Civilian Life in Occupied New Orleans, 1862-1865.

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CIVILIAN LIFE IN OCCUPIED NEW ORLEANS, 1862-65

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
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in

The Department of History

by

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

I  The Investment  
II  In the Hands of the Enemy  
III Lilies of the Field and Birds of the Air  
IV Yellow Jack and Dirty Gutters  
V Nurseries of Treason  
VI The Heathen Inheritance  
VII The Primrose Path and Other Roads to Jail  
VIII Hungry Enemies and Starving Friends  
IX Greenbacks, Car Tickets, and the Pot of Gold  
X Players and Candleholders  
XI Federals, Rebels, and Yanks for the Money  
XII Straining the Quality of Mercy  
XIII Abridging the Freedom of the Press  
XIV The Voice of the People--N. P. Banks  
XV Draining the Cup of Freedom and Liberty  
XVI By the Rivers of Babylon  
XVII Conclusion  

Bibliography
ABSTRACT

This is a study of what happened to the civilian population of one of America's largest cities in a situation experienced by no other urban community in the nation: its occupation for a period of years by an enemy military force.

New Orleans was occupied by Federal troops on May 1, 1862. They were not finally withdrawn until 1877, but this study is concerned only with the war years of the occupation. In it, every important phase of civilian life—from the daily struggle for the necessities of life to the mental attitude of the population—is examined. Necessarily, it is also a study of the techniques of occupation worked out by the United States forces to fit a situation almost unknown to American military authorities.

Material for the study was drawn from three types of sources: published secondary works, biographies, and memoirs; printed government documents and newspapers; and manuscripts. In the first category, the chief items of value were the published reminiscences of those who lived in New Orleans for the period under consideration and a number of articles published in periodicals. A limited amount of material was drawn from other works in this category but, outside of the general histories, there was little material available which covered the whole period.

iv
The most important single item in the second category was, of course, the immense compilation commonly referred to as the *Official Records*—a comprehensive collection of the records of the Union and Confederate forces. Contemporary New Orleans newspapers were an equally important source of first-hand material on the life of the civilian population, though the fact that they were strictly censored limits their value as mirrors of public opinion.

Finally, the manuscript sources were of prime importance and may be divided into two classes: the personal papers of New Orleans residents who were in the city in the years 1862-65; and the official correspondence and papers of the Federal authorities now housed in the National Archives at Washington, D.C. In both classes the papers consulted represent fresh source material on the subject studied; many of those in the first category have only recently been made available to scholars. Those in the second category were screened from a veritable mountain of official documents, a large portion of which have not been used before. Only by using them in conjunction with the *Official Records* could a historian of the period obtain a complete picture of the problem.

How did the Federal occupation affect New Orleans during the war years? From the civilian point of view the years 1862-65 represented a period of incredible dreariness. Physically, it was not a hard occupation; but there were just enough privations, just enough limitations on personal freedom, just enough discouragements, to leave in the memories of the residents a feeling understandably bitter and easily accentuated by time.
From the viewpoint of the occupying forces, these years show that, though the Federal forces had right as well as might on their side, they failed to consolidate their gains in the field by administering this military occupation with justice, honesty, and compassion. It was not enough that the military administration was no more corrupt than the civilian one it replaced. The situation called for superior qualities—and they were seldom evident. Lincoln clearly realized the need, but he seemed unable to find subordinates who had the necessary qualities. As a result, the North won the war in the field—and lost a moral victory in New Orleans.
INTRODUCTION

I have tried to write here the story of the people of an American city who found themselves in a situation happily without parallel in our history. New Orleans was the only large American community ever to undergo a lengthy wartime occupation by an enemy military force. The fact that both the people of the city and the "enemy" were Americans sets this occupation apart from many others in history, but it is also of particular interest to a student of social history because it shows Americans from two sharply contrasting points of view.

In writing their story I have tried to limit my discussion to those topics that would most closely touch the lives of ordinary citizens, and as a result I have had to leave out much that some readers might expect me to include. I have not, for example, discussed the imbroglio in which General Butler became involved with the foreign consuls—a topic of such far-reaching nature that it deserves a study of its own. For a like reason, I have not tried to explore the question of trade across the lines—one of the shadier aspects of our Civil War history—nor the activities of the Sequestration Commission, which operated chiefly in the parishes outside New Orleans. These subjects must await later studies.

Too, I have gone only briefly into the question of political reconstruction in Louisiana. This topic has been covered so fully in other studies that I felt no need exists for another detailed treatment of it.
I did not set out to "prove" anything when I began my research, but I have been forced as a result of it to make some conclusions in spite of myself. With these some may disagree, but I present them because they seemed to me readily apparent.
Chapter I

THE INVESTMENT

The Thirty-first Massachusetts and the Fourth Wisconsin regiments of United States troops went ashore at New Orleans on the first day of May in 1862.¹

The day was fair and humidly warm, and the air around the levee was still tinged with the acrid odor of the sugar hogsheads and cotton bales that had been burned there by order of the retreating Confederates as Commodore David Farragut's fleet came up the Mississippi River. The river was very high, and the crowd of curious citizens had no difficulty in seeing the transports now riding at anchor along the levee, nor the vessels of Farragut's fleet, the guns of which were trained menacingly on the city.²

The transports had arrived before the city about noon, and shortly after lunch the expedition's commander, Major General Benjamin Franklin Butler, circulated his disembarkation order to the troops.

¹ James Parton, General Butler in New Orleans (New York, 1864), 280.

² Diary of Zoe J. Campbell, entry for May 1, 1862, in Zoe J. Campbell MSS., Louisiana State University Archives, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Clara Solomon, "Diary of a New Orleans Girl, 1861-1862" (typescript in Hill Memorial Library, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; original is in Louisiana State University Archives), entry for May 4, 1862; New Orleans Crescent, May 1, 1862.
Thus far they had not had to fire a shot in their own defense, and their commander was no less uncertain than they were as to what their reception would be in this largest and richest of Southern cities. A howling mob had greeted the emissaries whom Farragut had sent to demand the surrender of the town a few days before, and the naval commander had warned his army vis-a-vis to expect trouble.

From the crowd that grew steadily in size came jeers and taunts—not all of them ill-natured, for these people were not secession leaders and most of them were still unsure how the resident of a captured city was to behave in the presence of an occupying force. So they called loudly for "Pioyume Butler" to come ashore and teased the soldiers they saw with cries of "You'll never see home again," and "Yellow Jack will have you before long!" Mulatto women, selling oranges and cakes, moved among them as they jostled each other for a good view. Almost a holiday mood seemed to move them; indeed, there was far more foreboding aboard the Mississippi, on which General Butler had arrived, than there seemed to be among the crowd of citizens he was to rule.

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4 Parton, Butler in New Orleans, 279.
The General waited until four in the afternoon to begin disembarking his troops—a strategic move, he later explained, designed to strengthen his position in case of an attack by the mob, for in the dark a commander "always knows where his troops are, and how many of them there are, while the mob can have no concerted action, and are not able to organize any in the dark." But daylight stretches well into evening in New Orleans in May, and probably anyone who wished to count the General's troops and ascertain their disposition would have had little trouble doing so. Reporters for most of the city newspapers seemed able to give their readers detailed reports the next morning, in any case.

After the two regiments and a battery of artillery had been disembarked and formed into a line of march in St. Joseph Street, the General, guided by his aide, Lieutenant Henry Weigel of Baltimore, placed himself at the head of his troops and set off on foot for the Customhouse, which was once again in Federal possession. The crowd pushed and shoved along the line of march, straining to catch a glimpse of Butler—who was himself straining to keep step with the music of "The Star Spangled Banner," the difficult rhythm of which was being rendered by the band of the Fourth Wisconsin.

5 Butler's Book, 373; see such New Orleans journals as the Bee, Delta, Picasune, Daily True Delta, and Commercial Bulletin for May 2, 3, 1862, for accounts of the landing.

6 Parton, Butler in New Orleans, 281; New Orleans Delta, May 2, 1862.
Though the vocabulary of the crowd was less than elegant—

"'Where is the d--d old rascal?' 'There he goes, God d--n him!'
'I see the d--d old villain!"—its temper was still unusually mild.

An occasional hiss was heard from a gallery here and there as the silent column marched on, but no incident occurred. Once arrived at the Customhouse the investing force experienced an embarrassing delay: Captain Bell of the Marines, whom Farragut had sent to take possession earlier, had locked the place securely, pocketed the key, and departed for the night. A door was soon forced, however, and the troops were able to enter the building. Though it had been under construction for almost fifteen years, the huge structure was still unfinished and, in fact, had no roof, so that the Spring rains seeped through the upper stories to the floors below and left the place with a dank and musty smell.  

When he had settled the troops for the night, Butler returned to Mrs. Butler aboard the Mississippi and awaited the morning before pushing his investment further. "The evening was warm and serene, and the city was as still as a country hamlet," an eye-witness recalled. General Phelps disobeyed his superior's orders on the subject and strolled alone about the city. He reported that he was treated with civility by all to whom he had spoken.  

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8 Parton, Butler in New Orleans, 281; Mrs. Butler to Mrs. Heard, New Orleans, May 2, 1862, in Private and Official Correspondence of General Benjamin F. Butler During the Period of the Civil War, 5 vols. (Norwood, Mass., 1917). (Hereinafter referred to as Butler Papers.)
Thus did New Orleans, second largest of the ports of North America and the commercial heart of the Confederacy, pass into the power of an enemy force.

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Though the commander of the occupying forces gave serious consideration to the possibility of trouble in taking over the city of New Orleans, it is doubtful that he realized fully the importance of the plum that had dropped so quickly and easily into his lap. But if he did not, he was not unique in his lack of appreciation; not even the Confederate leaders at Richmond had been able to evaluate correctly its importance to the Confederacy, and no help had been sent to the city while there was still time.

