

# Donaldsonville Chief.

Office in Crescent Place.

Official Journal Town of Donaldsonville.

**LINDEN E. BENTLEY,**  
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

Saturday, September 30, 1871.

## Republican State Central Executive Committee.

Officers of the Committee.

P. B. S. Pinchback, President.  
William Vigers, Recording Secretary.  
J. W. Fairlie, Corresponding Secretary.

Members for the State at Large.  
Edward Butler, S. S. Schmidt,  
Thompson Coakley, Elbert Gantt,  
John Parsons, A. W. Smythe,  
H. Babby, James McCleary,  
David Young, F. J. Herron.

First Congressional District.  
Hugh J. Campbell, H. Mahoney.

Second Congressional District.  
A. E. Barber, James L. Belden.

Third Congressional District.  
Thomas H. Noland, Geo. Washington.

Fourth Congressional District.  
E. W. Dewees, Rafoad Blunt.

Fifth Congressional District.  
W. Faulkner, A. B. Harris.

Congressional Committee, 3rd District.  
John R. Gallup, Emerson Bentley,  
Louis E. Laloue, Pierre Landry,  
Clark H. Remick.

Copies of the CHIEF may always be found at Wilkinson's news depot and at the postoffice.

Mr. Pierre Landry is duly authorized to act as agent for the CHIEF in this parish and elsewhere.

The New Orleans Republican of last Sunday, contains an editorial headed "The Sheriff of Ascension Parish," which relates to the Sheriff of St. James Parish. In Tuesday's issue the same mistake is made, notwithstanding there also appears in that issue a card from the Sheriff in question, signed "J. C. Oliver, Sheriff of St. James Parish." It was a curious mistake at first, but still more so the second time, when documentary evidence of the error had in all probability passed under the editor's nose.

## OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

We have been enabled to gather up considerable information in regard to the work of public education in this parish, which we lay before the public as a matter of public interest.

At a meeting of the Parish Board of School Directors, held in August last, it was deemed advisable to unite with the Town Board, increasing the number of Directors to seven. Permission to do this was granted by the State and Division Superintendents and the Board went to work in earnest. A ward was assigned to each Director, and two to the President, as follows: Mr. Charles N. Lewis, first ward; Mr. Charles F. Smith, second ward; Rev. Mr. Bryan, third ward; Mr. Rudolph Brand, fourth ward; Mr. G. H. Hill, fifth ward; Mr. Pierre Landry, sixth ward; Mr. E. W. Mason, President, seventh and eighth wards. Each gentleman is required to supervise and visit the schools in his ward at least once every month, and to make a written report to the Secretary of the Board. This is an eminently wise plan, as it insures constant inspection of the schools, and increases the facilities for discovering and abolishing any evils which exist in their conduct or management.

At present there are twelve schools in the parish in daily operation, under the control of seventeen teachers, each school having an average attendance of from fifty to seventy-five pupils. There is an excellent corps of teachers, whose hearts are in the work, and great results may be expected from their labors. Another school will be established in the eighth ward on the first of October, and we believe an effort will also be made to have an additional one in Donaldsonville.

There is about to be incorporated in the school system a Teachers' Institute to be held on the fourth Saturday of each month, and attended by every teacher in the parish. It is needless for us to say that this will work great good in the educational department, for it is a fact universally recognized that the commingling of teachers, and an exchange of ideas of school management on their part is beneficial to all, and tends to improve the progress of the schools under their charge wonderfully. The first of this series of monthly meetings will be held to-day, and we have no doubt it will prove a gratifying success.

In a future article we shall give some of the obstacles which the School Board meet with in the prosecution of their work, and explain how they propose to overcome them.

Wilkinson has all the latest periodicals at his news depot, Crescent Place.

## THE FOURTH WARD SPEAKS

Meeting of the Lincoln Mother Club!

Large Attendance and Harmonious Proceedings!

Resolutions Unanimously Adopted!

Last Saturday evening, pursuant to call, there was a largely attended meeting of the Lincoln Republican Mother Club of the Fourth Ward, at the M. E. Church, on Houmas street.

The assemblage was called to order at 8 o'clock by Mr. Pierre Landry, who nominated Mr. Robert Noel for president and Mr. Frederick Fobb for secretary. There being no other nominations, these gentlemen were elected by acclamation.

