, onions, cucumbers, spinach, artichokes, and the like. Though not of a good quality as usual, these are all held at reasonable rates, and the supply is quite abundant. It is in good appetizing meats that our markets are at present most deficient. Of good beef and mutton there is a great scarcity. In fact, young lamb and veal take precedence of beef and mutton, and of these the good qualities command such high rates as to place them beyond the reach of persons of moderate means. Two dollars for a small quarter of lamb is a high rate, considering that two, or at least hardly more than two healthy appetites could be satisfied therewith. It is no creditable to our planters that they should give so little attention to sheep culture in view of its great profitableness in the sale of lambs, of which it is one of the peculiarities of our clime and soil that there are at least two a year dropped by every healthy ewe, and that these lambs are eagerly bought in our market for four or five dollars per head. They cost nothing to raise, and multiply with great rapidity. Still, lamb is retailed in the markets at unreasonably high rates. Less than a dollar, instead of two and two and a half dollars a quarter, is the highest rate in the markets of other cities. The attempt to pass kids off for lambs is not a very practicable one, though frequently made. Of poultry the markets are almost entirely bare, or ought to be, "ought to be" by law. To kill hens, turkeys or ducks at this time of the year ought to be made a misdemeanor. It is little short of the crime of King Herod in its enormity and consequences. So, too, of what wretched specimens of game we find in our markets and on the streets. Of these, we observe papabottes, which there should be a severe penalty for killing for food at this season, when they are such shadows of the rich and delicious substance they will attain in August. Equally reprehensible and criminal is the custom of kidnapping from their mothers unweaned chickens to supply a silly and unhealthy appetite for spring chickens, so-called, which are scarcely attainable at any season in New Orleans, but are mere undeveloped and callow frauds and pretences at this time of the year, if it is even permissible among a highly civilized people, to satisfy unhealthy appetites upon such flimsy and immature food. Louisiana spring chickens are certainly not creditable features in our markets or on our tables.

But if we are so deficient in poultry and meats, our markets make up for this lack in the abundance and variety of delicious fish, which are now of nearly every species in season, in abundance and a healthy state of development. They supply the most appropriate article of food for the spring. What with river shrimps, Lake prawns, crabs, hard and soft, not forgetting crawfish, suggestive of that best of all soups, the *bisque*, and then with red snapper, grouper, pompano, Spanish mackerel, bass, crokers, sheephead and other varieties of fish, it is only needful to exercise a little art in their preparation of the various forms in which they may be served to bring within the reach of all of us the most wholesome and agreeable articles of animal food for this period of the year. It is a wise precaution, however, for the heads of families to select their fish themselves. This is too delicate and responsible a duty to be delegated to be vicariously performed.

THE SUFFERERS.

Those Affected by the Gaines Suit Decision Appeal to the City for Relief.

Reference was made a few days ago to a visit of the property holders affected by the decision in the Gaines case. Since then they have addressed the following communication to the Mayor and City Council:

To the Honorable the Mayor and Board of Administrators of the City of New Orleans:

We the undersigned, property holders in the Blanc tract and against whom judgment has been rendered April 16, 1877, in the United States Circuit Court, Hon. E. C. Billings, presiding, in favor of Mrs. Gaines, beg leave most respectfully to again apply to you, as we have heretofore done to your predecessors, and do now make this our earnest call upon your immediate consideration for protection against the consequences of the said judgment.

Prompt action on our part would put a stop to the uneasiness of our minds and spare to us the further disbursements and trouble which would otherwise be entailed upon us by seeking relief to a higher tribunal from the judgment rendered as aforesaid. This litigation has been protracted for such a length of time that we are averse to carry it any further, inasmuch as there always hangs a doubt on the result of all judicial contestations, and the progress of this suit does not appear to improve our chances, but on the contrary that of our adversary. We now ask that your honorable body immediately take direct and prompt action to bring about a compromise with Mrs. Gaines, so as to save to us our homes, which we have bought of and from the city.

We look upon the city now and at this moment as a trustee of the amount by us or our vendors paid into the treasury, and we now suggest that you offer to Mrs Gaines to pay to her the amounts you received of and from us or our vendors, and the legal interest thereon since the proceeds came into your possession, instead of paying the same to us directly, and of which we have the right to demand the return, and thereby secure Mrs. Gaines in her claim and save us and the city from a protracted litigation, which we will be forced to take in case of a refusal.