Second only to New York in size and importance as an American trading and financial center, New Orleans was indeed a rich prize to come by with so little effort. Though the more or less successful application of the Federal blockade had made serious inroads upon the city's prosperity, it was in normal times a flourishing center of business activity that had grown enormously in the decades just before the war. Strategically located on a bend of the Mississippi, the city—protected on three sides by its high, curved levee—was a major American port for both foreign and domestic trade.

To the wharves that lined the river side of the levee in the year 1860 came products of the upper Mississippi Valley and the settled regions of the West valued at more than $185 million; foreign imports
amounted to another $21 million; and exports of both foreign and domestic products amounted to over $108 million. Almost two thousand sea-going vessels and 3,566 river steamers, with an aggregate tonnage of 1,212,029, tied up at the noisy, bustling levee during this last year before the war. The streets along the river were lined with great warehouses and with the huge cotton presses that made the city the chief cotton export center of North America.9

New Orleans was a rich city. Its banks were among the soundest in the country. Its citizens, white and free Negro, owned real and personal property valued in 1861 at more than $125 million—and the figure had been climbing steadily for a decade.10

In 1860, the city had a population of almost 175,000, and even at the time of its capture was reputed to number 140,000 residents. It was a polyglot population—a haphazard mixture of the descendants of original French and Spanish settlers, later French arrivals, industrious Germans, brawling Irish, swarthy Sicilians, and a scattering of Scandinavians, English, Scottish, Portuguese, and a half dozen other nationalities. Few of the inhabitants were Louisiana-born, and almost a third of them were foreign born; of the latter, many had never bothered to establish their American citizenship. Nearly 150,000 of the total


population were white; 10,939 were free Negroes, many of them slave-owners themselves; and almost 15,000 were slaves. Travelers remarked on the cosmopolitan air of the population. French was heard on the streets almost as frequently as was English, and newspaper readers supported three French daily papers, two German ones, and anywhere from six to eight English dailies.\textsuperscript{11}

The population was divided fairly sharply on social and economic lines too, though the lines were peculiar to New Orleans. One line was drawn by Canal Street, regarded by some as one of the prettiest streets in the world; it separated the American First District, now strongly Irish in flavor, from the older French section of the city. Each side had its aristocracy and its abject poor. A significant middle class element could be found in the newer Third and Fourth districts, heavily settled by American tradespeople and sturdy German immigrants, and in the more remote suburban areas then known as Jefferson City, Lafayette, Greenville, and Carrollton. Some men of prominence, like the lawyer Christian Roselius, preferred the fresh country air of the latter areas; but the well-to-do of the Creole population still clung to their picturesque homes in the Old Quarter, with their walled courtyards and lacy iron galleries; and the rising

American merchants and professional men liked to erect large homes in the areas around Coliseum Place and Annunciation Square. Everywhere the visitor was struck by the semitropical climate, the squares "surrounded with lemon-trees, orange-groves, myrtle, and magnificent magnolias"; and private gardens adorned with "palmettoes and peach-trees" and "enormous cypresses, hung round with everlasting Spanish moss." Scattered throughout the older sections of the city were the dwellings of the free Negroes, many of whom were artisans and tradespeople, some of them extremely wealthy.12

Because it received a great influx of immigrants, New Orleans counted a large part of its population among the laboring and poorer classes. In the 1840's, a great wave of Irish immigration began—spurred partly by the demand for cheap, expendable labor on the railroads, levees, and drainage canals, and partly by economic conditions in Ireland. A few of these immigrants went into trade and prospered on reaching New Orleans; the larger part of them was unable to rise above the laboring class. Not long after the Irish came the Germans, many of them revolutionaries who fled the Fatherland when the attempt to establish democratic government there failed in 1848. Young, intelligent,

hard-working, and usually trained for a trade or profession, the Germans formed a substantial part of the city's middle class.  

In addition to this fairly permanent population, New Orleans, as a major port, had an immense floating population, estimated by some to be almost as large as the resident one. These were the sailors and river boatmen, the cattle drovers, the gamblers and thieves who moved always a step ahead of the law, and—during the theatrical season that ran from November to May—thespians and other performers in the many places of amusement.

The city had twenty-two Catholic parishes, four Episcopalian, four Presbyterian, eleven Lutheran, and several Baptist churches, three Jewish synagogues, and even a Swedenborgian temple. But it was not a religious community; indeed, few considered it unusual that on fair Sundays tent shows competed, on lots next to or across the street from the church, for the attention of churchgoers. Morally speaking, New Orleans had almost undisputed possession of the title of "Wickedest City in America"—a claim based on its record for murders, assaults, 

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13 Irish obituary notices for the war period almost invariably noted that the deceased "was a native of Ireland and a resident of this city for [15-20] years"; Robert T. Clark, Jr., "The New Orleans German Colony in the Civil War," in Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XX (October, 1937), 993; see also the manuscript census records of the Eighth Census, in which the professions of these two groups are listed: the Irish were laborers, draymen, stevedores, and so forth; the Germans were listed as bakers, shoemakers, clerks, and often had substantial holdings of real and personal property.

robberies, gambling, and—chiefly—the prevalence of prostitution. Even its sheriff, who was in a position to speak with authority, termed it a "perfect hell on earth." 15

Nor was its reputation any higher in the fields of health and sanitation. Cholera and yellow fever visited the city regularly and in some years in epidemic form, so that its population growth was achieved against tremendous odds. Cries for sanitary improvement were heard occasionally after the visitation of such plagues, but few taxpayers were willing to spend money to clean up the city, and this work was more or less left to Nature. Whenever a heavy rain fell on the city, flash floods poured through the streets and gutters, giving them the only washing they ever got and flushing out the filth-choked drainage canals. 16

The streets and canals of New Orleans were no dirtier, however, than was its local politics. In an age of widespread political corruption at the local level, New Orleans, with its heterogeneous population, presented colorful and sometimes original variations of a universally ugly picture. A few years before the war, corruption became so flagrant that a reform group took the law into its own hands,

15 Roger W. Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle in Louisiana (University, La., 1939), 63; Herbert Asbury, The French Quarter (New York, 1933), 351; Russell, Diary, 244.

16 Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle, 53-56; "Letters from George S. Denison to [Salmon P.] Chase, 1862-1865," in Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1902, II (Washington, 1903), 305. (Hereinafter cited as "Chase Correspondence.")
barricaded themselves in the Cabildo, and threatened a municipal civil war. Nationally, the city's politics was just as full of paradoxes as it was locally. In the election of 1860, moderates Breckenridge and Bell had received far more votes than had Douglas in Orleans Parish, but the same parish nevertheless sent a majority of "immediate secession" delegates to the state's secession convention in 1861. And when the call for troops came, few young Orleanians let the call to the Confederate colors go unheeded. Only in the fields of education and culture could New Orleans hold its own with any of the commercial metropolises of the North.

Though the state of Louisiana had been extremely slow in establishing its public schools, an extensive, if unusual, system was in existence in New Orleans at the outbreak of the war. Due to the bilingual composition of the population, the school system was also bilingual, and there was little unity in courses of study or textbooks. Despite this peculiarity, however, the New Orleans public school system was, for its time, unusually good. In addition to and in connection with the public school system, the city also supported a public library, which occupied one room in the

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17 Asbury, French Quarter, 297-314; Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 15-16; Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle, 168-69.

18 Henry Rightor (ed.) Standard History of New Orleans, Louisiana ... (Chicago, 1900), 236-38; New Orleans Delta, August 17, 1862; Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle, 72.
City Hall. And its residents had long been enthusiastic theater-goers. Three English-speaking theaters, a French Opera House, and a fourth theater, patronized by the French-speaking mulattoes, were winding up their seasons as Butler arrived.  

This, then, was the city that fell to Butler -- the fourth largest on the continent, and the only American city of its size ever to suffer such an occupation. The four years that lay ahead would be instructive ones, both for the residents of New Orleans and for the forces that occupied the city. But neither group thought at the time that the period of instruction would be so long or so thorough.

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Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education . . . 1864 (New Orleans, 1864), Appendix A; see current newspaper advertisements for offerings of the theaters.
Chapter II

IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY

On the morning of May 2, Commodore Farragut corrected the oversight of the previous day and sent Captain Albert Kautz to Butler with the keys to the Customhouse. "General, I fear you are going to have rather a lawless party to govern from what I have seen in the past three or four days," remarked Kautz, who had arrived in the city with Farragut.

"'No doubt of that,'" returned the military commander, "'but I think I understand these people and can govern them.'"¹ With that, he departed again for the center of the city, where his officers had overcome the reluctance of the proprietors' agent and set up departmental headquarters in the St. Charles Hotel. This huge granite structure, the pride of the American section of New Orleans, was providentially ready for occupancy by the military authorities, for its proprietors had, on the approach of Farragut’s fleet, dismissed their boarders, closed the hotel’s doors, and fled into Confederate territory. Situated as it was on St. Charles Street, just two squares off Canal Street and almost equally close to the new City Hall, the hotel offered a

¹ Kautz, "Incidents in the Occupation of New Orleans," in Battles and Leaders, II, 93.
splendid location for the seat of the new military government of the city.\(^2\)

Earlier in the morning, Butler had sent word to Mayor John T. Monroe to wait upon him in the hotel's parlor at 2 o'clock. At first the mayor had been reluctant to come, relying—for want of a better precedent—on the rule of etiquette that prescribes that a guest call first on his host. He was induced to change his view, however, by the young officer who delivered the order, and presented himself accordingly at the time appointed.\(^3\)

Butler received him in the ladies' parlor, a large room which looked out on a balcony and provided a good view of the corner of St. Charles and Common streets. Both thoroughfares were soon filled with a surging mass of citizens, who seemed to sense with remarkable accuracy the exact place of the meeting. So "clamorous and obstreperous" did they become that Butler threatened to clear the streets with artillery. Monroe, fearing bloodshed, begged for an opportunity to try and calm the crowd. However, his attempt proved ineffectual, Butler later reported, and "they jeered him to his face." The streets finally were cleared by the hell-for-leather arrival of the Sixth Maine battery of artillery, which came charging down St. Charles Street from its camp at Tivoli Circle and took up positions "in Battery" at the corner.

