THE NEW ORLEANS BEE.

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NEW ORLEANS, TUESDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 14, 1865

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NEW ORLEANS:
TUESDAY MORNING, FEB. 14, 1865.

On our second page will be found sheriff's and auction sales, bank notices and various miscellaneous advertisements.

THE ST CHARLES THEATRE.—We regret to learn that continued indisposition has again compelled the postponement of the debut of the Webb Sisters at the St. Charles Theatre. Faucheu, the Cricket, will be repeated tonight, by the strength of the St Charles company.

FAREWELL BENEFIT.—Isabel of East Lynne and Sally Scraggs are the diverse parts in which Mrs. G. de Lane will, early to night at the Varieties, bid her farewell benefit. Since her engagement at the Theatre, Mrs. G. has personated a succession of very fine and light characters with results that have still further confirmed her position as one of the prime favorites of our theatre going public. For a certain taste and discretion of behavior, for a certain revelation amid all the mimicries and artificialities of the stage, of true womanly decency, grace and dignity, she is one of the few of her profession who may with what is of more worth even to an artist than admiration, and what no amount of brilliancy or power can obtain—respect and esteem.

BALL BY THE LADIES' JEWISH RELIEF SOCIETY.—We acknowledge a polite invitation to attend fancy dress and sociable ball to be given by the ladies of the Jewish Relief Society, at Mozart Hall, on the evening of the 16th inst. We are sure that will prove socially as pleasant as its philanthropic purpose is benevolent.

BY TELEGRAPH.
FROM SOUTHWEST PASS

The Fung Shuey Across the Bar.

S. W. Pass, February 13, 11 A. M.

The steamship Fung Shuey, from New York on the 5th, crossed the bar to day at 11 A. M.

Late News via Meridian, Miss

General Forrest's Cavalry Command in Mississippi, East Louisiana and Alabama—Lieutenant General Taylor at Meridian Return of Peace Commissioners to Richmond—Affairs in Mississippi.

Special to the Appeal.

Meridian, February 13.

We have just received the Mercury, Miss., Confederate of the 11th, containing the following news:

The despatches in the papers from Richmond, received.

The rebel General N. B. Forrest has assumed command of the Department of Alabama, Mississippi and East Louisiana, with headquarters at Meridian, Mississippi, and issues the circular accordingly, under date of January 28th, requiring reports of the same to his order. He pledges protection to the rights of citizens and the restoration of local organizations of cavalry, of similar which, he says, early in May, are to come through the country, combining acts of economy and humanity which demand a tenacity which he will not hesitate to apply, even to the extremities.

Lieutenant General Taylor has left the headquarters at Meridian, Miss., and on the 9th had not returned by any route he intended, published in the *Courier*.

A despatch from Richmond, dated the 9th, says:

The Peace Commissioners returned from Fortress Monroe last night. They had an interview with Lincoln and Seward.

They were informed authoritatively that peace could only be obtained by an unconditional submission to the Government and law of the United States, and that the slavery question had been disposed of by the action of the Federal Congress, adopting the proposed amendment of the Constitution, now pending slavery in the United States.

An official statement of the Commissioners will be issued to-morrow.

Gold in the rebel capital continues to advance, and the speculation, which is causing the greatest distress, is also increasing.

Also the Senate passed a joint resolution to adopt a flag for the Confederate States with only two stripes. The new flag was introduced by Colquitt, from the south [illegible].

The only change in the flag is a modification of the first and third stripes, which, instead of being [illegible] are to be of the same width as the second.

Major Gen. W. W. Loring is at Meridian with his division.

Brigadier General Wirt Adams is assigned command of the Districts of Mississippi and East Louisiana, with headquarters at Jackson, Miss., on the 31st inst.

On the 1st instant, the rebel Forrest issued another circular order, dated March, Miss., ordering all absentees, deserters and refugees to report at once to their [illegible].

The Governor of Mississippi, Charles Clark, has ordered the State Legislature in session at Columbus, Miss., on Monday, the 20th day of February, 1865.

Negro Testimony in Various States.

In December last Governor Morton, of Indiana, addressed a letter to the Governors of various States, requesting information as to the legal competency, under their respective laws, of persons from or claiming to come from which white persons are parties.

From Massachusetts he was answered:

"There is no law, nor rule, nor custom, in our Commonwealth, nor am I aware that there is even a prejudice, which renders indispensable or affects the credibility of the testimony of any person, who is honest and capable of rational discourse, by whatever color, descent, origin or nationality."

The Governor of Pennsylvania replied:

"In this State, negroes are competent as witnesses in all courts and in all cases. There are no legal disabilities which do not [illegible] subject."

At with all of these [illegible] the [illegible] is [illegible] jury of the court to [illegible] called as a witness.

From New Jersey, Vermont, New York, Connecticut, Ohio, Wisconsin and Kansas responses came to the same effect. The answers from Maine to Rhode Island indicate absence of both political and legal distinctions between whites and blacks. "In the State," wrote the Governor of Maine, "there is no limitation in respect to color. Negroes have the same rights of suffrage and testimony as all races that white persons have." The late returned from Rhode Island says:

"I have the honor to forward by mail a copy of the Constitution of Rhode Island, which will show that colored persons are, in this State, entitled to all the privileges of citizenship, and that their testimony is therefore admissible in all cases, without restriction."