We therefore respectfully pray that your honorable body may take as prompt action in the matter as the urgency of the case requires and your official duties may permit. We do not believe that if your honorable body shows a truly position to act directly and speedily in the matter that Mrs. Gaines will meet the city in a true spirit of compromise, which will be acceptable to all parties; and we look upon such a consummation as being desirable, as the property holders will be able to enter upon a new era of improvements which must necessarily be beneficial to the city.

The petition is signed by

A. Carriere,	F. Foy,
E. Abell,	J. De Fuentes,
Felix M. Jacobs,	Widow A. Lamy,
Joseph Turegano,	W. Delord,
Pierre Bordes,	J. R. Courdin,
Veuve Avenard,	Joseph Avenard,
G. B. Delord,	Emile Laffan,
J. B. Jacquet,	Mme. Vve. Estein,
Veuve Ayant,	Jean Lavy,
Lucien Francoint,	Eugene Henri Dunand,
Vve. Mme Helen Philips,	Veuve Pierre Cap,
J. G. Bilhoper,	P. T. Semond,
J. Marqueze,	J. B. Marmouget,
James Beers,	Fermi Le Vasseur,
Joseph Donegal,	W. Zimmerman,
Aug. Blacksmith,	J. M. Biron,
Mrs. A. L. Marty,	N. B. Le Billieu,
Palmyra Gravice,	Manuel Ellis,
Theofile Hubert,	Mr. T. De Blanc,
L. F. Desfaure,	G. Augustin,
A. D. Salvant,	Martin ——,
Jean Morgan,	Mrs. Abadie,
William Moran,	Eliza and Marie Bazax,
Henry Larquie,	August n Annaud,
Gabriel Levasseur,	Veuve Augusto Lamusse,
M'me Arthur Dejan,	

The Patriotic Gas Company.

We had almost forgotten it—but not entirely. On Thursday last, after Governor Nicholls and the Legislature had occupied the St. Louis Hotel, and while the roll of the House was being called, the writer was informed by Mr Flood, the Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms of that body, that the Gas Company man had just shut off the gas of the building.

What's that for?

"I don't know, said Capt. Flood; "I asked the man myself, but all the answer he gave me was, that he had been ordered to shut off the gas, and was going to do so."

This occurred on the day before the last of the session, when there was every reason to believe that a night session would be necessary. The patriotism of the gas company on this occasion created not a little comment.

MAYOR PILSBURY.

Probability of Another Important Injunction Case.

The Railroad Tax, the Gaines Decision, the Tax Bill and Police Matters.

It is not to be wondered that Mayor Pilsbury should be prostrated by illness, he has his hands so full of important and vexatious business just now. He was already not a little harassed by the duties imposed upon him to appoint the Police Commissioner; then came the decision in the matter of the Pacific railroad tax, which was closely followed by the decision in the Gaines case, and to cap the climax, the passage of the bill by the Legislature making the certificates of indebtedness issued by the city for the years of 1874 and 1875 receivable for taxes, to which the Mayor is positively opposed. Yesterday our reporter endeavored to obtain some information from the Mayor as to what would be done in the Pacific railroad case and the Gaines case, but his Honor, usually so agreeable in conversation, was not in a condition to give any opinion in these matters.

THE LATTER CASE

reminds us that the Mayor was at one time involved in the Gaines litigation, he having acquired some property included in the Blanc tract of land. With noticeable foresight he compromised the matter with Mrs. Gaines for about $1500, and, it is said, that but for this compromise he would now be involved in a suit amounting to about forty thousand dollars, owing to the increased value of the property and the accumulation of interest thereon. His Honor did say something in our interview with him yesterday touching the

CERTIFICATE REDEMPTION BILL,

and that was, that a combination of the creditors of the city were preparing to apply for an injunction against the promulgation of the act. For the reasons given above, we were unable to ascertain precisely on what grounds the injunction would be asked for.

AT THE STATE-HOUSE.

