

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA.

First Day's Proceedings.

NEW ORLEANS, April 22, 1879. It is remembered, that on this day, the fifty-first day of the month of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy-nine, and of the independence of the United States of America the one hundred and thirty year, in pursuance of the provisions of an act of the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana, No. 3, entitled "An act to provide for a Convention to frame a new Constitution of the State of Louisiana, and to appropriate to pay the expenses of the same," approved January 23, 1875, the delegates from the several senatorial districts and parishes of this State and the representative districts of the city of New Orleans have met this day, at 12 o'clock m., in hall of the House of Representatives of the State, in the State House, at the city of New Orleans, and were called to order by his excellency Francis T. Nichols, Governor of the State of Louisiana, and by law presiding officer of the Convention, who directed the following named delegates to represent and answer to their names as representing the heretofore senatorial districts of the parishes and representative districts of the city of New Orleans, to wit:

SENATORIAL DISTRICTS. First District, composed of the eighth and ninth wards of the city of New Orleans and the parishes of St. Bernard and Plaquemine—Messrs. Henry P. Kerneochan and Edward Howell. Second District, composed of the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh wards of the city of New Orleans—Messrs. Gustave LeGardeur, and Henry Chappell. Third District, composed of the third ward of the city of New Orleans—Mr. Thomas J. Mmes. Fourth District, composed of the second and seventh wards of the city of New Orleans—Mr. Frank J. Bulger. Fifth District, composed of the first and third wards of the city of New Orleans—Mr. J. A. Breaux. Sixth District, composed of the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth wards of the city of New Orleans—Messrs. Don A. Pardee and Benjamin Forman. Seventh District, composed of the parishes of Jefferson, St. Charles and St. John the Baptist—Mr. Henry Demas. Eighth District, composed of the parishes of St. James and Ascension—Mr. Felix P. Che. Ninth District, composed of the parishes of Iberville, Lafourche and Assumption—Messrs. Clay Knoblock and Mayer Cahon. Tenth District, composed of the parishes of St. Mary, Vermillion, Cameron and Calcasieu—Messrs. Donelson, Caffrey, and William H. Kirkman. Eleventh District, composed of the parishes of St. Martin, Iberia and Lafayette—Mr. Ward Simon. Twelfth District, composed of the parish of Landry—Messrs. Joseph Moore and William A. Robertson. Thirteenth District, composed of the parishes of Avoyelles and Pointe Coupee—Mr. F. C. Claiborne. Fourteenth District, composed of the parishes of Iberville and West Baton Rouge—Mr. Joseph T. Allard. Fifteenth District, composed of the parishes of East and West Feliciana—Mr. Thomas B. Ows. Sixteenth District, composed of the parish of East Baton Rouge—Mr. Andrew S. Herron. Seventeenth District, composed of the parishes of St. Helena, Livingston, Tangipahoa, Washington and St. Tammany—Mr. John B. Sterly. Eighteenth District, composed of the parishes of Rapides and Vernon—Mr. James G. Lile. Nineteenth District, composed of the parishes of Natchitoches, Sabine, DeSoto and Iberville—Messrs. M. J. Cunningham and B. Stille. Twentieth District, composed of the parish of Iberville—Mr. L. M. Nutt. Twenty-first District, composed of the parishes of Bossier, Webster, Bienville and Calcasieu—Messrs. A. B. George and J. C. Vance. Twenty-second District, composed of the parishes of Union, Morehouse, Lincoln and Carroll—Messrs. Robert E. Todd and G. Gaskins. Twenty-third District, composed of the parishes of Ouachita, Richland, Caldwell, Franklin and Jackson—Messrs. R. Willis Anderson and N. W. Smith. Twenty-fourth District, composed of the parishes of East Carroll and Macdonald—Mr. James A. Gla. Twenty-fifth District, composed of the parishes of Tensas and Concordia—Mr. Wade Lough.

RECAPITULATION.

Table with 2 columns: Senatorial Delegates, Representative Delegates. Total 131.

One hundred and thirty-one members of the Convention answering to their names, constituting a quorum of the Convention.

The proceedings were opened with prayers, offered by Rev. John Perdual, of the Episcopal Church.