From West Virginia Gov. Boreman is informed that section 20, Code of Virginia, which section is not repealed, and in force as a law of the State—enacts that "A negro or Indian shall be a competent witness in a case of the Commonwealth, for or against a negro or Indian, or in a civil case to which only negroes or Indians are parties, but not in any other case."

From Delaware extracts from the laws were communicated showing that free negroes could only testify in criminal prosecutions when competent white witnesses were not to be had, that they could obtain redress in law and equity, but were precluded from the other rights of a freeman.

The following law of Tennessee was received by Governor Andrew Johnson:

"3,808. A negro, mulatto, Indian or person of mixed blood, descended from negro or Indian ancestors to the third generation inclusive, though one ancestor of each generation may have been a white person, whether bond or free, is incapable of being a witness in any cause, civil or criminal, except for or against each other.

"3,809. No person of mixed blood of any degree whatever, who has been liberated from slavery within twelve months previous, shall be admitted as a witness against a white person."

Governor Yates, of Illinois, submitted the appended extract from the statutes of that State:

"No black, or mulatto, or Indian, shall be permitted to give evidence in favor or against any white person whatsoever. Every person who shall have one-fourth part or more of negro blood, shall be deemed a mulatto; and every person who shall have one half Indian blood shall be deemed an Indian."

And Governor Hall, of Missouri, responded:

"I have to say, that according to the laws of our State, a negro or mulatto, bond or free, except in pleas of the State against a negro or mulatto, bond or free, or in civil cases in which negroes or mulattoes alone are parties, is absolutely incompetent to testify as a witness in any of our Courts."

Referring to the official information thus obtained, the Indianapolis *Journal* remarks:

"The object of these inquiries was to direct, by the action and experience of sister States, the policy of our own. That it has been abundantly accomplished will appear upon reading the accompanying answers. Governor Morton pithily announces it in his message: 'Indiana and Illinois are the only free States whose statute books are dishonored by the retention of a law so repugnant to the spirit of the age, and the dictates of common sense.' Illinois has already taken one decisive step toward removing the dishonor—the Senate has repealed the law excluding negro testimony—and it now remains for Indiana to say whether she will stand alone in the redeemed and regenerated Union soon to be established, the champion of the last disgrace that barbarism has entailed upon civilization."

Sketches of the Rebel Peace Commissioners.

From the Richmond Whig.

JOHN A. CAMPBELL.

John Archibald Campbell, son of Duncan G. Campbell, was born in Wilkes county, Georgia, in June, 1812. He graduated at the University of Athens at an early age. He afterward entered as a cadet in the Military Academy of West Point, completing three years at the institution.

The decease of his father induced him to resign his commission and return to his native county, Richmond, in that State within view of pursuing the profession of law.

He commenced the practice of his profession in Montgomery, Alabama. While residing there he served in the legislature during a year of much local agitation. In 1837 he removed to Mobile, and remained with the great success his profession, serving but one term again in the legislature council, and only accepting political office when forced upon him in 1853, the first year of the administration of President Pierce, he was appointed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. At the breaking out of hostilities he retired from that position to abide the action of his native State. For a month after the election of Mr. Lincoln he was actively engaged in endeavoring to avert the war then threatening the two sections.

He was in Washington in March, 1861, when Messrs Forsyth, Crawford and Roman, Commissioners from the Confederate States, received to have an official interview with Mr. Seward. He was a Union man and the policy of the administration rendered Union in the South impossible. Messrs. Forsyth and Crawford were informed by Seward of the demand of the Commissioners for recognition he refused to write to President Davis and ask him to "detain his letter." Seward understood him to mean to intimate the fact of the intended evacuation of Fort Sumter to Mr Davis, but having some doubts of the sincerity of the intimation, he conferred with Judge Nelson, at whose suggestion and by whose counsel he agreed to be in the [illegible] next Sunday was stipulated."

In the interview with Seward on the 15th inst., he was led to believe that the Government would not undertake to supply Sumter with provisions by force in Governor Pickens' case, unless notice in writing was given. We now append his own words from a letter to Wm. B. Reed, Esq., of Pennsylvania, dated April 11, 1861:

"I was saddened the matter of desire, and, with what had taken place, left the impression that if any attempt were made it would be an open, declared and special effort to supply Sumter by force, being resisted by the Carolinians, the fort would be abandoned as a military necessity, and to spare the effusion of blood—the column to be struck and if the evacuation being thrown upon the late administration and the Confederate States. Had these councils prevailed—and they nearly been marked with candid and manly dealing—I am not sure that even before this the front might have been seen [illegible] among the States in renewed relations of happiness and peace, and, to be followed ere long by a suitable political and civil union, adequate to the security of both sections at home and abroad. Instead of this, and to be followed ere long by a suitable political and civil union, adequate to the security of both sections at home and abroad. Instead of this, and to spare the effusion of blood—the column to be struck and if the evacuation being thrown upon the late administration and the Confederate States. Had these councils prevailed—and they nearly been marked with candid and manly dealing—I am not sure that even before this the front might have been seen [illegible] among the States in renewed relations of happiness and peace, and,