The roll was called and several new names added, pending which Mr. Charles N. Lewis was proposed as an honorary member and unanimously elected.

Mr. Pierre Landry then took the floor and explained that the original object of the meeting had been the organization of the Parish Executive Committee, but as the President of that body was absent on official duties, he suggested the propriety of postponing the organization to some future day.

This suggestion was at once acted upon by the meeting, and organization of the Committee deferred.

Mr. Landry was then invited to address the meeting, which he did in some well-timed remarks, setting forth the political situation lucidly, and explaining the necessity for the Republican party to support Governor Warmoth's administration. He carried the sympathy of his audience with him, as was evinced by frequent bursts of applause.

The editor of this paper was next introduced, and gave a brief account of some of the doings of the Custom-house clique on the 9th of August last, as also of the visit of the Washington Committee to President Grant and Governor Claflin, president of the National Executive Committee. The listeners were especially enthusiastic when we told them of Gen. Grant's denial of Mr. Packard's insinuation that he had authorized the use of troops at the Custom-house on Convention day. The manner in which our remarks were received was very encouraging to ourself, never having made an impromptu speech before.

Mr. Charles N. Lewis was the next speaker and he was extremely felicitous in his remarks. He said the Republican party had built up this State government after many hardships and trials, and to pull down the structure now would only be to destroy ourselves. He was eulogistic of Governor Warmoth, and expressed regret that Lieutenant Governor Dunn, should allow himself to be led astray by a lot of political wire-pullers. Mr. Lewis was frequently applauded and retired only too soon, as the audience would have listened to him with pleasure for two hours longer.

President Robert Noel was next called upon, and was as successful in pleasing the assemblage as the previous speakers had been. He spoke mainly of parish affairs, and put the situation in its right light.

The last speaker was Mr. James Baily of the Third Ward. Although brief in his remarks, he awakened the greatest enthusiasm in the audience. He likened the Republican party to a bucket of water; and said it would not do to throw away any dirty water there might be in the bucket before we had found some clean to replace it, or the hoops would come off and the bucket fall to pieces. This simile created much enthusiasm and merriment.

The following resolutions were then read by the Secretary and adopted without a dissenting voice:

Resolved, That we, the Republicans of Ascension Parish, in mass meeting assembled, denounce the action of the Custom-house fraudulent convention, and declare that all that participated therein are disorganizers, and tending to the overthrow of the Republican party of this State.

Resolved, That we heartily approve the proceedings of the convention held at Turner Hall, in the city of New Orleans, and also the action of our duly elected delegates Pierre Landry and C. F. Smith in their actions therein, and that the same is hereby approved and ratified.

Resolved, That we denounce as bolters any and all men who, claiming to be Republicans, indorse by word or act the Custom-house bogus convention.

Resolved, That we indorse all resolutions introduced and passed by the convention held at Turner Hall, and ratify the same.

Resolved, That we indorse the State Central Executive Committee, of which Hon. P. B. S. Pinchback is president.

Resolved, That we indorse the ac-

tions of the delegates of the Third congressional district, and congratulate them in their judicious selection of true and tried Republicans for the congressional committee of this district.

Resolved, That we heartily indorse the National administration of his Excellency President U. S. Grant, and acknowledge him as the leader and standard bearer of the National Republican party.

Resolved, That we heartily indorse the administration of his Excellency Governor Henry Clay Warmoth, and acknowledge him as the leader and standard bearer of the Republican party of this State.

Resolved, That we pledge ourselves to support the regular nominees of the Republican party of this Parish and State, and that we cordially invite our erring friends to return to the Republican fold.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to the DONALDSONVILLE CHIEF, for publication.

It was decided, by resolution to that effect, to have a regular meeting of the club on the fourth Saturday of every month. After a vote of thanks had been tendered to the president and secretary, a motion to adjourn prevailed.

This meeting was a really fine one, and is only a forerunner of many others to follow. The utmost harmony and enthusiasm characterized the proceedings, and the people present were evidently of one mind in regard to supporting the State Administration.

As the Fourth Ward has spoken, so will all the other wards speak, until there shall remain no doubt in the minds of the most unwilling believers that Ascension Republicans are a unit for the State Administration and decidedly opposed to the Custom-house ring.

## THE DEATH PENALTY.

TRIPLE EXECUTION IN ST. JAMES.