There was nothing remarkable going on at the State House Saturday morning, except the remarkable activity of the corps of women employed in scrubbing paint all over the building. The floors, after yesterday's work, looked bright and clean, but the efforts of the women did not seem to be crowned with much succes, on the paint.

The desks and other paraphernalia of the would-be Supreme Court under Packard have been removed from Superintendent Brown's office, and now Mr. Lusher has made the room look quite neat.

It was late when the Governor arrived and no important business was transacted during the morning. The Auditor has not yet taken possession, nor is it probable he will before the middle of the week, after adjusting the matters connected with the past session.

Every day developes more and more of the desperate schemes of the Packard conspirators while they occupied the State-House. On the Sunday night before their evacuation of the building, so says one who was inside, a guard was placed over the door leading out of the courtyard into the old bank on Toulouse street about midnight, and no one was allowed to pass.

In a dark corner of this basement passage way, there was a steam engine situated, used in forcing water throughout the building, and near the engine its boiler, where steam was kept up night and day. On the Sunday night mentioned the steam had gone down considerably before the guard was placed at the door, but when, after a long interval, the guard was removed, the steam had gone up considerably, and scattered documents lay about the furnace door. It is evident that that Sunday night was the one chosen on which to destroy the most criminating of the documents, as there was not fuel enough there to increase the steam, and the papers burned run up the pressure. It will probably never be known how much or

WHAT WAS DESTROYED

during the last days of the Packard dynasty. If such pains were taken to burn up the limber, caisson and trail of the one piece of artillery in the building, and to box and ship it off, surely those damaging records and papers must also have been destroyed.

For some reason or other the negroes who have been in the habit of

LOAFING AROUND

the St. Louis Hotel have not been able to get over their old habits, and now, daily, the same old crowd can be seen enjoying the sunshine at the corner of St. Louis and Royal streets. In fact, there has been some increase of late over the numbers that there congregated during Packard's short stay, and the most of those who do put in an appearance are not of the best character. It would be difficult for one to say, judging from the men assembled, whether Packard had given up or not. About 1 o'clock, Gen. Augur, accompanied by his staff, paid

A VISIT OF COURTESY

to Gov. Nicholls, and remained some time in his private office. There was a pleasant interchange of civilities, and some old reminiscences of the war were brought up.

After Gen. Augur left the Governor gave audience to a number of negroes, who had been in waiting, and heard what they had to say. The following

APPOINTMENTS

were made yesterday:

Assessors—L. L. Rambin, DeSoto; J. M. McLemore, Red River; J. H. Patum, Jackson; Jas. H. Caldwell, Sabine; Aef. LeBlanc, St. Tammany; John H. Seibert, Pointe Coupee; F. A. Leonard, Caddo.

Notary Public.—W. M. Prescott, Plaquemines.

Police Jurors.—Fred'k Leip, H. V. Long, Saml. Williams, Gus ave Labatt, B. C. Duke, Rapides; J. J. U. Miller, Jacob Ryan, Calcasieu; B. H. Day, Josiah Kleinpeter, Fergus Gardere, A. B. Booth, John Williams, East Baton Rouge.

CITY HALL.

A Visit from Gen. Augur and Staff to the City Authorities.

The same crowd lingered about the corridors of the City Hall in the expectation of catching the ear of an Administrator in the interest of some applicant for membership on the police force.

But the Mayor and City Councilmen had all gone down to the Superior Criminal Court to "show cause" in the matter of that writ issued at the suit of Sheriff Houston.

A NEW SENSATION.

Saturday morning the city authorities were informed that Gen. Auger and his staff would return the visit of the Mayor and Administrators, the latter having replied that they would be ready to receive the General at noon. The prospects were, however, that the contempt case would detain the Administrators at the Criminal Court a little longer than they thought when they appointed 12 o'clock for the reception.

Such was not the case, however, for at the hour named,

GEN. AUGUR AND STAFF,

and several officers of the Canonicus, visited the Mayor and the Administrators, and after about three quarters of an hour of conversation, withdrew, everybody seemingly well pleased with the meeting.

The occurrence created, naturally, much pleasant comment; it had been so very long since the military of the United States had met our civil authorities on social terms.