\(^2\) New Orleans Daily Delta, May 3, 1862.

\(^3\) Butler's Book, 374.
The effect of the charge was electric. "From that hour to the time I left New Orleans," Butler was to recall, "I never saw occasion to move man or horse because of a mob in the streets of the city."\textsuperscript{4}

He then proceeded to outline for Monroe the terms of his proclamation to the citizens of New Orleans—a document which his officers were even then setting into type in the commandeered pressroom of the \textit{True Delta}.

The city of New Orleans and its environs, with all its interior and exterior defenses, having surrendered to the combined naval and land forces of the United States, the major general commanding hereby proclaims the object and purposes of the government of the United States in thus taking possession of New Orleans . . . and the rules and regulations by which the laws of the United States will be enforced and maintained, for the plain guidance of all good citizens of the United States as well as others who may have heretofore been in rebellion against their authority.

Thrice before has the city of New Orleans been rescued from the hands of a foreign government, and still more calamitous domestic insurrection, by the money and arms of the United States. It has of late been under the military control of the rebel forces, and . . . it has been found necessary to preserve law and order and maintain quiet by an administration of martial law.

This regime would be continued, but all persons "in arms against the United States" were required to surrender themselves and their arms. Members of the European Brigade, which at the request of

\textsuperscript{4} Parton, \textit{Butler in New Orleans}, 286; Butler's Book, 377.

\textsuperscript{5} Proclamation of General Butler, New Orleans, May 1, 1862, in Butler Papers. The complete text of the proclamation appears here, as well as in Butler's Book, 379-82.
Monroe had been keeping order in the city, were exempted and invited to continue to act as a police force.

All flags except that of the United States were prohibited. All those who took the oath of allegiance to the United States would receive the protection of citizens; those who retained their rebel sympathies would be treated as enemies. Foreigners who had not sworn allegiance to the Confederacy could also look for protection, and former Confederates who laid down their arms and lived peacefully would not be disturbed "in their persons or property, except so far . . . as the exigencies of the public service may render necessary."

All keepers of public property were obliged to render an inventory of their holdings to headquarters at once. The levy and collection of taxes, except those "imposed by the laws of the United States," and "those for keeping in repair and lighting the streets, and for sanitary purposes," were to be suppressed. The latter were to be collected "in the usual manner."

Keepers of "public houses, coffee houses, and drinking saloons" were ordered to report their names and numbers to the provost marshal and be licensed by him. They would be held responsible for "all disorders and disturbances of the peace arising in their respective places." The killing of American soldiers "by any disorderly person or mob" would be looked upon as assassination and murder rather than war, and would be "so regarded and punished." All disorders interfering with the "forces or laws of the United States" would be tried by the court-martial; all civil causes between party and party would be referred to the "ordinary tribunals."
The circulation of Confederate bonds was expressly forbidden, but, since a large portion of the currency consisted of Confederate bank notes, their circulation would be permitted "so long as any one will be inconsiderate enough to receive them. . . ." The municipal authority, so far as the police of the city and environs was concerned, was to continue until suspended.

No publications "unfavorable to the United States" would be allowed, and all articles and editorials on war news were first to be submitted for examination to an officer "detailed for that purpose from these headquarters." Telegraph lines also would be supervised.

"All assemblages of persons in the streets, either by day or night" were held to promote disaster and were therefore forbidden. The city fire companies would, however, be allowed to retain their organizations and were ordered to report themselves to the provost-marshal.

The city's inhabitants were "enjoined to pursue their usual avocations." All shops and places of business were to be "kept open in the accustomed manner, and services to be had in the churches and religious houses as in times of profound peace."

"The armies of the United States came here not to destroy but to make good, to restore order out of chaos and the government of laws in place of the passions of men," the proclamation concluded. Martial law would be imposed as long as it was deemed necessary, and, though it would be administered "mildly, and after the usages of the past, it must not be supposed that it will not be rigorously and firmly administered as the occasion calls for it."
The afternoon was almost over when Butler concluded his meeting with Mayor Monroe, and upon the latter's departure, the general returned to the Mississippi, where Mrs. Butler and her maid waited for him.

"'Get ready to go on shore,'" he told them, and signalled to a hack to pick up the party on the levee and drive them back to the St. Charles. 6

"And what do you thing of my being among the first to enter New Orleans!" Sara Hildreth Butler gaily wrote her sister in Massachusetts that evening. "We had no guard but an armed soldier on the box and another behind the carriage. A regiment was drawn up around the hotel and four howitzers on the corners. If we were to encounter a mob, it was decided to give them an opportunity." But though a crowd gathered, it seemed attracted more by the "fiery" rendition of "all the national airs from Yankee Doodle to the Star Spangled Banner," by a band stationed on the hotel portico, than by the arrival of the Butlers. 7

"There was a curious tea-party that evening in the vast dining-room of the St. Charles," recalled one of the participants. "At one end of one of the tables sat the little company, lost in the magnitude of the room. . . . The fare was neither sumptuous nor abundant, and the solitary waiter was not at his ease. . . . The general entertained the company by reading extracts from anonymous letters which he had received

6 Parton, Butler in New Orleans, 289.
7 Mrs. Butler to Mrs. Harriet Heard, New Orleans, May 2, 1862, in Butler Papers.
in the course of the day." The meal closed with a further performance of national airs by the band on the portico. Outside, a crowd, "standing silent and sullen," listened too.  

* * * * * *

Benjamin Franklin Butler was the first of three Federal major generals who were to serve as commander of the military Department of the Gulf, with headquarters at New Orleans. Of the three, he was the only one whose administration is very clearly remembered in New Orleans today, but the reason for this may lie in his own expressed desire to be remembered. Those who followed him may have had success or fortune as their guiding stars, but Butler wanted to be remembered. When he left New Orleans in December, 1862, he predicted that his name would be "indissolubly connected" with the history of the city, and though the connection was made in an atmosphere of hatred and bitterness, his prophecy has proved indisputably correct.  

Butler had been a successful Massachusetts lawyer and politician before he used political influence to have himself converted from commander-in-chief of the state militia to major general of United States volunteers in 1861. The militia had never fired a shot in anger under his command, but Butler was well known in the state for other types of battles. Though he was very well educated for his time and 

8 Parton, Butler in New Orleans, 289-90.

9 Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 69; New Orleans Picayune, December 25, 1862.
obtained his knowledge of the working conditions of labor from ob-
ervation rather than experience, Butler had come from an impoverished
family and early identified himself with the masses in the fight against
wealth and privilege. As a young lawyer, his first clients had been
mill girls who worked in the great textile factories of Lowell, Massa-
chusetts. He took their cases, when they felt they had been wronged
by the mill-owners, though no other lawyer would consider them for
the two- and three-dollar fees they yielded.10

Butler eventually did so well that he acquired a capital in-
terest in some of these mills himself, but he never lost his affinity
for the working classes, and he carried it with him to New Orleans.
To him, the subjugation of New Orleans was as much a part of the class
struggle as it was a phase of the great political upheaval through
which the nation was passing.11

A short, ugly man to whom a childhood eye injury had given a
permanent leer, Butler was as unprepossessing a figure physically as
the Federal government could have found to represent it in the new
field of administering occupied territory. Yet, in spite of this handi-
cap, he could at times exert an irresistible social charm, and his

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See, for example, his proclamation to the workingmen of New
Orleans in General Order No. 25, New Orleans, May 9, 1862, in Butler
Papers.
family and friends were devoted to him.

There was, however, a contrary streak in his character, which made him at one time a fond father and husband and a calloused judge who could order the mother of eight children imprisoned on a treeless, sandy island. He saw his duty as military commander in stern blacks and whites, but he either overlooked or frankly countenanced the most overt dishonesty on the part of his own brother. He was a versatile and talented showman with a sure dramatic touch, which he was never averse to using in his own interests; and he apparently believed sincerely that he had established a just and progressive administration in New Orleans. 13

His paradoxical make-up eventually led him into so many scrapes that the embarrassed Federal government was forced to send a representative to investigate the flood of complaints that poured in from New Orleans. The investigator was Reverdy Johnson of Maryland, with whom Butler had already tangled during an earlier "occupation" of Baltimore.

12 See photographic frontispiece in Holzman, Stormy Ben Butler; Thomas Ewing Dahney, "The Butler Regime in Louisiana," in Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XXVII (April, 1944), 495; see also George Denison to Salmon P. Chase, New Orleans, December 17, 1862, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 339-40.

The general's recall apparently was already decided upon before
Johnson's final report was submitted—Butler later claimed that he
had learned it two weeks before his successor arrived from a captured
Rebel—but the report did not improve his case.14

Butler attributed his recall to the intermeddling of the
foreign powers he had offended in setting up his occupation and re-
garded himself as a sacrifice on the altar of international politics.15
In his farewell address to the citizens of New Orleans, he took pains
to remind these foreign powers of a few of their own sins in the field
of military occupation; "You might have been smoked to death in
caverns, as were the Covenanters of Scotland," he told Orleanians,
"or roasted, like the inhabitants of Algiers during the French campaign;
your wives and daughters might have been given over to the ravisher,
as were the unfortunate dames of Spain in the Peninsular war. . . ."

14 William Seward to Edwin M. Stanton, Washington, June 3, 1862,
in Butler Papers; Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 67; Diary of Henry
Clay Warmoth, entry for August 17, 1864, in Henry C. Warmoth Papers,
Southern Historical Collection, Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Henry W.
Halleck to N.P. Banks, Washington, November 9, 1862, in War of the
Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and
Confederate Armies, 130 vols. (Washington, 1890-1901), Series I,
Volume XV, 590-91 (hereinafter referred to as Official Records);
according to Caskey, the Johnson report was whitewashed by the
Committee on the Conduct of the War and Butler exonerated (Secession
and Restoration, 68). Fresh charges were made by the Special
Commission sent to New Orleans in 1865, but its report was suppressed.

