

LAKE CHARLES COMMERCIAL.

SATURDAY, - - - JULY 9, 1881.

WATERMELONS! WATERMELONS!!—Three hundred fresh water melons, from Galveston, at King's Restaurant. Cheap.

The total number of immigrants to the United States during eleven months ending May 31, 1881, sum up 549,000.

The Fourth of July passed off very quietly. Not a canon fired, nor an arm or leg blown off, and not a man shot, even in the neck, from a bottle.

Ryan & Geary, with their usual vim and keep-up-with-the-times-activeness, are repairing and enlarging their saw-mill wharf. They run their mill all day, and their plauer all night.

Platz & Moss have received the machinery for their new saw-mill, the frame of which is about finished, on the Lake, just above town. Everything is now, and they expect to have a mill second to none on the river.

Moss & Riddick have built a new shed-gallery to their store. Old Sol was too many for them without it. They have also removed the old bridge over the gutter, and put down a new and substantial one. Their example could be profitably followed by several more of our business men.

Clement Bros. arrived at the head-of navigation, on the main river, a few days ago, with a run of about 3500 logs—of which, about 500 go to Hutchins & Mann's mill, about 1200 to Birleson Bros., and the remainder to Platz & Moss. This is the only run of logs made this summer, and was very much needed.

Fricke's Opera House is looming to the front, and will prove to be quite an acquisition to our town. Mr. Fricke is now having put up some patent, folding seats, with a spring to hold one's hat. Prof. Paul Sullivan will shortly finish the stage scenery and drop curtain. What is done looks very well.

J. W. Burnside, the Louisiana millionaire and owner of twenty large sugar plantations on the Mississippi, Lafourche and the Teche, died recently, at one of the northern watering places, leaving his immense fortune in the hands of Mr. Nelson McStea, one of the largest dry goods dealers in New Orleans.

We were pleased, some time since, in passing the German Methodist Church, to notice the improvements made. The house (which had been blown from the blocks) has been righted, repainted and new shutters put up, the fence repaired, etc. The Rev. Mr. P. H. Hensch, Minister in charge, and the ladies of the congregation, deserve great credit for their efforts in retrieving the building from the ruinous condition it had been in for a year or two.

We are reliably informed that a project has been matured, by several enterprising citizens of Calcasieu, which will insure the construction of a tramway for transporting saw-logs from the pines to tide-water. We are assured that the locomotive and cars for the tram-way are secured. One of the gentlemen connected with the enterprise leaves here to-night to secure the iron, and they expect to have the iron-horse snorting in the pines within ninety days. We shall have further occasion to speak of this long wished for enterprise.

MARINE.—Owing to light and head winds there have been very few arrivals this week. We note, however, that Capt. Quinn, of the schr. Mary E. Lynch, and Capt. Gus. Rolling, of the Livonia Perkins, and the schr. Cleopatra, arrived.

The departures, this week, so far as we can learn, are: the Adolphe Fluke, last Tuesday, for Tampico, Mexico; the A. J. Perkins, Capt. Smith, Mary E. Lynch, Capt. Quinn and the L. Wells, Jessie, and Caroline, for Galveston, and the "Let Me Go," for Vermilion.

SALUTATORY.

We present to the public to-day the first number of the LAKE CHARLES COMMERCIAL. We hope that our humble beginning will be looked upon with favor, by the good and intelligent people of Calcasieu, and other parts of the State and country, where it may be our good fortune to find interested readers. The standard of the public press in the United States to-day has reached a height that no one will venture on that elevation, with the thousands of eminent publicists, racy writers and eminent editors, who are at the head of the profession, without feeling giddy at the rashness of the undertaking. We do not, therefore, underestimate the difficulty of our task; but we will endeavor to follow the example of our abler seniors, without ever expecting to accomplish more than to humbly imitate the excellence to which they have attained. Should we succeed in doing this; should we be able to convince our readers, at all times, that we have enlisted heart and soul, in the great work for the public good and that we are co-workers for the enlightenment, education and morality of the people, we feel that any deficiency, on our part, will be passed over on account of the rectitude of our intentions.