On motion of Mr. Stille, the Convention proceeded to the election of its President, and he nominated for that position the Hon. Louis Alfred Wiltz, Representative Delegate from the Ninth Representative District of the parish of Orleans.

Mr. Allain nominated the Hon. Pierre Landry, Representative Delegate from the parish of Ascension.

There being no other nominations, the Convention proceeded to the election, and on a call of the roll the following was the result of the vote, to wit:

Messrs. Augustin, Babcock, Baskin, Bell, Bienville, Blanchard, Bolton, Breaux, Breen, Bridger, Brian, Bulger, Bulow, Burton, Byrne, Caffrey, Caroy, Chaffe, Chiappella, Claiborne, Collins, Colvin, Cunningham, Davenport, Davidson of Claiborne, Davis, Denis, Denis, Dillard, Easterly, Edwards, Estopinal, Faulk, Favrot, Fontelle, Forman, Gardner, Gaskins, George, Girard, Gowers, Gueringer, Havard, Henry of Cameron, Henry of Natchitoches, Herron, Howell, Jastremski, Jenkins, Joffron, Kelly, Kemp, Kennedy, Kerneochan, Kidd, King, Kirkman, Knoblock, Lagran, Lanau, Land, Luckett, Lyons, Marks, Millard, Moreland, Moore of Lafourche, Moore of St. Landry, Munday, McConnell, McGloin, Nutt, Ogden, Olivier, Ott, Parlange, Phelps, Poche, Ponder, Reid, Richardson, Robertson, Self, Semmes, Simon, Smith of Jackson, Stagg, Stille, Stone, Stringfellow, Sutherland, Thompson, Todd, Vance, Webb, Wells, White, Williams of Grant and Young of East Baton Rouge voted for the Hon. Louis Alfred Wiltz.

Messrs. Allain, Benham, Bobe, Bourgeois, Cahon, Davidson of Iberville, Dickerson, Gla, Grimes, Hough, Loan, Mathews, Montz, Noguez, Pardee, Pinchback, Roach, Smith of St. Mary, Stamps, Steele, Stevenson, Stewart, Stroviok, Warmoth, Williams of Terrebonne, Wiltz, and Young of Concordia voted for the Hon. Pierre Landry.

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The Hon. Louis Alfred Wiltz, having received a majority of the votes cast, was declared duly elected President of the Convention.

On motion of Mr. Allain the election of the Hon. Louis Alfred Wiltz, as President of the Convention, was made unanimous.

On motion of Mr. Poche, a committee of three members was appointed by the Chair to inform the Hon. Louis Alfred Wiltz of his election as President of the Convention.

Whereupon the Chair appointed Messrs. Poche, Landry and Breaux on the committee.

Subsequently the committee appeared and conducted to the chair the Hon. Louis Alfred Wiltz, who was presented by the Chairman as the President-elect of the Convention.

The Chairman, before vacating the chair, delivered the following address:

Gentlemen of the Convention—As Executive of the State, the law has made it my duty to preside over this body until it shall have elected a permanent presiding officer. That special and single duty performed, my relations with this Convention will terminate. It would be manifestly improper for me under such circumstances to refer, even indirectly, to any of the subjects which will have to be examined and terminated by you. I congratulate the State and yourselves that you have been selected at a period of complete political quiet, and that you will bring to your deliberations minds free from partisan excitement.

No convention has ever had more serious and difficult questions to dispose of than will be presented for your consideration, and certainly no State ever more needed