15 Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 68; Harold Sinclair,
The Port of New Orleans (New York, 1942), 255-56; Toxie L. Bush, "The
Federal Occupation of New Orleans" (M.A. Thesis, Louisiana State
University, 1954), 120; for Butler's personal estimate of his achieve-
ments, see his farewell to his troops, General Orders No. 106, New
Having thus reminded the British and French that they lived in glass houses, he held a farewell levee for officers and citizens, had his photograph made with his staff "in group," and left for the North.  

Butler's successor was another Massachusetts lawyer-politician-turned-major general—Nathaniel Prentiss Banks, who, because of his youthful apprenticeship in the textile mills of Waltham, rejoiced in the soubriquet of "The Bobbin Boy." Banks was a self-educated man, fired by a deep-rooted and consuming desire to succeed and excel. He once attributed the many achievements of his life (he served one term as governor of Massachusetts and after the war was for many years a United States Congressman) to his ability to swim four rods under water when no one else in Waltham could. He had spent much time in his youth as a temperance lecturer; was known as a champion of social reform and educational progress; and, in general, enjoyed such a reputation for rectitude that he was received "like manna" in New Orleans.  

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The nearly two years of his administration did not work the results of the heavenly dew upon the city, however, and part of the reason undoubtedly lies in the character of Banks himself. He was a humorless man, handsome, meticulous in his dress, and fond of glittering display. He soon surrounded himself with a small army of subordinates, who kept out of his office all except those whom the commanding general himself wished to see. He made his family an important part of the social life of the city; his wife became the acknowledged queen of New Orleans Union society, and his little daughters the petted royal princesses.18

To the life of the ordinary citizens of New Orleans, Banks devoted the same searching scrutiny that he gave to his wife's toilette—and seemed chagrined when they did not respond to his suggestions with her good grace. No phase of civilian life escaped his notice, and there was a "Banks commission" to investigate everything from the city's cemeteries to the financial conditions of the Presbyterian and Baptist churches.19

In addition, Banks seems to have seen himself from the day of

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18 Dabney, "Butler Regime," loc. cit., 525; see letters of persons who had called on him in vain in Letters Received (Civil), 1863-64, Record Group 98, Records of the War Department, Department of the Gulf, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (Unless otherwise stated, all material from the National Archives may be found in Record Group 98, Records of the War Department, Department of the Gulf.) For evidence of the social activity of Mrs. Banks and her children, see New Orleans Era, February, 1863 to September, 1864, passim.

19 Harrington, Fighting Politician, 6; see Report of the Board of Officers, . . . New Orleans, August 5, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, National Archives, and New Orleans Daily True Delta, September 4, 1864.
his arrival as the political redeemer of Louisiana. From the begin-
ing he took a deep, active, and not always legal, interest in state politics, which of necessity were centered in New Orleans. There is evidence too that he found little difficulty in combining his political plans with his military operations. One observer even charged him with aiming both his military and his political programs at a Presidential nomination. 20

Though he invested the office of Federal military commander with more power and prestige than it had known under his predecessor, Banks was not popular in New Orleans, even among Union men. Shortly after his arrival Treasury agent George Denison characterized him as lacking in decision; and a year and a half later, Denison wrote Secretary of the Treasury Chase that Banks was "very unpopular, especially with the army who attribute to him alone the miserable failure on Red River." 21

20 Banks defended his actions in a letter to Senator James Lane of Kansas, which was published in pamphlet form in New York in 1865. A copy, titled "The Reconstruction of the States," is in the Howard-Tilton Library, Tulane University, New Orleans. For charges of improper meddling, see Report of the Special Commission . . . . , Vol. 737, Record Group 94, Records of the War Department, Adjutant General's Office, National Archives, and Havana (Cuba) Diario de la Marina, quoted in New Orleans Times, April 13, 1864.

21 Denison to Chase, January 8, 1863, and June 17, 1864, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 348, 438.
By the end of the summer of 1864, Banks's military failures in western Louisiana and the scandalous behavior of his political puppets apparently induced the Administration to call him to Washington for an accounting. Escorting Governor Michael Hahn and Superintendent of Negro Education Rush B. Plumley, he boarded the S.S. Suwo Nada and sailed for the North on September 24. 22

In his place came Major General Stephen A. Hurlbut, a native of South Carolina who had moved as a young man to Illinois. Like his predecessors, Hurlbut came to the military life from politics, and, while his military career included no such incidents as Butler's "victory" at Big Bethel or Banks's Red River fiasco, neither did it shed any particular brilliance. He had served in northern Missouri and in the Shiloh-Corinth campaign; during the siege of Vicksburg, he had protected Memphis as a supply base and, presumably, was supposed to have demonstrated a talent for administration in that city. 23

In his later life Hurlbut was several times charged with corruption and drunkenness, and indeed before he left New Orleans his court-martial was recommended on very similar charges. He was in command of the Department of the Gulf from September, 1864, until May, 1865, but it was a period undistinguished from the administrative point of view with a single exception: he drew criticism from all sides when

22 I b i d , 438-39; New Orleans Era, Tribune, September 24, 27, 1864.

on January 1, 1865, he ordered the closing on Sundays of all theaters and other places of amusement.

These were the men, then—Butler, Banks, and Hurlbut—who created and implemented the policies for the military occupation of New Orleans. They were not, of course, alone.

Butler arrived with a force of fifteen thousand men, and though at first these were much in evidence in the city—in the Customhouse, in Lafayette Square and the City Hall, in the St. Charles, and on Tivoli Circle—most of them were soon moved out to the defenses surrounding the city. "From the first," recalled Butler, "I felt perfectly safe in New Orleans, and I immediately arranged to hold the city proper with a very small force..." As military operations got under way in the LaFourche region, however, more and more troops arrived in the city. Most of them passed through to the field, but occasionally large numbers remained long enough to attract the notice of the citizens. Orleanians deplored their bivouacking in the public squares, particularly after citizen Hugh Goodwin was killed by a stray shot fired by troops quartered in Lafayette Square early in 1863.

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Contact between the citizens of New Orleans and the troops of course occurred far more frequently than between them and the command- ing general, and the impression left by the occupation in the popular mind must be more directly attributed to the actions of subordinate officers and common soldiers than to the commanders. More civilians had contact, for example, with office of the Provost-Marshal General, who issued passes, performed most police functions, and acted vicel the commanding general when the latter was in the field, than they had with the commander himself. And the Assistant Chief Quartermaster of the Department, who directed property confiscations and seizures, probably was personally hated by more citizens than Butler ever was during the war period. If, however, Butler is more notorious in New Orleans today than Captain N.S. Constable, it must be attributed to the willingness of all three commanders to let their subordinates interpret policies subjectively and to accept the responsibility for and uphold these interpretations, whatever they may have been.
Chapter III
LILIES OF THE FIELD AND BIRDS OF THE AIR

On the day that Butler arrived in New Orleans, he talked with Thomas J. Durant, a prominent Unionist and former attorney general of Louisiana. "'General,'" Durant told him, "'you will understand to what we have been reduced when I tell you that the day before you landed, all that my children had to eat was two ginger cakes got from a confectioner."1 Durant was a man of some means, but he shared with most other Orleanians in what was to be the most immediate and pressing problem to face the Federal commander.

The blockade of the mouth of the Mississippi had cut off most of the coastal and ocean-going trade before the arrival of Farragut and Butler at New Orleans. The fall of the city meant that its connections with the rural portions of the state, and possible provision sources there, were also cut. Fearing looting and runs on their merchandise, storekeepers had closed their doors as the fleet came up the river. On the day before Butler's arrival, almost no stores were open, the principal restaurants and hotels had closed, and it was reported to be "impossible, under the present dearth and scarcity of breadstuffs and provisions, to obtain accommodations and meals in the city."

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1 Butler's Book, 387

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At such bakeries as remained open, members of the European Brigade stood guard to prevent rioting, and admission was on a "first come, first served" basis as the guards admitted only one buyer at a time.²

Faced with the possibility of food riots, Butler moved quickly to avert the mass starvation of New Orleans' population of 140,000 persons. Learning that a stock of flour purchased by the city was being held in Mobile because Federal warships prevented its being brought up the Mississippi, he granted a safe conduct to a ship to go to Mobile for the flour. He also directed the officials of the Opelousas Railroad to "run cars over the road for the purpose of bringing to the city . . . provisions, marketing, and supplies of food which may be offered, in order to supply the wants of the city." Livestock and all other supplies except cotton and sugar (which would be purchased "at fair market value by the United States in specie") were not to be brought in, however. He also wrote the Army's Commissary General and urged haste in filling his requisition for stores as "it may become necessary to feed the people of this city out of subsistence stores. . . ."³

² New Orleans Daily True Delta, April 29, 1862; New Orleans Crescent, May 1, 1862; Zoe Campbell Diary, entry for April 30, 1862.
³ General Orders No. 19, New Orleans, May 3, 1862, in Butler Papers. He afterwards reported bitterly that the ship had been used by the French consul to carry dispatches to the Confederacy. See Butler's Book, 391, and manuscript notes of George Raffalovich on Charles Camille Heidsieck, New Orleans, Louisiana. General Orders No. 20, New Orleans, May 3, 1862, in Butler Papers; Butler to S.P. Taylor, New Orleans, May 7, 1862, ibid.
The orders did not come a moment too soon. "Already the distress is extreme," reported L'Abbeille the next day, "and we really don't know how the poor families are living. The small amounts of flour and meat which remain among us are being sold at such raised prices that the poor have been reduced to living exclusively on corn and molasses."

One young girl, whose family still had some financial means, reported at the same time, "Beef is 40 cts. a pound. Everything in proportion. No bread at all. There is no flour." A week or so later, she reported that she and her family had had a meat dinner, but of "meat, which in former times we would consign to the Mississippi..."