It looks like what it is indeed—the finishing touch and an essential complement of the readmission of Louisiana into the confederacy of States, and a return of peace and harmony where, at best, a negative antagonism existed formerly.

NO COUNCIL MEETING

occurred, and there will be none until the regular meeting on Friday next. On that day, the Mayor thinks that he will nominate the four Police Commissioners.

It is possible, also, that the members of the police will be elected on that day, as it is desirable that the time of the new appointees shall begin on the 1st of May. It is reasonable to suppose that the appointments will be made beforehand in committee of the whole, and passed upon in open council by lists, a process which will expedite the business materially.

A VERY GOOD IMPRESSION

is created by the new police law when it is clearly understood. Reference is made to the feature which gives the right to electo the Council, and the power to remove to the Board of Police Commissioners composed of the Mayor, Administrator of Police and four citizens. Thus the commissioners, in exercising their authority to dismiss, cannot be actuated by any motive of favoritism, nor is the electing power authorized to interfere with the administration of the rules of the board.

The City Council, it is understood, however, reserves the right to locate the three police captains and the sergeants in command of precincts.

MIND YOUR EYE!

It is wholesome advice to applicants for positions on the police to get the personal support of an Administrator, else his chance may be slim. This is quite natural, for there are so many applications now before the Council—and all are well recommended—that the Administrators, being unable to determine upon the best applicants, will probably have to select them from among those who are known to them personally, or are recommended more directly than through a mere written application.

MARY SULLIVAN.

Drinking a Ship's Crew to Death, and Ending in the Parish Prison.

Mary Sullivan was yesterday before Judge Kleinpeter on the same old charge—drunk.

"Well, Mary, here you are again."

"Yes, Judge, your Honor; but I did not cum of me own free will; they brought me."

"Well, Mary, the captain of the Work-House wants to see you, and as that is the best place for you, I am going to send you there for thirty days."

"Och sure, Judge, you would not send me out there; they work a poor woman to death. Now Judge, dear, if you will let me go this time I will scrub out your court from beginning to end."

"Well, Mary, how is it you stood so much whisky?"

"Oh! listen at the Judge now! Ah! your Honor, when I came over in the ship from old Ireland, I drank the captain and all of his sailors drunk, and then had all of the ship to myself."

"Well, Mary, if you can stand that much whisky, you had better be kept from it, so you go to the Workhouse."

Then the clerk cried out "Re-mand-ed," and Mary went down for thirty days.

The Auditor's Office.

Capt. Jumel finds the Auditor's old office in the State-House in such condition that he has not yet moved into it, and for the present retains his quarters for transaction of public business at the Odd Fellows' Hall.

The books and papers of the old office are being inventoried as far as accessible, for no one seems to have been left in charge to turn them over formally to Auditor Jumel, or surrender to him the keys of the vault, which remains locked, as the Auditor is not disposed to break open the doors unnecessarily and is waiting on his predecessor, Mr. Johnson, who is reported very sick, for the keys or lock combinations in the latter's possession. Mr. Johnson, it is said, is too sick, according to the statement of his physician, to admit of notices of any kind being served on him. However this may be, Capt. Jumel will hardly wait much longer for keys or lock combinations of any character, as the interests of the people demand that the public business should be transacted promptly.

A glance through the apartments of the old office indicates shameful vandalism. The shelves are almost void of the vast quantity of documents with which they should be filled, and many of the papers of the office seem to be scattered out of their usual places.

One disagreeable feature noticeable in the general debris, is the absence of most of the tax and assessment rolls from their usual places of deposit. It is to be hoped that they may be found elsewhere, but it is believed they have been burned or otherwise destroyed.

As a result of such a state of affairs in impeding full possession of the archives of the office, Auditor Jumel has taken proceedings, under the intrusion act, against Mr. Johnson.

A Schooner Sunk.

At half-past 6 o'clock last Sunday morning, the steamtug Lillie, of Pensacola, ran into the schooner Cora Smyzer, and sunk her in Lake Pontchartrain, near Little Woods. The schooner and cargo are a total loss. No lives lost.

City Licenses and Taxes.