Lincoln—Mr. T. R. Colvin. Livingston—Mr. Leonard Z. Gowers. Madison—Messrs. P. B. S. Pinchback and M. G. Bobe. Morehouse—Mr. C. C. Davenport. Natchitoches—Messrs. W. A. Ponder and Joseph Henry. Orleans, First Representative District—Mr. Ferdinand Marks. Orleans, Second Representative District—Messrs. Matthew D. Lagran and John Kennedy. Orleans, Third Representative District—Messrs. Charles Byrne, W. A. Bell and W. J. Kelly. Orleans, Fourth Representative District—Mr. Jules C. Donls. Orleans, Fifth Representative District—Messrs. E. J. Gueringer and J. N. Augustin. Orleans, Sixth Representative District—Mr. W. A. Bienville. Orleans, Seventh Representative District—Messrs. Pierre Lanau and Victor Olivier. Orleans, Eighth Representative District—Mr. Webster Long. Orleans, Ninth Representative District—Messrs. Louis Alfred Wiltz and Joseph Collins. Orleans, Tenth Representative District—Messrs. John Phelps and James McConnell. Orleans, Eleventh Representative District—Messrs. John Chaffe and Thomas D. Carey. Orleans, Twelfth Representative District—Mr. Hugh Breen. Orleans, Thirteenth Representative District—Mr. Frank McGloin. Orleans, Fourteenth Representative District—Mr. T. B. Stamps. Orleans, Fifteenth Representative District—Mr. W. F. Loan. Ouachita—Mr. David Faulk. Plaquemine—Mr. Henry C. Warmoth. Pointe Coupee—Mr. Charles Parlange. Rapides—Messrs. G. W. Bolton and Robert L. Luckett. Red River—Mr. H. C. Stringfellow. Richland—Mr. H. P. Wells. Sabine—Mr. D. W. Self. St. Bernard—Mr. Albert Estopinal. St. Charles—Mr. C. A. Bourgeois. St. Helena—Mr. Dempsey Kemp. St. James—Mr. Vincent Dickerson. St. John the Baptist—Mr. C. A. Babcock. St. Landry—Messrs. E. M. Millard, L. S. Havard, Walthall Burton and Paul Stagg. St. Martin—Mr. Alexander Stroviok. St. Mary—Messrs. E. B. Montz and W. B. Smith. St. Tammany—Mr. J. M. Thompson. Tangipahoa—Mr. N. S. Edwards. Tensas—Messrs. James S. Mathews and Hiram R. Steele. Terrebonne—Messrs. Enos Williams and Jordan Stewart. Union—Mr. B. F. Dillard. Vermillion—Mr. F. E. King. Vernon—Mr. John C. Davis. Washington—Mr. C. D. Ott. Winn—Mr. S. M. Brian.

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and judicious counsel in the formation of a permanent government. I need scarcely say that I shall take the deepest interest in proceedings upon which so much depends for good or evil. God grant that your earnest efforts will insure to the honor, welfare, happiness and prosperity of our country the preservation of the presidency of this Convention are now in order.

The Hon. Louis Alfred Wiltz, upon taking the chair, delivered the following address, to wit:

Gentlemen of the Convention—For the honor conferred upon me by your partial suffrages I return to you my most cordial thanks. In making me the presiding officer of this body you have imposed upon me an onerous trust and imposed upon me onerous duties. I am flattered by your confidence, which I hope to deserve, and I shall try to fulfill as many of the duties of this laborious position as my strength and ability may permit. Even with your good will and co-operation, and with all the incidental aid tendered by competent officers and assistants, the task will be difficult; but any sacrifice of personal comfort for the service of this body of representative citizens, and in that of the people whom you worthily represent.

While anxious, as your presiding officer, to act with strict and impartial justice in all respects and at all times, I am still conscious that neither this eager desire, nor present pains, nor past experience, can insure me against errors, for which I ask in advance your generous indulgence. I shall endeavor to abide by and obey the will of the Convention as expressed in its rules, votes and resolutions. I may at times err as to the true interpretation and construction of the Convention's will, and I shall be cheerfully corrected by its kindness on the part of delegates to note the errors promptly, and on every questioned or doubtful point that may arise I shall most cheerfully call upon the Convention for its good judgment.

These are the duties which I deem common to all deliberative bodies, and in their enforcement I anticipate no difficulty. They are merely the rules of good breeding as adapted to the exigencies of such bodies, and are spontaneously and instinctively observed by an instinct common to all who combine good will with intelligence.

In this connection let me advise and urge a strict adherence to the established order of business. These among the delegates around me who have had experience in legislative bodies are well aware of the enormous waste of time that results from habitual disregard of the rules of debate, the maxims of parliamentary order, and the order in which business should be considered. Those rules, maxims and customs are all founded on reason and are matured by the experience of successive generations of lawmakers. They are the concentration of the wisdom of the wisest and the best of men, and by an instinct common to all who combine good will with intelligence.

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