As Butler worked at these means for relieving the starving city, some Orleanians suggested others. Price-fixing by the city authorities was asked by one citizen—a course that was to be followed by the Federal authorities later in the month. With the arrival of stores from New York at the end of May, Federal-operated commissary stores, in which basic provisions were sold at fixed prices, also were opened. Though the patronage of these stores was more or less limited to those whose loyalty to the Confederacy had been diminished proportionately with the food supply, they did serve to reduce prices eventually in the city markets. Meats, including scarce and popular pork, ham, and

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4 L'Abbeille de la Nouvelle Orleans, May 5, 1862 (this was the French half of the bilingual New Orleans Bee and will be cited hereinafter as L'Abbeille to indicate material taken from the French section); "Diary of Clara Solomon," entries for May 4, 13, 1862.
bacon, were sold in these stores for ten cents a pound, and flour for seven and one half cents a pound.\textsuperscript{5}

Other foods—fresh vegetables and eggs (which were "not very plentiful at one dollar per dozen")—remained high. In fact, complained the True Delta, "'cream cheese' is the only thing being sold at former prices."\textsuperscript{6}

A week after Butler's arrival, a majority of the city's restaurants had reopened, but the fate of the boarder differed little from that of the cook. The Crescent reported that it would cost "about $10 for a hungry man to obtain a fair dinner" in one of the restaurants, and at that the fare was not up to Creole standards. "True, a little gumbo filet [sic] can be provided now and then," and a few crabs and some rice were available; but it was all sold at "three times the cost of it in Charleston or Savannah."\textsuperscript{7}

Other discomforts plagued the citizens. The presence of the fleet had prevented the arrival of the ice boats. As the thermometer


\textsuperscript{6} New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 8, 1862.

\textsuperscript{7} New Orleans Crescent, May 9, 1862; New Orleans Bee, June 14, 1862.
rose to 90° in early May, ice—rather than cotton—became king in New Orleans. In an effort to be helpful, the Bee provided its readers with a recipe for a "refreshing summer drink," which it described as "better than the best 'snowdrop julep'..." Julep connoisseurs probably were pretty desperate, however, before they found the following recipe a suitable substitute:

Take 3 lbs of white sugar, 3 oz. tartaric acid, and 1 quart cold water, put them in a brass or copper kettle, and when warm add the white of three eggs; beat up with three teaspoonsful of flour; stir till it boils three minutes; when cold, add one gill of essence and bottle up.

Directions for Use—Two dessert spoonsful of the nectar to each glass; then fill them two thirds full of ice water, if it can be had, and add a little carbonate of soda.

Young Clara Solomon had what she thought was a better idea. "Beer making," she noted, "is the fashion, & our attempts have proved successful. In the absence of ice it is an excellent substitute for a drink." 9

By the middle of May, the price of bread, based on the rate per barrel of flour, was fixed and published by the city authorities—a practice that was to continue throughout the war period. During the week of May 15, bread was sold at twenty-eight ounces for twenty cents, fourteen ounces for ten cents, and seven ounces for five cents. By September, the supply of flour had increased to the point where the

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8 New Orleans Crescent, May 12, 1862; New Orleans Bee, June 15, 1862. The ice boats finally arrived early in June. See New Orleans Picayune, June 8, 1862.

9 "Diary of Clara Solomon," entry for May 29, 1862.
price had been reduced to twenty cents for sixty-two ounces, but New Orleans was to know a summer of extreme want before this period of relative plenty. 10

A few other items of food also became more plentiful as more vessels were permitted to ascend the river from the Gulf. From Cuba came "luscious bananas and fragrant pineapples . . . [in] plenty," but prices discouraged buying—pineapples sold at $1.75 each; bananas at a quarter apiece. 11

A thousand head of cattle arrived from New Iberia, designated for the Committee of Subsistence, on May 16; and on May 25, the steamers Alice Vivian and Empire Parish arrived from Mobile and Shreveport with 1800 barrels of flour and other provisions. But these were comparable to the five loaves and two fishes, and the Commercial Bulletin commented late in May that "unless something is done speedily to supply the markets with meat, their condition will relapse into the state prevailing at the beginning of the month. Already the butchers are asking 40 cents per pound for meat which ordinarily sells at six or eight. . . ."12

10 New Orleans Bee, May 15, 1862; New Orleans Daily True Delta, September 5, 1862.

11 New Orleans Delta, May 16, 1862.

Nor was scarcity of provisions the only evil hungry Orleanians had to face. The city's desperately confused currency situation (see Chapter IX) only added to the hardships, as some grocers and merchants refused to accept many of the various types of currency offered. Even the Federal-operated commissary stores would accept only city bank notes, gold, silver, or Treasury notes in exchange for provisions. Since most citizens, and particularly those of the poorer classes, held only Confederate money or trolley tickets, the currency discrimination was especially unjust. In addition, Orleans bakers were not above cheating their suffering fellow-citizens in selling short-weight bread. So flagrant did this practice become that Military Governor George F. Shepley called a meeting of the city's bakers on May 27 and warned them that short-weight bread would not be tolerated. Those guilty of the practice, he stated, would in the future have their bakeries seized and their flour made into bread by Army bakers for free distribution to the poor.\textsuperscript{13}

As the summer wore on, provision dealers advertised (without mentioning prices) a great variety of food and drink—corn, pork sides and shoulders, hams, rye flour, rice, corn meal, canned meats, fruits and vegetables, tea, spices, mustard, pickles, raisins, nutmegs, almonds, 

\textsuperscript{13} New Orleans Bee, May 7, 1862; General Orders No. 35, New Orleans, May 28, 1862, in Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XV, 447; New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 28, 30, 1862. Violations did not cease with the warning, however, and arrests of bakers were frequent. See ibid., July 24, 1862.
prunes, schnapps, cognac, and Louisiana rum. But neither the pro-Federal True Delta nor the Creole Bee found any cause for rejoicing in their appearance. After a stroll through the Poydras Market in the American Second District, the editor of the former reported that he found meat in plentiful enough supply to meet the demand, but he considered the prices asked (sixty cents for steaks that should have cost twenty) appalling. Vegetables were plentiful and in good variety, but they too commanded exhorbitant prices. His contemporary on the Bee agreed that though a more stable currency was becoming available no appreciable lowering of prices had occurred. His readers were "strongly admonished of the expediency of living frugally and of practising in ... every day disbursements a system of economy which the citizens of New Orleans have been hitherto little addicted."14

The apparent return of plenty during June seemed a cruel deception by the first of July, however, when—in protest against the twenty-eight dollar per barrel price of flour, the bakers refused to bake bread. Meat also became scarce again, and New Orleans found itself "in the grip of famine." To add to the bitterness of the citizens, cargo vessels had arrived from New York with nails, linen, and champagne—but no flour. To readers driven by the disappearance of wheat bread to the use of corn meal and rice flour, the Picayune offered a crumb of comfort: "By proper attention and art on the part---

14 New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 1, 3, 1862; New Orleans Bee, June 3, 1862.
of housekeepers, meal can be cooked up into many very appetizing and nutritious forms. [Rice] flour . . . is more difficult to make into bread than meal. [But] . . . rice boiled makes a better cake than the flour." And for the poor, there was always the thought that in the hot weather one didn't feel much like eating anyway.  

Apparently conditions improved little throughout the summer, for in late August, Treasury agent George S. Denison wrote his superior, Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase, that "provisions are high, and there is much suffering in the City. . . . The condition of the people is now scarcely better than under rebel rule—as to food I mean." The arrival of more flour did succeed, however, in reducing the price of bread by the middle of September to the lowest point it was to reach during the war period.  

More exciting and plentiful fare was available, however, for those of sufficient means and correct politics. Blineau's, the celebrated confectionery and restaurant that stood for many years at the corner of Canal and Bourbon streets, advertised in October that they would "keep in their restaurant, like every winter, the celebrated MENTER'S CHOCOLATE; the best Coffee and Tea; Oysters in the Shell or

15 L'Abeille, July 1, 1862; New Orleans Picayune, July 2, 19, 1862; New Orleans Commercial Bulletin, July 3, 1862.

16 George S. Denison to Salmon P. Chase, New Orleans, August 26, 1862, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 311; New Orleans Daily True Delta, September 13, 1862, and see published bread tariffs for entire period, 1862-65.
Prepared; cold meats, such as Daubes, Hams, Tongues, Boned Turkey, Chicken Salad, &c. &c. " And when the officers of the Thirtieth Massachusetts Regiment sat down to their Thanksgiving Dinner on November 27, the menu ran through six courses (from green turtle soup, three kinds of fish, five entrees, roasted pig, beef, ducks, and turkey, to fifteen varieties of dessert) all of which were washed down with plenty of champagne and accompanied by many speeches and toasts. 17

In December, Lopez' Chartres Street confectionery suggested an assortment of bonbons, cream chocolates, Richelieu coquettes, and glazed chestnuts for Christmas giving. But it is doubtful that many Orleanians were able to follow up this tip. 18

The military situation, which after all was directly responsible for the shortage of food in New Orleans, improved during 1863, when both Vicksburg and Port Hudson fell to Union forces and river boats were again able to travel freely up and down the Mississippi. Wholesale food prices fell in proportion. Bread which sold at retail for approximately eight cents a pound in November, 1862, remained steady at a low seven cents per pound, wholesale, in the middle of May, 1863. Chocolate was available wholesale at thirty-five cents a pound, and

17 New Orleans Picayune, October 10, 1862; New Orleans Delta, November 28, 1862.
18 New Orleans Bee, December 19, 1862.
Brazilian coffee (to replace the mixture of rye, chicory, and toasted bread used as a substitute by the Marianite Sisters and others) was sold for thirty to thirty-five cents a pound. Other items included eggs (twenty-nine to thirty cents a dozen); lemons and oranges ($2.25 per box); molasses (thirty-seven cents a gallon); and rice (five to eight cents a pound). Alcoholic beverages were available by this time too at prices ranging from $1.00 per gallon for Louisiana rum to $18.00 for the finest imported brandies. Ice was more common and, though a temporary shortage drove the price up to ten cents a pound in September, 1863, it ordinarily retailed for about half that amount.19

The situation for the average citizen was still far from normal, however, and even the pro-Union Times euphemistically pointed out in October that Orleanians had not "yet found out how to subsist without food," in urging farmers of the Mississippi Valley to ship provisions into New Orleans. Of several basic items—flour, feed, pork, and bacon—it reported that the stock was either exhausted or in too short supply to satisfy the city's needs.20

19 New Orleans Daily True Delta, February 8, May 15, 1863; Sister M. Loyala (comp.), Marianite Centennial in Louisiana, (New Orleans, 1948); New Orleans Picayune, September 16, 1863. Even five cents a pound was considered too high by some Orleanians, who formed a private combination early in 1864 to import ice for the summer at a net cost of $6.00 per ton. See New Orleans Picayune, February 2, 1864.