As the last day for the payment of city licenses and taxes approaches, the attendance of taxpayers in the department of finance at the City Hall increases. After the 1st of May the license bills which remain unpaid will be filed, according to the new law, in the various justices' courts for collection.

Search for Stolen Booty.

Isaac H. Smith, at the request of Dr. Jas. A. Knapp, was arrested yesterday and locked up in the Central Station, charged with having stolen property in his possession.

Isaac, when searched at the Central Station, had concealed in his pocket the inevitable white handled razor, and hence the charge of carrying a concealed weapon was also recorded against him.

After Smith had been incarcerated, Special Officer Pecora procured a search warrant and searched his room with the hopes of recovering some of the stolen booty, but was unsuccessful.

A Bunch of Charges.

Prosper Williams and Paul Thomas are in the Second Precinct Station charged with being dangerous and suspicious characters, having no visible means of support, following no honest occupation for a livelihood, dangerous to the community if permitted to roam at large, and about to commit a breach of the peace; also charged, from information received, with having been implicated in the robbery of Mrs. Smith's house, No. 418 Terpsichore.

Ineffectual Firing.

About 10 o'clock Saturday morning a difficulty took place at the Garden Confectionery, No 593 Magazine street, between Mr. John Curry and a clerk in the confectionery, named Chas. Frank, which terminated in the former firing one shot at the latter without effect.

The cause of the difficulty was that Frank had published a card in Saturday morning's *Picayune*, in which he denied having been cowhided a day previous by Mr. Curry.

Regarding Taxes.

Applicants for the extension of time for the payment of their back taxes—of 18 4 and 1875—do not meet with much favor at the City Hall just now. To several of these taxpayers Administrator Denis has replied that if they will pay their taxes for 1876 or 1877, he will grant them four months extension on those of 1874 and 1875, and six months more extension on the payment of another year's tax, that of 1876 or 1877.

These terms seem to be liberal, and might be made available with profit by taxpayers who are in arrears.

The Auditor's Battle.

The following is the text of the petition filed in the Fourth District Court involving the Auditorial question:

To the honorable the Fourth District Court for the parish of Orleans:

The petition of the State of Louisiana, represented by H. N. Ogden, Attorney General, on the relation of Allen Jumel, Auditor of the State of Louisiana, with respect represents:

That George B. Johnson, formerly Auditor of Public Accounts of Louisiana, a resident of this city, refuses to deliver over to relator, his legal successor, the keys, archives, books and public records and papers belonging to the office of Auditor of Public Accounts.

Relator avers that a writ of mandamus is necessary to compel the said George B. Johnson to make the said delivery.

Wherefore relator prays that a writ of mandamus may issue directing and commanding the said George B. Johnson to deliver over to relator, Allen Jumel, Auditor of Public Accounts, the keys, archives, books, records and papers belonging to the office of Auditor of Public Accounts, or to show cause to the contrary.

And relator prays that, after hearing, this mandamus may be made peremptory.

(Signed) H. N. OGDEN,
Attorney General.

Personally appeared Allen Jumel, Auditor of the State of Louisiana, who, being sworn, says that the facts set forth in the foregoing petition are true; that a writ of mandamus is necessary to protect the State from great injury.

(Signed) ALLEN JUMEL, Auditor.

THE PACIFIC RAILROAD AND THE CITY.

An Expression of the Popular Idea Asked for on the Railroad Tax Question.

Yesterday, Mayor Pilsbury received the following communication from Col. Wheelock, which explains itself:

Office of New Orleans Pacific Railway Co.,
New Orleans, April 27, 1877.

To the Honorable, the Mayor and Administrators of the city of New Orleans:

Gentlemen—I have the honor to inform you that the judgment in favor of the New Orleans Pacific Railway Company, dissolving the injunction in the suit of Roudanez et als. vs. the Mayor and Administrators, was affirmed by the Supreme Court on the 16th inst., and that the decree of affirmance is now final, the attorney for plaintiffs having, in writing, waived his right to apply for a rehearing. It is the desire of the company that the question of the tax should be submitted to a popular vote by the 15th day next. I would respectfully ask that action may be taken by your honorable body at the next meeting of the Council.

Your obedient servant,

E. B. WHEELOCK, President.

Art and Nature.