Scene at the Gallows.

[From Our Special Correspondent.]

ST. JAMES, Sept. 16, 1871.

EDITOR CHIEF:—The triple execution of John Williams, Alfred Decaroux and Noel, alias Madison Hampton, convicted of the murder of Francis S. Mentath, on the night of the 10th of May last, took place to-day, and was witnessed by over one thousand persons, both men and women.

As your readers may not be familiar with the particulars, I will give a short account of the fiendish deed and the subsequent trial and conviction of the perpetrators.

On the night aforementioned, four men—James Parker, John Williams, Alfred Decaroux and Noel—started from the vicinity of Judge Beauvais' residence with the intention of committing a robbery. It seems that after trudging a distance of about ten miles up the river, as far as the St. Michael's Church, and not having come to any determination as to which store they should rob, they halted and held a consultation which ended in the selection of Choppin's store, situated upon the batture fronting the Welham place.

Arrived at this store, John Williams made an attempt to wrench the back door open, which was at first unsuccessful, but he immediately made a second trial, and being a powerful man, succeeded in wrenching the door entirely from its fastenings.

Parker immediately rushed in and seized young Mentath by the throat, holding him thus until John Williams produced a rope and adjusted it securely around the neck of the victim, when each of the villains took an end of the rope and pulled it until Mentath was strangled to death. The arms and legs of the young man were then tied, and John Williams took the body upon his back and threw it into the river. The store was then pillaged and the fiends started away, but had proceeded but a short distance when Williams proposed to return and burn the store in order to destroy all vestige of their crime. Acting upon the suggestion of their leader, they returned and set fire to the store which burned to the ground.

AT THE TRIAL.

The foregoing facts were elicited from Parker, who was accepted as State's evidence, and gave his testimony in a remarkably clear and straightforward manner. Williams attempted to prove an alibi by his wife, but she stated that he was not at home the night of the murder. There was no rebutting testimony; Parker's statement being corroborated by other witnesses, and also by the confessions of Decaroux and Noel, consequently the three men John Williams, Alfred Decaroux and Noel, alias Madison Hampton, were found guilty of murder in the first degree and sentenced to death. Some

time after the trial the Governor signed a death warrant fixing this day for the execution of the criminals.

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE EXECUTION, Alfred Decaroux and Noel were visited by their mothers, who bade them a last farewell, and reprimanded them for the crime they had committed. Noel's mother reproached him with deserting the Catholic religion—in which faith he had been born and raised—and joining the Baptist sect. She told him that this change of religious views had cost him his life, as they were Baptists who had induced him to become a party to the crime for which he was to pay the penalty with his life. Williams was visited by his wife, with whom he had been on very bad terms. He forgave her for having testified against him at the trial, and expressed the hope that she had forgiven him for his great crime. At sunrise, this morning, the prisoners were baptised by the Rev. Samuel Cook. The unfortunate men remarked that last night was the longest they had experienced during their confinement, and expressed a desire for the hour of execution to arrive.

THE PREPARATIONS.

A few minutes before nine o'clock, everything being in readiness, a wagon containing three coffins drove up to the jail door to receive the prisoners. Decaroux was the first to make his appearance. He came down the stairs looking pale and laggard; mounted slowly into the wagon, and took his seat upon the coffin which bore his name, gazing around at the assembled crowd, expectantly, then dropping his head upon his breast and swinging himself to and fro. Noel came out next with buoyant step, and sprang lightly into the wagon, seating himself near Decaroux, and nodded to some friends in the crowd. John Williams was the last of the condemned men to come forth from the jail. His step was slow and filtering, and he was evidently weak and depressed by mental suffering. He shook hands with several friends, then jumped into the wagon with the others. Parker, the accomplice to the deed who had turned State's evidence and saved his own neck, mounted the driver's seat and took the reins. Randall Coleman, a prisoner who was under charge of murdering a man on Mr. Jules Druilhet's place, was brought forth securely bound, and placed in the cart with the condemned murderers, he having expressed a desire to witness the execution.

THE START.

At nine o'clock the Sheriff gave orders for the start, when a numerous guard immediately formed around the prisoners, and proceeded towards the place of execution. The wagon containing the condemned was followed by the executioner in a buggy covered with the colors of death—white and black. The scene was a solemn one. Three men condemned to die, dressed in white, with white caps on their heads, and the executioner following in their wake.