20 New Orleans Times, October 31, 1863.
In addition, milk dealers had joined bakers in cheating their customers, and the *Bee* complained that though the police prevented the sale of spoiled meats, fish, and vegetables, the milk vendors watered their product (with canal and ditch water at that) without fear of punishment. "It is surely time," was its acid comment, "to settle the question whether the vendors of the fluid under consideration ought to be licensed as milk-men or water-carriers."21

The following year, 1864, was a year of improved trade conditions, but, though starvation was no longer imminent for the great majority of the population, food does not seem to have been much more plentiful for most families. A Wisconsin soldier, strolling through the picturesque French Market one Sunday morning in March, found that one could get the best cup of coffee in the city there for five cents, it was true; but he noted that the same beverage sold for ten and fifteen cents a cup in most of the city's restaurants. And in April, the *Picayune* charged that the ubiquitous speculators were running up the prices of sugar, coffee, and butter, as well as a "multitude of other things..." These latter undoubtedly included meats, for the *True Delta*, after noting that speculators had bought up all the meat which arrived at the Stock Landing Market early in May, urged butchers to take after them with their knives and to "skin the skinners. Beef is too expensive at its rates now."

21

New Orleans *Bee*, September 17, 1863.
Readers were advised to meet the speculator threat by practicing self-denial and buying government bonds.22

That the burden of the high cost of living sometimes fell on soldier and civilian alike was evidenced in one Union soldier's record of his experiences in New Orleans in the summer of 1864. A "frugal dinner" at the St. Charles cost two dollars he reported; "two small slices of dry toast, fifteen cents; the same for a cup of tea or coffee; ten cents for ice and butter; sixty cents for one small mutton chop. The simplest fare cost six dollars a day." He suggested that the frequently heard charges of corruption among Federal officers undoubtedly stemmed from their inability to live on their salaries.23

As the war in western Louisiana again moved down into the sugar-growing Teche country, the price of sugar began to sky-rocke...
At the end of June, the bakers of New Orleans felt that the bread tariff was so far out of line with their productions costs that they announced again that they would refuse to make bread after July 1, preferring to go into other more profitable lines of work. Their protest apparently was successful for by August the fixed price of bread had risen to a little less than ten cents a pound.  

The food shortage continued into the Fall of 1864—a period especially prosperous for the Northern businessmen who had flocked to New Orleans to seek their fortunes. The sale of movables was brisk, but things were very dull around the city's markets. "Never did we know," lamented the Picayune, "the markets of this city so scant of vegetables, fruit, fish and game as they have been for the past three months. At this season of the year fruit and vegetables should be abundant." And a New Orleans bachelor wrote his sister living in the North: "If a change don't take place so I do not know what we will all do. I'm used to starving so it don't trouble me much, but I'm determined to have all the good things I can get now to prepare for another siege as I have before." 

By the end of the year, wholesale food prices had showed a substantial advance over those of the preceding December. Bread now

25 L'Abelle, June 29, 1864.

sold for eight to nine cents a pound; chocolate for fifty-three to fifty-four cents a pound; coffee, forty-five to sixty cents a pound; eggs, thirty-five to forty cents a dozen; lemons, two and a half to eight and a half cents each; molasses, $1.00 to $1.32 a gallon; rice, twelve and a half to fourteen cents a pound; and alcoholic beverages now ranged in price from $1.80 per gallon for Louisiana rum to $25.00 per gallon for fine imported brandy. 27

In addition to the high prices for food and drink, 1864 was gastronomically notable for another reason. In June, Captain Stephen Hoyt, the Federal-appointed mayor, decreed that it would be unlawful to sell oysters in the city from June 1 to September 1. Apparently the traditional prohibition against eating the bivalves in months with no "R" in their name meant little to the cosmopolitan tastes of Orleanians, and Hoyt's decree meant little more. It was revoked on August 17. 28

As the war drew to a close, food prices in New Orleans continued to advance. Early in 1865, the wholesale price of bread had advanced to nine and one half cents a pound; coffee and chocolate remained steady at fifty-four and sixty cents a pound respectively; eggs reached eighty cents to one dollar a dozen (though they had fallen sharply in price by the end of January); beef sold for $24.00 to $44.00 a barrel; and no cheap cuts were available; the same was true of pork; fine butter

27 New Orleans Daily True Delta, December 4, 1864.

28 Ibid., June 12, August 18, 1864.
sold for fifty-six cents a pound; and potatoes for $3.00 to $6.50 a barrel. The price of most liquors remained steady, but that of champagne had advanced 25 per cent over what it had been at the beginning of 1864. 29

Shortly before the end of the war, in March, 1865, bread sold at retail for as little as eight cents a pound, but other commodities did not reflect this decline. "Prices are very high for everything eatable & drinkable too for that matter, a great deal higher than they were a year ago," a Union soldier wrote home, adding philosophically, "as we have no money to buy with, high prices don't effect us much." 30

Prices of food are, of course, meaningless unless viewed in the light of the purchasing power of the consumers. Modern readers, for example, would not find fifty-six cents a pound an exhorbitant price for fresh butter. When it is realized, however, that these were the prices paid by heads of families whose income rarely amounted to as much as $100.00 per month, and that many either had no steady employment at all or received less than $50.00 per month, the enormity of living costs in the period becomes apparent. It is true that the Federal authorities controlled the price of bread and that some salaries

29 Ibid., January 7, 1865.

advanced more quickly than these controlled prices. But one need not
be a nutritionist to realize that, though it is the staff of life,
bread alone provides a diet lacking both in interest and nutritive value.
Certainly the shortage of food in New Orleans in the war years must
have contributed its share to the mortality rate for the years after
the war was over.31

* * * * *

Of the three necessities of life—food, clothing, and shelter--
the problem of clothing never became as urgent in Civil War New Orleans
as did those of food and shelter. Shortages there certainly were, but
the question of clothing the population never reached the catastrophic
proportions that feeding it did.

Ready-made items at that period were limited, of course, to the
cheaper lines of men's clothing, to shoes, and to such feminine items
as crinolines, hoopskirts, and shawls. Most of the clothing for women
was made either in their homes by the wearers themselves, or in the
workrooms of dressmakers, of which New Orleans had its fair share--
many of them women of mixed blood who had been trained to do exquisite
hand work in the convents of France.

31 For salaries, see Cash Books in Records of the Office of
the Provost Marshal General, Vol. 317, National Archives, and J. Bourga
to "Mr. Tucker," New Orleans, August 28, 1863, in Letters Received
(Civil), 1863, Box 1, ibid. Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle, 190
and note, seems to feel that incomes matched prices, but the materials
I examined failed to bear this out.
Dry goods stores, like most others, either closed their doors or were short of merchandise when the city fell to the Federals. One fashion-conscious New Orleans girl reported in May, 1862, that her mother had made several unsuccessful trips to Dryades Street, where many of the dry goods stores were located, in search of trimming for the bodices she was making for herself and her sister. A subsequent foray in the same neighborhood elicited only the information that "$10 linen is now $50, 12½ cts. muslin, $1.00! & every thing in proportion."\(^{32}\)

There is evidence, however, that the dry goods business righted itself much more quickly than did other forms of trade. By June, the same young lady was able to report that hoops had "become much reduced in price, as there has been an influx from Yankee Land," and a Canal Street merchant announced a sale of summer clothing, claiming to offer reductions of 50 per cent or more on such items as India silk and drap d'ete coats. S.N. Moody, a Canal Street haberdasher who was the Madman Muntz of his day, also announced a sale of menswear early in July at reductions he termed "enormous," "great," "terrible," and "cruel."

The fact that he advertised his terms as "Cash on delivery" would indicate, however, that the credit of his customers was not as good as could be desired.\(^{33}\)

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\(^{32}\) "Diary of Clara Solomon," entries for May 15, 20, 1862.