At Wagener's, on Canal, we saw exposed last evening a *crayon* of our friend, Colonel Wm. T. Vaudry, which is, without exaggeration, a *chef d'œuvre* of the *dessinateur's* art, and is a striking likeness. It is from the pencil of Mr. Julio.

A fine portrait is also on exhibition there, signed by J. R. Reid, of St. Louis, Mo. The painting is one of a very high order and indicates a correctness of lines and boldness of touch seldom met with in local paintings, but what is more striking in the picture is its warmth of tone and living expression, the former feature being worthy of a master.

NATURE.

About 9 o'clock last evening the Southern skies presented a sight which, viewed from Canal street, was beautiful beyond description. The full moon had risen to about fifteen degrees above the horizon, and shone with its utmost brilliancy through a mass of water-clouds seemingly torn to shreds and patches, and recalling, by their fantastic shapes and inky hues, bordered with silvered fleece, the weirdest heavenly scenes that the vivid imagination of a Dore could picture. The sight provoked the admiration and wonderment of hundreds who saw it, and there was not even the most prosaic lounger whose attention was not at least attracted by it.

A Pleasant Occurrence.

The State-House, on Friday afternoon, was the scene of a pleasant affair. Mr. Charles R. Macmurdo, chief clerk of the Enrolling Committee, followed by the other clerks, took Rep esentatives Kidd, of Jackson, and Young, of Claiborne, by surprise, and forced upon the former a handsome gold-headed ebony cane and upon the latter a fine meerschaum pipe, each with appropriate inscriptions.

Mr. Macmurdo's presentation remarks were neat and to the point.

As to the Chairman of the Enrolling Committee, and the Chairman on Contingent Expenses, they were so taken by surprise that they found themselves almost incompetent to acknowledge the flattering testimonials.

The affair ended as usual. "Let's go and take a drink, boys."

Short Items.

James Douglas, a carpenter, was locked up in the Fifth Station, charged by Marie Labran with the larceny of $150.

Chris Gerger is being preserved in the Fifth Calabouse on a charge of larceny.

A negro woman named Nelly Hartman died suddenly at 9 o'clock Friday night, at her residence, 108 Frenchmen street.

Mary Jones got away with $2, the wealth of Howard Paton, and the law got away with Mary, and she is now in the Third Station-house.

A bunch of keys was found Saturday in Coliseum square and taken to the Second Station-house.

Edward Hesse and Felix Masse were arrested at the corner of Dumaine and Toulouse streets, and locked up in the Third Precinct Station, charged with having stolen from the Catholic Church, at the corner of Rampart and Conti streets, two silver candlesticks.

The candlesticks were recovered by Special Officer Hennessey.

Ignatos Thomates has been furnished a resting place in the Central Station, charged with having been an accessory to the robbery committed on the person of Nicholas Duigon on the 24th inst.

Dan Gallagher was yesterday placed under lock and key at the Central Station on a charge of larceny preferred against him by H. Behler.

The case of Ben Sheridan, charged with the murder of a little negro baby on the New Basin, was yesterday continued by Judge Kleinpeter, owing to the absence of witnesses.

Wm. Schwarm, charged with shooting and wounding with intent to murder, was yesterday before Judge Kleinpeter on a preliminary examination, but owing to the absence of the prosecuting witness the case was continued.

Brevities.

There will be given a pleasuresome picnic at Oakland Riding Park on Sunday, 29th inst., for the benefit of the Ladies' Hebrew Charitable Aid Association of the Fourth District. It is hoped the visitors will be numerous.

The last calling of cases for this term of the Supreme Court will be had on Monday, 31st inst.

The dockets of the Fifth and Sixth District Courts is now clear.

The Agricultural, Mechanical and Horticultural Association of Mobile are preparing for their fourth annual fair.

To-day is the opening day of L. F. Gery & Co.'s swimming school at the New Lake End.

We are informed that among the visitors to the fair for the benefit of the House of the Good Shepherd will be Gov. Nicholls and staff, Gen. Jos. E. Johnson and Miss Mildred C. Lee, daughter of Gen. R. E. Lee.

There will be preaching on Congo Square this evening at 4:30 o'clock, by a talented young preacher of this city. Everybody, saint or sinner, is invited to attend.