On questions of National politics, the COMMERCIAL will always be found among the most zealous advocates and supporters of the time-honored principles of the democratic party; because, in the final triumph of the principles of this great national party alone do we see that the peace, prosperity and future greatness of the South are assured. But we hope never to be so blinded by party preference or prejudice as to abandon the high spirit of independence which should always characterize the press, or, as to suffer party bias to take the place of merit, in our advocacy of men and measures.

The agricultural and industrial pursuits of the Parish of Calcasieu, and of the State of Louisiana will receive deserved attention at our hands, and it will be our aim not to neglect any item of information which may be of profit or use to merchant, sailor, farmer, mechanic, logman, stockman or lumberman. As a matter of course we will devote a great deal of our time and space to the cause of immigration. It strikes us that a large accession, to our country, of good substantial laborers, farmers and mechanics, will contribute more to the greatness and prosperity of the South, than all other causes combined.

In fine, our every effort will be directed to present to our readers a Southern home paper, devoted to every interest, moral as well as material, which can conduce to make home cherished, bright and happy.

THE WONDERS OF THE HEAVENS.—If you want to have a fine treat, such a fine, celestial treat, as is not given to any man to have more than once in a life time, just rise up from your quiet slumbers at 3 o'clock in the morning and cast your eyes towards the east. There you will see the four major planets in full view: Venus, just above the horizon, shining like a young moon; Jupiter, about five degrees to the south of her, flaming with scarcely less brilliancy; just above them, about 15 degrees, the red-hot, fiery Mars and the yellow-tinted Saturn, standing side by side. Turn to the left and you will see, in the north-east, the vaugrant wonder of the heavens, flashing out her immense tail, like a burning tassel, away from her more sedate companions in the planetary world; all five presenting a most inspiring spectacle, and sending forth light equal to that of the moon itself.

Charles J. Guiteau, the would-be assassin of President Garfield, is about 40 years of age. He was born at Ann Arbor, Michigan. His past history shows him to have been an embezzling lawyer, a luff-brained religious fanatic, a schemer of fantastic projects and entirely insensible to every principle of honor and virtue. His name will go down to posterity coupled with the execution of mankind.

The Attempted Assassination of the President.

One of the most dastardly and heinous crimes was committed last Saturday, at the Washington City Railroad depot, by an individual named Charles Guiteau. This man had been for some time applying to Mr. Blaine, the Secretary of State, for a consulate at Marseilles, France. Meeting with a peremptory refusal his disappointment so maddened him that he swore vengeance, not only against Secretary Blaine, but against President James A. Garfield himself. Accordingly he watched his chances, and at 9.30 A. M., Saturday, July 2, just as the President was passing through the ladies' room of the Washington Railroad depot, on his way to the train, he fired two shots at the President, both shots taking effect, the first in the right arm and the second in the back, the ball entering to the right of the spinal column, below the small ribs. Although the latter wound is of a very serious character, it is not considered necessarily fatal by his attending physicians, and strong hopes are still entertained for his recovery.

The whole country has been thrilled with horror at the terrible deed. Such an act is so outrageous that it passes beyond the limit of political significance, and the enormity of the crime is too dark to allow the mind to look through it, to the probable political consequences growing out of it. Every man, woman and child in the land, who has sense enough to know and heart enough to feel, have been struck by the awful news as the dire announcement of a public calamity. The execrable crime is national in its character and in its effects—and everyone must feel that the heart of the nation has been fatally hurt in the respected person of the President. If the worst should happen, if President Garfield should die, party issues and party preferences will disappear from the land and leave a nation of mourners over his grave.

Railroad News.

[Orange (Texas) Tribune.]

A special train Wednesday brought to Orange Judge Crosby and Major Burton, of the Texas and New Orleans Railroad. The object of the visit of these gentlemen was to ascertain the feeling of our people on the question of a railroad from this city to the timbered lands of Newton and Jasper counties, and when the train pulled up to the depot a large number of our citizens were found on the spot, anxious to confer with the railroad men concerning the proposed line. The reception was such as to leave no doubt that a large majority are eager for the road, and the consultation resulted satisfactorily, as near as we can learn, to both parties. Judge Crosby being called upon addressed the assembled crowd on the matter which had brought them together. Judge Crosby is now on his way to New York City, and we feel confident that in a very short time we can announce the chartering of this new enterprise, and once commenced it will be very speedily pushed through.