\(^{33}\) Ibid., entry for June 22, 1862; New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 28; July 1, 1862.
Always close to France in thought, the population of New Orleans—at least its feminine part—followed closely the fashion news from the Court at Versailles. They were aided in this by the Picayune, which carried regular reports from Paris, and there is evidence that, despite the patriotic (in the Confederate view) ban on too much stylish display, some New Orleans ladies happily made the switch from the "Mary Stuart" ("no longer admissible") to the new soft-crown bonnets. In one respect, however, New Orleans ladies created their own fashion: during 1863, they started wearing small, round silk capes which were known as "beauregards" in honor of the great Creole military leader.34

Sometimes fashion led to strange reports in the local journals, such as the story of the young woman who, caught in an electrical storm in the Spring of 1864, quickly cut all the steel buttons off her dress and dropped them out the window of the trolley on which she was riding. Editorial comments were frequent too on the subject of hoop skirts which, the obviously masculine editor complained, took up at least three seats when worn on the horse-cars and cut down on the available walking space on Canal Street banquettes. Consider too the sad plight of "Dot," a lady of Union sympathies who wrote the editor of the True Delta for sartorial advise. Red and white,

34 New Orleans Picayune, January 29, 1864; Zoe Campbell Diary, entries for April 25, May 15, 1864;
she explained, were her best colors; blue was a ghastly mistake. Yet, if she subtracted it from her color ensemble, she would find herself clad in Confederate colors. The editor gallantly suggested that she carry a blue fan, and she presumably went happily on her patriotic way. 35

Not all clothing problems were of so light a nature, however. To the tailors of New Orleans, the discrepancy between the pay received for their work and the cost of living became so noticeable that, to avoid a murderous price war, they formed an association and announced a schedule of fixed prices. By doing so, they were able to raise the wages of their employees and still keep their prices within a range fairly comparable with those in St. Louis. 36

For Mrs. Carrie Hyatt, the wife of a Confederate officer and the mother of three small children, the problem was equally serious. Both she and the children were "rather in a bad state for clothing shoes are a great tax on me," she wrote her husband in the summer of 1864. "I cannot get a pair of shoes for the children for less than


36 New Orleans Daily True Delta, March 26, 1864; New Orleans Bee, April 25, 1864.
two dollars per pair everything else accordingly. We are very short
in clothing but try to keep up a descent [sic] appearance...37

As in the discussion of food prices, it is important to view
these prices in the light of consumer purchasing power. In the case
of Mrs. Hyatt, the two dollars for shoes must have appeared enormous,
for her total income was fifteen dollars per month.38

* * * * *

Like clothing, housing did not present itself as an immediate
problem to the Federal authorities when they arrived in New Orleans.
Such public buildings as the Customhouse were available for housing
the troops that remained in the city proper, and General Butler did not
hesitate to apply the terms of the first Confiscation Act to his seizure
of the homes of prominent Confederate officials absent from New Orleans.
But, as more and more Federals arrived during the course of the war,
housing became more and more scarce. The question became entangled
with that of confiscations and property seizures, and much injustice
resulted. It was further complicated by the presence of Northern
merchants and speculators in large numbers, by the arrival of the fami-
lies of officers stationed in the city, and by frequent fires which
steadily reduced the number of dwelling places available to house both
the civilian and the military populations.

37 Carrie Hyatt to Arthur W. Hyatt, New Orleans, July 6, June 26,
1864, in Arthur W. Hyatt Collection (typescript), Part I, Louisiana
State University Archives, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

38 Ibid.
Because of its large floating population and because many of its inhabitants were too poor to own their own property, New Orleans undoubtedly had a large amount of rental property when the Federals arrived in the spring of 1862. Boardinghouses and rooming houses abounded on such streets as Camp, St. Charles (above Lafayette Square), Prytania, Canal, Dauphine, Rampart, Dryades (between Common and Canal), Common, Royal, and Bourbon. Other rental property was located in all parts of the city and rented at a wide range of prices.39

This rental property became almost immediately a source of litigation, however, since the income of most renters was cut off by the war and they soon fell behind in their rent payments. As early as July, 1862, the True Delta reported that the Federal-run "landlord's court" was jammed with persons involved in eviction cases. "There are thousands of tenants who are really unable to pay their rent because they are out of employment," noted the editor, "and if they are turned out, the tenements must remain empty or be occupied by those in no better condition."40

In August, the same journal reported that eleven men had been arrested one midnight "for being found sleeping in a vacant house on Camp street," and in October it characterized as "most heartless" a landlord who had turned out two mothers and five fatherless children, forcing them to seek shelter in the lock-up while their furniture was cast into the street.

40 New Orleans Daily True Delta, July 31, 1862.
So desperate did the plight of these unfortunate persons become that the Federal authorities finally were forced to act, and Military Governor Shepley ordered that "in view of the present disturbed condition of many tenants and debtors, household furniture not exceeding three hundred dollars in value" was to be exempted from seizure for debt. 41

"What in the name of common sense do these landlords want to do with empty houses or rooms?" asked a correspondent of the Delta who was especially outraged by eviction reports; "they cannot rent them after they have . . . put them empty? Why not allow the poor to rest in peace?" 42

The Federal authorities answered the question with a series of general orders. The poor would be allowed to rest in peace if they were of a proper political complexion. The foreclosure of mortgages against loyal citizens was prohibited, and landlords were forbidden to evict tenants for nonpayment of rent if the tenants could prove they were the kin of Federal soldiers. 43

41 Ibid., August 29, October 14, November 11 (General Orders No. 15, New Orleans, November 7, 1862), 1862.

42 New Orleans Delta, December 9, 1862.

43 General Orders No. 15, New Orleans, February 8, 1863, in Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XV, 1099; General Orders No. 90, New Orleans, November 6, 1862, ibid., Ser. I, Vol. 15, 569. In 1864, there were 302 such families living rent-free in New Orleans. See H.M. Porter to James Bowen, New Orleans, February 26, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 8, National Archives. The order concerning foreclosures was modified in General Orders No. 113, New Orleans, August 22, 1864, New Orleans Daily True Delta, August 23, 1864, "so as to allow foreclosure and sale, except in cases where it is against equity and justice. . . ."
Proof of loyalty was generally regarded as protection in the matter of housing, but it was not always fool-proof. The Assistant Quartermaster of the Department was zealous in ferreting out the property of persons whose loyalty might be challenged, oath or no oath. "Mrs. Pinkard has had a message from the Federal authorities that she must either lodge General Thomas W. Sherman, give up her house, or pay rent for it," noted a New Orleans diarist. "Colonel French lived in it and gave it up after Mrs. Pinkard's return with reluctance. She had taken the oath and there was no excuse."44

Sometimes Federals themselves took advantage of their position to evade payment of rent, as seemed to have been the case when landlord James Affleck complained to Banks about the $100.00 unpaid rent bill of Army Chaplain S.M. Kingston. The chaplain was well able to pay, he asserted, but he had obtained an order from Provost Judge A.A. Atocha threatening Affleck with military reprisal if the latter attempted to collect the rent through the courts. At other times, Federal officers engaged in a time-honored Army pastime; "bumping" officers of inferior rank from their quarters when housing became scarce.45

In addition to such factors as fires and the influx of new residents, the housing problem in wartime New Orleans was intensified

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45
James Affleck to N.P. Banks, May 27, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, National Archives; see Manuscript diary of Henry Clay Warmoth, VI, entry for June 25, 1864, in Henry C. Warmoth Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
by the fact that almost no new building was done during the war years.
A "row of fine new buildings" was erected at the corner of Magazine and
Josephine streets in 1864, but they represented a notable exception to
the general rule, according to the Picayune, which pointed out that
"very few, if any, private residences have been put up in this city for
the past three years..." The demand for housing was said to be
especially acute in the Garden District.46

From the landlord's point of view, the war period offered
different but equally unpleasant disadvantages. In addition to the
fact that the income from rental property (in many cases, the income
upon which the landlord depended for his own livelihood) was cut off
by the inability of tenants to meet rent payments, much vacant property
was taken over for government purposes—and the government concept of
what constituted fair rental did not always strike even the most patri­
ocic landlord as equitable. The Federal Board of Administration,
reporting on its activities in September, 1864, gave its formula for
compensating the owners of property appropriated for government use:

...when the property is "bona fide" that of parties
loyal to the United States or of neutral foreigners, a
sufficient rent shall be paid for its occupation to
cover the whole of the legitimate taxes thereon for
the period and insurance equal to that paid thereon
for an equal period of the last two years; and as com­
pensation for ordinary wear and to keep them in or­
dition, in addition, a sum not to exceed (1½) one and one half
of one per cent, of the assessed value of the Property
as taken from the city assessor's records, and upon which
taxes are actually paid and no more, this being regarded

46
New Orleans Picayune, July 19, 1864.
by the Board as a fair compensation . . . for the Occupancy . . . in the present limited [State of] business in any part of the city occupied by Troops &c.

Property of disloyal citizens or "non neutral foreigners," or that which had been registered for sequestration, was not subject to compensation though it was to be preserved in good order and a record kept of the compensation that would have been paid had it been the property of loyal owners. 47

In June, 1864, the Board reported that the occupying forces were holding 100 structures classed as business property, 63 houses (including the Haunted House of Lafayette), and 6 vacant lots under the terms set forth above. Among the houses held was almost an entire block on Magazine Street. 48

Generally speaking, the housing problem, both for the civilian and the military population in this period was acute; since no solution of it was possible during the war period, both groups were victims of the peculiar situation, and much injustice necessarily resulted. Rents were much higher than they ought or needed to have been, and the poor man (or the junior officer), as the weakest element in the situation, generally got the short end of the stick.

In this as in all the necessities of life the ordinary citizen of New Orleans had to suffer many privations between May, 1862, and May, 1865. Many of them were directly attributable to the effects of

47 Report of the Board of Administration, September 30, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, National Archives.

48 Ibid., June 17, 1864.
the Federal occupation; but these and all the rest were ultimately chargeable to the war itself. Had there been no Civil War, New Orleans probably would not have had to contend with acute shortages of the necessities of life; but it would not be accurate to say that the city would not have experienced some shortages had it not been for the Federal occupation. They were already present in some form when Butler arrived.
Chapter IV

YELLOW JACK AND DIRTY GUTTERS

Mortifying as was the fall of the city to the Federal forces, many an Orleanian took a cheering look at the calendar as the troops landed and began to entertain confident hopes of deliverance by the end of the summer. For even the Yankees knew that summer was the yellow fever season and that the city was regularly visited by an epidemic at least one year in three. Twelve thousand persons had died during the great epidemic of 1853, and the idea was generally held that only those who had passed safely through one of these scourges could escape a later visitation. And how ripe for the Grim Harvester were the unseasoned Federal troops!1

The approaching hot weather brought no feeling of confidence to the occupying forces. School children, passing troops in the streets during late May and early June, sang a taunting song of which the refrain ran:

"Yellow Jack will grab them up
And take them all away."

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1 George S. Denison to Salmon P. Chase in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 305; Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle, 53; New Orleans Daily True Delta, September 20, 1862.
And one citizen with a macabre sense of humor equipped himself with an assistant, a measuring tape, and a notebook, and began to measure the height of Federal soldiers. Asked what he was doing, he announced that he had a "contract from headquarters" for making ten thousand coffins and that, though the Yankees would not "need them all just now . . . they will be needed as more troops will be brought here."