AT THE PLACE OF EXECUTION.

The place where the murder was committed being too small for the execution, a spot one mile above, on the batture in front of the upper portion of the Welham plantation, was selected. A circle was formed with a rope, in the centre of which was the gallows. Guards were stationed around this circle and none of the spectators were admitted within it. The prisoners were now ordered to descend from the wagon. Decaroux came first and mounted to the platform of the gallows, seating himself upon the right. Williams and Noel followed; the former taking the middle seat, the latter the one upon the left. The Sheriff then notified the condemned that if they wished to say anything, now was the last opportunity that could be given them. Decaroux was the first to speak. He said: "Here I am before you, and you know what brought me here. I am glad my time has come, I shall soon be with my Heavenly Father." On the rope being adjusted around his neck he exclaimed: "Good-bye, old world, good-bye." Williams then arose and commenced singing a psalm. He essayed several times to speak, but got no further than "Don't be alarmed, my friends," then broke down. Noel spoke last, in a cool and indifferent manner: "You see we are before you; you know what brought us here. Let it be a warning to you all not to follow in our tracks." The time allotted them for speaking having expired, the executioner was summoned. Mounting the scaffold he pulled the caps over the faces of all three of the men, and adjusted the ropes around their necks, and bound their hands and feet; after which he

descended, broke the props down which supported the platform, and secured a rope to the trap. The hour of eleven having arrived, a prayer was offered by Rev. Samuel Cook, and the Sheriff ordered the executioner to do his duty. Like a thunder clap the platform fell, and the three criminals were suspended in mid-air. Noel was killed immediately. Decaroux showed signs of suffering, raised himself convulsively, then fell with a lurch. Williams also showed some signs of pain, but they were not as perceptible as Decaroux. At five minutes to twelve the bodies were cut down, after having hung fifty-five minutes. When the rope holding Williams was cut, the body fell with great velocity and rebounded from the earth like an elastic ball. Deputy Coroner Gray empanelled a jury, and held an examination upon the bodies, declaring them lifeless. Williams was buried three yards from the gallows; while the mortal remains of Decaroux and Noel were delivered to their friends for interment elsewhere.

And thus ended a scene which will be remembered for a long time to come in this community. A very large number of people witnessed the execution, and were visibly affected. Yours Truly, PENCIL DOT.

## A WORD TO THE "LEADER."

The advent of the CHIEF to the journalistic arena has brought forth an article from our contemporary of the Leader which is about as complete a conglomeration of erroneous statements—we believe not wilfully made—and inconsistencies as one could well imagine.

The editor of the Leader is particularly stirred up by the fact of our charging his journal with being the first to place a misconstruction upon our motives for withdrawing from the support of the Custom-house clique while yet editor of the St. James Sentinel. He begs to remind us that the article referred to published in his journal was written before our end of explanation appeared in the Sentinel, which card, he says, "was indeed a lame excuse, but still better than none." We should naturally take this to be intended somewhat as an excuse for the slander of the previous article, but this idea is at once dispelled by the charmingly inconsistent statement which follows: "What we then insinuated we can now state upon positive and reliable information, that the Governor did sign his printing bills, and that other inducements were offered and received as the sequel clearly shows." We have never denied that Governor Warmoth signed our printing accounts, but that he signed them in consideration of any promise on our part to support him we do deny most emphatically. Mr. Geo. E. Bovee, at that time our partner, was and still is opposed to Governor Warmoth. It stands to reason that the Governor would have required a pledge from Mr. Bovee as well as ourself—if requiring any at all—before signing bills in which we were mutually interested. This is rendered more probable by the fact that Mr. Bovee's position as Secretary of State gave him more importance in political circles than we could claim to possess. Mr. John E. Leet, of the Abbeville Flag, obtained Governor Warmoth's approval to his bills for printing, yet he still hails denunciation upon the State Administration and its Chief Executive with undiminished violence. We believe Governor Warmoth will approve any bills for work properly done under a printing contract, and he requires no promises from the holders, as we know both from personal experience and the statements of others.