Shot Like a Dog.

A people's president, the kindest and simplest of human beings—but four months in office and for the most part immured in the sick room of his wife—two amiable and charming types of our system, our civilization and race—two gentle and pleasing illustrations of what an honest, aspiring boyhood and girlhood, going hand-in-hand, may achieve from the humblest beginnings in this land of ours—separated for a few days—are about to meet for a little holiday; good Christian people, their hearts full of thanks to God for sparing the life of the weaker; plain, unpretending offerings and representatives of the people, and no crowns, nor uniforms, nor escorts—a sweet July morning, and the children peeping over wistfully into his coming fourth—presented a flash a bullet, a flash another bullet—and, with peace and plenty all around about, and not a private enemy in the world, and not an act or a word to wrong or injure any living thing—this happy hearted man—gridded by that sovereignty only which doth hedge an honest citizen—is shot down like a dog or a cat.—[Louisville Courier Journal.]

Birds are melancholy in the morning, because their little bills are all over due.—[Meriden Reporter.]

A Tragedy and its Philosophy.

[Galveston News.]

There is philosophy in the attempted assassination of the President if one could only find it out. History has, in more than one memorable page, lent credibility to the ancient adage that those whom the gods intend to destroy they first make mad, and it may be that the present condition of the republican party is about to afford a signal illustration of the truth of the saying. The dead-lock at Albany; the bribery and perjury there; the Star Route developments; the partial unearthing of Treasury frauds and its sudden suppression, and the monstrous crime of Saturday, in which the President fell under the pistol of an office-seeking desperado, are all a part of a deep-laid and wonderfully complex political drama, the actors in which are all living characters in the party which has ruled and misruled the country for more than twenty years. Whatever the cause of the "deep damnation" of the deed of blood, the world is invited to witness a republican quarrel and a republican tragedy. A house covering all manner of sins and guilty secrets is at last divided against itself, and its impending fall from the explosion of internal iniquity will be in strict accord with poetic justice. None but republicans are complicated with any of the unwholesome and execrable business which culminated in the terrible crime of Gritthead, and in view of the fact that the republican party had come to regard the country as its legitimate heritage, and its bosses and spoils-men as the rightful possessors and administrators in perpetuity of the grand estate, the thoughtful and patriotic citizen, while grieving for the President, will realize a message of hope and health in the sad catastrophe if it shall prove the herald of the restoration of this grand estate to the people and to honesty, and the complete and permanent destruction of the corrupt and corrupting spoils system. It is an hour of deep and anxious concern with all right-thinking Americans. It is an hour that may mark a mighty crisis in the country's history, perhaps a sharp and vastly eventful turning point in its destiny. But if the occasion is calculated to excite the profoundest solicitude, it is not without its hopeful and reassuring suggestions.

The following were the West Point graduates who died during the past year. Among them were a number who had played important parts in the civil war: Theophilus H. Holmes, lieutenant-general C. S. A.; Paul O. Hebert, major general C. S. A.; Alfred T. A. Torbert, major general U. S. A.; Bushrod R. Johnson, major general C. S. A.; Henry P. Walker, Asa H. Holgate, Eskine Gittings, Edward D. Mansfield, George R. Crittenden, major general U. S. A.; Edwin Mauck, Archie Gibson, John Love, Franklin E. Hunt, Charles H. Heintzelman, Charles T. Baker, Thomas S. Alexander, Emory Upton, major general U. S. A.; John McNutt, Timothy M. Bryan, George A. Kensel, Samuel A. Cherry, William H. French, Benjamin H. Wright.—[N. O. Times.]

Mr. Conkling is quoted as having said "it is murder or suicide." The suicide was committed when he resigned; the moment the Republican Senators and Assemblymen consent to an adjournment of the legislature without having elected United States Senators. Such a course would be both a blunder and a crime. Gentlemen of the Legislature, you have tried every plan but the right one. Try a caucus now, agree to abide by the wishes of the majority, and elect in joint convention the two men who receive the votes of that majority to the Senate of the United States.—[Troy Times.]