The annual Easter festival of the Children's Home of the Protestant Episcopal Church, on Jack on street, will take place on the grounds of the institution this afternoon at 5 o'clock.

J. R. Walker, D. D. S., 180 Delord street.

Go to Jno. U. Adams' hat store for the most fashionable hat, 26 St. Charles street.

Before making a selection of a sewing machine, try the "Dom estic."

Burnett's Cologne is sold in elegant bottles of superior finish and beauty—in themselves an ornament. It has, in a brief time, attained a large and constantly increasing sale, confirming the opinion of the best judges, that it is equal, *if not superior*, to the celebrated farina.

Get your hats at the "Stonewall Jackson," corner of Royal and St. Louis streets.

THE COURTS.

Fourth District Court.

Wm. Strong, Secretary of State, has filed a petition under the intrusion into office act through the Attorney General, against Emile Honore, claimant for Secretary of State, restraining him from acting in said official capacity. An injunction was at once issued as prayed for.

J. O. Landry entered suit against the city of New Orleans for three month's salary as Administrator of Commerce, for $500. He alleges that he has been refused the full amount of his salary, and he claims a balance due of $125 on each month. This difference is owing to the discount on city paper.

Sixth District Court.

It will be remembered that on January 11, 1877, the Attorney General filed a petition on behalf of the State for a writ of injunction against the Louisiana National Bank restraining its officers from paying out any sum of money for account of the State Treasury. Yesterday Attorney General Ogden applied to Judge Rigator and discontinued the case.

In the damage case of C. B. Block vs. Myers, Levy et als., the jury brought in a verdict against defendants for $1000.

John Barrow filed a case against Thos. Carey and sureties, setting forth that he was appointed tax collector of the Third District of New Orleans, by ex-Gov. Kellogg, and gave bond. He alleges that Thos. Carey enjoined petitioner from acting and now Barrow asks damages against Carey's bondsmen on his injunction bond.

Superior Criminal Court.

SENTENCED.

Nelson Childers, $5 or five days, Chas Rosenheim, $5 or five days, for carrying concealed weapons; Jack Shepherd, 7 years in the State Penitentiary for grand larceny; Edward Hille, who pleaded guilty to grand larceny, 1 year in the Parish Prison.

The motion for a new trial filed by Dan'l Shay was dismissed, and the motion in arrest of judgment was fixed for May 2d.

The case of M. Abadie was similarly disposed of.

The plea of *autrefois acquit* filed by M. Abadie was fixed for next Saturday.

The court took up the case of Michel Monier, charged with the rape of a little girl. The details of this crime are unfit for publication, and the simple story of the poor victim was listened to with deep earnestness by the jury. Not a whisper could be heard in the court-room, and the trial was very affecting.

After the jury had been out only a minute or two they returned into court with a verdict of guilty. When the verdict was announced the prisoner showed not a sign of feeling, and was escorted to the dock with a nonchalant air on his face. The penalty in such a case is death, and unless Executive clemency or a new trial intervene, Monier will hang for his brutal conduct.

First District Court.

Judge Abell yesterday sentenced Eugene Soulie, the proprietor of that noted den, the Pacific Variety Saloon on Charleres street, to pay $150 fine or two months in the Parish Prison, for keeping a disorderly and disreputable house.

AMUSEMENTS.

Opera House.—On Wednesday next, a series of pantomimic performances, which, we are informed, will be presented with rare art, will be given at the Opera House, for the benefit of the House of Good Shepherd, an institution which, like many other charitable ones in this city, is much in need of funds to carry it on. The public of New Orleans will, it is hoped, manifest once more their kind hearts by attending. The tickets are only fifty cents each; reserved seats one dollar. Refreshments will be served during and after the performance.

Academy of Music.—The first performance of the Academy Combination, at the matinee yesterday, was a success, and a deserved one. Gilbert's comedy of "dandelearis," presented for the first time, was acceptably rendered. Like everything else from the pen of that charming writer, it is written in the highest literary art, and as a comedy is novel and pleasing. Roland Reed and Connie Thompson appeared in a pretty and laughable sketch, entitled "The Suspicious Wife," and the performance closed with a local farce called "Going to the Lake."