The Leader next insinuates that even before the material for this journal was bought it received the printing of the town and the Police Jury regulations of St. James, these latter "from that notorious and liberal Oscar F. Hunsaker, who it is rumored has somewhat of a pecuniary interest in the welfare and prosperity of the new enterprise." We simply state that it was not until our order for the printing material had been given that we concluded to locate in Donaldsonville instead of St. James, and that we were not elected town printer until the material aforesaid had all arrived here and we were actively engaged in preparing it for the issue of the paper. The regulations of the Police Jury of St. James we did not, have not, and do not expect to receive. In regard to the latter part of the sentence above quoted: our name is placed at the head of the CHIEF, as its editor and proprietor, in good faith, and Dame Rumor may lie about it as much as she pleases.

And now the editor of the Leader

displays another instance of his unfathomable inconsistency: he says he had no intention of slandering or maligning us. We should certainly accept this statement as sincere were it not that he immediately follows it by asserting that there was too much truth in his slanders to call them by that name.

Then he says that the party which he represents has gained by our departure. When we call to mind the handsome compliment paid us by the editor of the Leader upon our assuming control of the St. James Sentinel, and contrast it with his assertion of to-day, we are certainly inclined to doubt his capacity as a competent witness. He said then that it would be a difficult task to cleanse the Sentinel after the dirty hands it had passed through, but he felt that no one more competent for the task than ourself could have been selected. He warmly wished us success so long as we were of his own penitential opinions, but when we espoused better ones he forgot our talent, our competency, our everything good, and philosophically—but very inconsistently—declared that we were well rid of.

But the conclusion of the Leader's bewildering article is written in a spirit which we admire and enter into heartily. We have no more desire to enter into a newspaper controversy than our contemporary professes to have; and now that we have shown that his article of last week contained statements inconsistent with the facts and unjust to ourself, we can start fair, and are willing to accept his promise of future editorial courtesy in good faith, and demonstrate to him by our course hereafter that we also can exercise that courtesy to its fullest extent.

## WHAT THE PAPERS SAY OF US.

From all sides the kind greetings of our editorial brethren of the press pour in upon us, and we hope a reproduction of some of them in our own columns will not be regarded as inexcusable vanity upon our part.

The first greeting came from the Iberville News, and was published in our last issue. Next in order comes the New Orleans Republican, the leading Republican paper of the State, with an acknowledgement of the receipt of the CHIEF and an extract from what it characterizes as our "well written salutory."

Close in the wake of this, a flattering notice from the New Orleans Semi-Weekly Louisianian, a paper owned, edited and managed by colored men, and the leader of its class in this State. We copy its notice in full:

THE DONALDSONVILLE CHIEF.—A new Republican paper, and neatly got up, has just put in its first appearance, and we gladly place it among our exchanges. Mr. Linden E. Bentley is the proprietor and editor. Mr. Bentley is well known as the talented young editor of the St. James Sentinel, which position he recently resigned in consequence of a difference of opinion between himself and the proprietor. The salutory of the Chief as may be expected merely reiterates its editor's well known sentiments, and pledges the consecration of every editorial ability he may possess to make his paper valuable. The first number is lively and well arranged, and we wish it a prosperous career.

We were as much surprised as gratified at the following notice from the Feliciana Republican, a paper until recently opposed to the State Administration, but which has now taken the "new departure" and comes out boldly for the right side:

The first number of the Donaldsonville Chief, published by Mr. Linden E. Bentley has been received. Its splendid typographical condition did not take us by surprise, nor did Mr. Bentley's pointed editorials make us forget that he was at one time connected with the St. James Sentinel, a paper which ranked first among the journals of Louisiana. Linden, your enterprise deserves success and we extend to you the right hand of fellowship in everlasting grip.

The North Louisiana Journal, published at St. Joseph, La., pays us this compliment:

We are in receipt of the first number of the Donaldsonville Chief, (Rep.) published by L. E. Bentley, until lately editor of the St. James Sentinel. The Chief is a live paper, and its typographical appearance truly refreshing, after going through a bundle of almost illegible country exchanges. We gladly place it upon our list.

We close our installment for this week, with a flattering paragraph from the Baton Rouge State Journal:

We welcome to our table the first number of the Donaldsonville Chief. We have examined it critically, perused it thoroughly from top to bottom, and vice versa, and pronounce it, in its make up, faultless. In its appearance it couldn't be improved. It is sound in principle and upon the right side. We wish the Chief all the success imaginable, and to its able editor, extend in greeting our editorial slipper.