The Western Union Telegraph company, on an actual investment of \$25,000,000, issued \$90,000,000 of stock, which at the market value is worth \$81,000,000 in hard money. Thus nearly sixty million dollars are exploited by the watering system, that goes into the pockets of less than a dozen men. Does it not occur to the political economist that this is a pretty heavy draught on the people who use the wires? Can such enormous accumulations by a simple stroke of the pen be altogether legitimate, or wholesome to the public wealth.—Galveston News.

"I am a stalwart of the stalwarts" is a sentence of infamy that will follow the Republican party to its grave. True, the other "stalwarts" are not implicated in the bloody deed, but the words of the assassin will couple the crime with the party for all times to come.—Galveston News.

The Morning Star and Catholic Messenger says: "After taking legal advice, State Tax Collector Houston, has decided that tax sales are illegal on account of the State Auditor having neglected to comply with the forms of law."

THE PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION.

A Possible Hiatus With Terrific Results.—The Nation's Great Peril.

[New Orleans City Item.]

A correspondent telegraphs from Washington that "thoughtful men recall the fact that should Garfield die, Mr. Arthur's life is the only alternative to anarchy and civil war." We are asked the question: "To whom would the succession descend in case both the President and Vice-President should now die?" The Constitution of the United States provides, article II, section 1:

"In case of the removal of the President from office, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of said office, the same shall devolve on the Vice-President, and Congress may, by law, provide for the case of removal, death, resignation or inability both of the President and Vice-President, declaring what officer shall then act accordingly until the disability be removed or a President shall be elected."

Article I, section 3, provides that "The Vice-President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no vote unless they be equally divided. The Senate shall choose their other officers, and also a president pro tempore in the absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the office of President of the United States."

In accordance with the above the act of March 1, 1792, was passed, the provision of which are embodied in the latest revision of the statutes as follows:

"Section 146. In case of removal, death, resignation or inability of both the President and Vice-President of the United States, the President of the Senate, or if there is none, then the Speaker of the House of Representatives, for the time being, shall act as President until the disability is removed or a President elected.

"Section 147. Whenever the offices of President and Vice President both become vacant, the Secretary of State shall forthwith cause a notification thereof to be made to the executive of every State, and shall also cause the same to be published in at least one of the newspapers printed in each State.

"Section 148. The notification shall specify that electors of a President and Vice President of the United States shall be appointed or chosen in several States as follows:

"First—If there shall be the space of two months yet to elapse between the date of such notification and the first Wednesday in December, then next ensuing, such notification shall specify that the electors shall be appointed or chosen within thirty-four days preceding such first Wednesday in December.

"Second—If there shall not be the space of two months between the date of such notification and such first Wednesday in December, and if the terms for which the President and Vice President last in office were elected will expire on the third day of March next ensuing, the notification shall specify that electors are to be appointed or chosen."

But the country is now without a President of the Senate or a Speaker of the House of Representatives. Senator Randall adjourned the Forty-sixth Congress sine die, and with the fall of his mallet became functus officio as such.

Owing to the Senatorial dead-lock about the offices of Secretary and Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate, and the subsequent loss to the Republicans of the majority in that body by the resignation of Conkling and Platt, Vice President Arthur refused to vacate the chair in order, as is customary, that a substitute might be chosen to meet such an emergency as now is rendered possible.

Even should the President not survive the dastard's blow at his life and the country's peace, it is not at all probable that the added calamity of Arthur's untimely taking off would befall. But the possibility in itself presents consequences which are so appalling, that this should teach those who are entrusted with responsibilities so vast and far-reaching never again to permit partisan spoils seeking to so put them in jeopardy.

AN EXPENSIVE FOX.—Six months ago a party of hunters tried to smoke out a fox that had taken refuge in a hole ten miles west of Somerset, Ky. In so doing they set fire to a bed of coal which has been burning ever since.

Theory of Meteorites.

[Tinsley's Magazine.]