The potpouri by the band, under the leadership of Vogt and Moses, was played a little carelessly, like everything generally is at matinees. To-night the company will appear in the sensational drama of "Under the Gaslight," which will, we anticipate, draw a large audience at the Academy.

The Bird Concert.—We understand that Gov. Nicholls has accepted an invitation to attend the promised "bird concert," a novelty to be presented here shortly. The presence of his Excellency at the entertainment will afford many an opportunity to see him, who have not had that pleasure as yet, and in his character of undisputed Governor of the now free State of Louisiana. He will, in his turn, receive the congratulations of the Queen of the birds, and of the Queen of the flowers. Beyond doubt a large crowd will attend to see the interesting ceremony.

Many other attractions will make the entertainment a most enjoyable evening. Our feathered favorites will give charm to the occasion, and will find rivals in sweetness in the human songstress, adding interest and pleasure to the occasion. We would call attention to the "zithern," an instrument very seldom heard here, which will take a conspicuous part in the concert.

The Contraband Children achieved another grand pecuniary success last evening at the Varieties, the auditorium of which was crowded in every one of its parts; a brilliant array of our ladies being in attendance and forming a charming part of the entertainment. The entertainment was ludicrous in the extreme, and evinced that the young gentlemen who got it up had spared no pains or expense to do so. The entertainment was for the benefit of the St. Mary's Orphan Boys' asylum. The response of our people to this highly meritorious institution was creditable to them, but nothing more than we expected. The performance was marked by floral offerings seldom witnessed even on the occasion of the grandest ovations to stage professionals.

Southern Dramatic Club.—The first complimentary performance of this excellent amateur club will be given on Tuesday evening, May 22. The programme will be the drama of "Aurora Floyd," in which Miss Emmie Wilmot will play the title role. Miss Wilmot, as we have had occasion to say, has been engaged for the summer season by the club.

Philharmonic Society.—We have received an invitation to attend the sixth public rehearsal of the New Orleans Philharmonic Society, to take place at Grunewald Hall, on Monday, May the 7th, for which we tender our thanks.

The Club Dramatique Social No. 1 will give a Fete Champetre at Oakland Riding Park, on Sunday, the 27th May.

Magnolia Garden.—On Sunday next, Magnolia Garden, at the Bayou Bridge, will be the scene of the first complimentary picnic of the Merry Revellers Social Club.

Red Riding Hood.—An entertainment will be given to-morrow evening at the private residence corner of St. Charles Avenue and Bordeaux street, for the Ladies' Aid Society of St. George's Church. There will be lyric performances, dancing and refreshments. The price of admission is only 25 cents.

Wm. P. Ellison's Portrait.

Mr. E. B. D. Julio has been painting a portrait of the late Wm. P. Ellison for the Pickwick Club. The resemblance is so perfect that the family and many friends of the deceased have requested that the painting should remain on exhibition at the artist's studio. Mr. Julio will therefore keep it on exhibition for one week, and the public, artistically inclined, will be received with pleasure by the courteous painter and daily welcomed to his studio, where other works of art will amply repay the visitor's trouble.

HOTEL ARRIVALS.

City Hotel.—W Walt, Galveston; H B Chevallier, Mrs Braxton Bragg, Mrs Davis Pagan, Geo B Thomas, N Y; John Zeitman, J B LaVille, Louisville; Jno J Donovan, str Emma; L S Scruggs, Holly Springs; F E Ellis, La; J L Hayne and wife, Miss Hayne Brownsville; Theo Reese, Chicago; Sam H Hardwick, Montgomery; J Hall, Tevis; H F Williams and wife, St Louis.

New spring silks, grenadines, organdies, linen suits and dusters, are among the many attractions now being offered by M. L. Byrne & Co., No. 163 Canal street.

Staub never fails to walk up appropriately to the front when the time comes, and we again acknowledge receipt of a welcome parcel. He has for sale to-day, among other things, and besides all the latest papers, the London Graphic, Saturday Night, Harper's Weekly, McGee's Illustrated Weekly, and Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly for May. Staub, as usual, receives visitors at Goldthwaite's bookstore, on Exchange Alley, near the corner of Canal street.