One of the oldest theories, and the one that is, perhaps, most consistent with all known facts and laws, is that meteorites are bodies moving round the sun, which occasionally enter our atmosphere, and are either frittered into dust or reach the earth as aerolites. In other words, they are abnormally large fragments of comets. Small fragments are dissipated in the higher regions of the air by the intense heat produced by friction, and give rise to phenomenon of shooting stars. Larger pieces appear as fire balls, and very large masses fall through the air in a state of combustion, which is not, however, sufficiently intense to consume their volume before reaching the ground. This idea of a celestial origin seems to have originated among the Greeks. Plutarch says: "Falling stars are, according to the opinion of some physiologists, not eruptions of the ethereal fire extinguished in the air immediately after its ignition, nor yet an inflammatory combustion of the air, which is dissolved in large quantities in the upper regions of space; but these meteors are rather a fall of celestial bodies which, in consequence of a certain intermission in the rotary force, and by the impulse of some irregular movement, have been hurled down, not only to the inhabited portion of the earth, but also beyond it into the great ocean, where we cannot find them." The views of Diogenes of Apollonia are expressed thus: "Stars that are invisible, and consequently have no name, move in space together with those that are visible. Those invisible stars frequently fall to the earth, and are extinguished as the stony stars, which fell burning at Egos Polmos." Chladni, as the result of his investigations, advanced the opinion that meteors are bodies moving in space, being either accumulations of matter as originally created, or fragments separated from a larger mass of a similar nature. Sir H. Davy offered the same explanation in the "Philosophical Transactions" for 1817. These views, or rather a modification of them suited to our increased knowledge of cosmical ways and means, have their modern advocate in Prof. H. A. Newton, of Yale College.

The Comet.

[New York Herald.]

The great meteor which has just burst on the northern skies continues to excite the attention of astronomers, who now are certain that it is one of the most brilliant comets on record. Professor Skinner describes its luminous body as taking something of the shape of a parabola, the nucleus not at the extreme end, but perhaps a degree back from the end, the brilliance greatest behind the nucleus, while the tail is so transparent that stars can be seen through it, and it is rapidly moving toward the north pole of the heavens. Professor Boss, of Albany, conjectures that it is not the comet of 1812, and is moving nearly in the track of the great comet of 1807, though its identity with that body is still in doubt. There are also conflicting opinions as to identity with the comet reported by Dr. Gould on the 1st inst. Dr. Deaper suggests a difficulty in this assumption. If not Gould's comet then it may be approaching the sun, and so become more and more brilliant. After all it may be a celestial traveler making a first visit to this part of the solar system. The deep, popular interest in this new wonder is not unaccountable. "The distinctive character of comets," as Flammarion says, "lies in the length of their courses and in the immense duration of their journeys round the sun," some of which as the period of the comet of 1680, cover thousands of years. The mind is lost in contemplating the extent of space in which such orbital movements can find room for fulfillment by bodies coursing long at hundreds or thousands of leagues a minute, yet unmoved from their ordained paths. Their appearance in our skies after traversing the outmost limits of the solar system makes us feel that we have had at least some report, by an actual explorer, from the frontiers of that system beyond the Neptunian orbit. While science has stripped them of the terror they formerly had, by showing the tenacity of their masses, its revelations have only enhanced the awe-inspiring mystery which surrounds their movements. In the case of the present comet the doubt that still hangs over its history, and the inability of the most eminent astronomers as yet to pronounce on its identity with some previous visitor, or to pronounce it a new phenomenon, only serve to intensify this mystery.

POSTAL CARDS.—A Washington dispatch says: It is estimated that during the fiscal year ending June 30th there will be used three hundred and twenty million postal cards, making a total for the last four years of almost precisely one billion. The proposal for bids for the next four years called for two billions, and it is not unlikely that the number sold next year will amount to very nearly five hundred millions. The three hundred and twenty millions sold this year, if connected end to end, would run a girdle around the world with enough to spare to make a showy knot. These cards are often bought in very large quantities by business houses for advertising purposes, order having been received for twenty, thirty and forty thousand at once; but the great bulk of them are singly or in small lots, for purposes of correspondence. The future of the postal card depends in some degree upon the rate of letter postage. If that is dropped to two cents, the sale of cards will be materially reduced.

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