"The yellow fever will kill you all," he cheerfully assured a prospective victim.2

Nor were the newspapers backward in voicing public speculation about the effects of a possible yellow fever epidemic on Federal forces. "If the heat . . . of the lovely month of May bothers them," asked L'Abelle hopefully, "how will they stand that of June? And the mosquitoes? And the intermittent fevers? And that other affliction, the terror of strangers, which periodically decimates the population of this rich and vast metropolis?" The same journal also expected to witness an outbreak of typhus and smallpox just as soon as the weather got hot.3

Butler began to feel the results of this subtle campaign as one by one his officers presented reasons for their being relieved from duty in Louisiana and returned to the more salubrious Northern climate.

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3 L'Abelle, May 5, 1862; New Orleans Bee, May 7, 1862. See also New Orleans Crescent, May 5, 7, 1862.
Though Northern friends urged him to move his headquarters from the city to Ship Island, which would be "hot [but] still not pestilential," Butler had little patience with such weakness in the face of the unseen enemy. He threatened to publish requests for leave, endorsed with his personal refusal, in his official newspaper, and he later remarked with grim satisfaction, "Fortunately nobody could go home without my pass." 4

Rebel hopes for the arrival of the terrifying fever came as no surprise to the Federal leader. "I had heard," said Butler, "that in the churches prayers were put up the the pestilence might come as a divine interposition on behalf of the brethren"; and a Federal official who had spent some time in New Orleans before the war advised a Cabinet member that 90 per cent of the occupying forces probably would be attacked by yellow fever, to which at least 10 per cent would succumb. 5

Since no surgeon in his command ever had seen a case of yellow fever Butler asked a prominent New Orleans physician to accept the post of departmental medical director. The physician declined on the grounds of political inexpediency but referred the general to a work by a

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4 P.R. George to Butler, Boston, June 20, 1862, in Butler Papers; Butler's Book, 399.

5 Butler's Book, 396; Denison to Chase, May [?], 1862, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 305.
Professor Everett on the epidemic of 1853. Butler immediately began a personal study of the disease.6

The limited medical knowledge of the time made it impossible for Butler to base his subsequent course of action on correct scientific hypotheses; but he managed in spite of this handicap to work out what was probably the best program possible. Cleanliness and quarantine, he felt, were the keys to success in his efforts, and with a characteristic New England briskness he set his program in operation. State law traditionally required that a ten-day quarantine be imposed on vessels arriving from certain Gulf, Caribbean, and South American ports. Butler made this a quarantine in the literal sense and ordered that ships arriving from infected ports be held at the Quarantine Station below the city for forty days.7

The True Delta scoffed at the idea of the quarantine and warned that "dependence upon quarantine for the exclusion of yellow fever . . . is a dangerous delusion [which] if encouraged may be the means of doing immense injury to the health of this place." If they wanted to be really helpful, the True Delta hinted, Federal doctors would concern themselves more with cutting down the mortality rate of the disease.8

6 Butler's Book, 399.
7 Ibid., 403. See too Butler to O.P. Gooding, New Orleans, June 20, 1862, in Butler Papers.
8 New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 11, 1862.
The foreign consuls too were extremely apprehensive about the effects of a quarantine of such severity upon a foreign trade already almost dried up by the Federal blockade. Some of them threatened to have a reciprocal quarantine imposed on American shipping, and the Spanish consul saw nothing culpable in the ignoring of the regulations by the Spanish vessel Cardenas, which ran past the quarantine station and discharged its passengers and cargo three miles south of the city. On hearing this, Butler peremptorily ordered the vessel to return to the quarantine station and told Senor Imanuel Callejon, the consul, that when he was satisfied the ship had "committed no breaches of the Revenue Laws of the United States" it would be permitted to come up again.9

With wry humor he announced his course of action to the citizens of New Orleans: "In order to allay the hopes of the bad and the fears of the good and timid, the commanding general gives notice that the strictest health regulations have been established . . . against the importation of all epidemics." Whether she spoke as a member of the former or the latter group, one young New Orleans girl was frankly disappointed in this chain of events. "I should not wonder," she wrote, "did we have an uncommonly cool summer & an intelligent friend of mine

9 Sinclair, Port of New Orleans, 251; Butler to Imanuel Callejon, New Orleans, June 22, 1862, in Butler Papers. See also P. Haggerty to Health Officer, Quarantine Station, Mississippi River, New Orleans, June 2, 1862, ibid.
is of the opinion that as everything else seems favoring them, that there will not be a case of fever."  

The Federals were not quite that fortunate, but when two cases of yellow fever came in from Nassau on a ship which had evaded the quarantine regulations, Butler moved swiftly to isolate them. He ordered the area in which the two men lay surrounded by troops, and directed that "bright fires at the four corners of the square . . . be] kept burning day and night, supplied with tar barrels and pitch, so as always to keep an upward current of air." After six days the victims died; on the following day, everything they might have touched or infected was burned and their bodies cremated. No other yellow fever cases occurred in New Orleans that year, Butler reported.  

The same sort of thorough attention was given to the health of the men of his command; "a minute care was exercised with regard to their] . . . clothing and food . . . which was entirely unknown to other portions of the Army. . . ." The results were highly satisfactory, and at the end of May the surgeon in charge of the St. James Army Hospital

10 "Diary of Clara Solomon," entry for May 26, 1862. New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 9, 1862.

11 Butler's Book, 408-10. The Daily True Delta (September 13, 1862) reported one other fatal case.
reported that the Department of the Gulf was enjoying a "condition of health as gratifying as it was unexpected."\textsuperscript{12}

Butler next turned his attention to the sanitary condition of the city. Here he found a gargantuan task cut out for him. Just a year before, a visiting correspondent had noted that "it is not to be wondered at that New Orleans suffers from terrible epidemics. At the side of each street a filthy open sewer flows to and from with the tide in the blazing sun. . . ." In addition to this fairly routine state of affairs, the levee had crevassed at Jefferson City (near the present General Pershing Street), forcing many of the residents to flee the area, and filling the ditches and canals of the city's unaffected sections with floating debris and the carcases of dead rats and other animals.\textsuperscript{13}

Though Mayor Monroe assured him on May 9 that the City Council had passed a resolution directing that an extra force of three hundred men be employed to clean the streets and canals, Butler was not satisfied with the assurance; three days had passed since he first called the situation to Monroe's attention and nothing had been done. "Resolutions and inaction will not do," he chided. "Active energetic measures, fully and promptly executed, are imperatively demanded by the exigencies of the occasion."


\textsuperscript{13} Russell, Diary North and South, 231; Dabney, "Butler Regime," loc. cit., 508-509; Zoe Campbell Diary, entry for May 24, 25, 1862.
The widespread unemployment in the city meant that a large labor force was available for the work, and Butler urged that they be employed at once. "A little of the labor and efforts spent upon the streets and Public Squares of New Orleans, which was uselessly and inanely wasted upon idle fortifications like that about the U.S. Mint, will place the city in a condition to insure the health of its inhabitants," he concluded. "It will not do to shift the responsibility..." 14

The Bee was not sure that the proposed program of public sanitation would keep yellow fever away, but its editor thought that it might be helpful in preventing typhoid and diseases of that type. He called attention too to the New Basin, which was being used as a dump, and to Customhouse Street, which "every now and then pours forth exhalations of the most noisome character..." 15

A series of distractions which culminated in the imprisonment of the Mayor and the members of the City Council (see Chapter XIV) apparently prevented any action in this line during the month of May. However, with the appointment of Military Commandant George F. Shepley at the end of that month, municipal sanitation again became a topic of discussion. Shepley presented the Federal commander's program to the

14
John T. Monroe to Butler, New Orleans, May 9, 1862, in Butler Papers; Butler to Mayor and Common Council of New Orleans, New Orleans, May 9, 1862, ibid.

15
New Orleans Bee, May 15, 1862. See also New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 11: 1862, for pointed comments on the sanitary habits of Federal troops quartered in the Customhouse.
new City Council on June 5. Two thousand unemployed men would be put
to work for thirty days, ten hours a day, at a rate of fifty cents cash
and fifty ounces of food per day. The council agreed but suggested that
the cash pay be increased to $1.00 per day and still delayed action.
Exasperated, Butler himself finally ordered the work begun on June 11. \(^{16}\)

Under his orders, the break in the levee was repaired; the
damaged wharves partially rebuilt; the filthy gutters flushed; and the
streets and drainage canals scraped, broomed, and cleaned as they never
had been before. Nor were private citizens exempted from the program.
With the advice of Street Commissioner T.B. Thorpe, Butler ordered a
clean-up of all private property within twenty-four hours. "The outside
walls of buildings which were not painted were . . . to be thoroughly
whitewashed with a wash containing a solution of lime, alum, and salt."
Refuse receptacles were to be used for all types of refuse and were to
be kept clean with a wash of chloride of lime. Refuse collections
would be made by army mule teams twice a week. Nothing of any descrip-
tion was to be thrown into the street; when a daring tradesman threw a
scrap of paper into the street to test the order, Butler had him sent
to the parish prison for three months. And a lady who was dilatory in
in emptying the night soil from her backyard was threatened with the
same punishment. She speedily complied with the regulation. \(^{17}\)

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\(^{16}\) Dabney, "Butler Regime," loc. cit., 508-509; Bush, "The
Federal Occupation of New Orleans," 114; New Orleans Bee, June 10,
1862.

\(^{17}\) Dabney, "Butler Regime," loc. cit., 509; Butler's Book,
404-406.
It would be comforting to be able to report that Butler's excellent program of sanitation was an immediate and permanent success, but this unfortunately does not seem to have been the case. A week after the concentrated street-cleaning effort began, the True Delta noted that it was "barely possible for the gutters to be more filthy than those in the vicinity of the Poydras Market..." And late in August the same journal again complained of filthy gutters, particularly those running north and south, the grade of which was not sufficient for them to drain. "The green scum standing on the water in some of the gutters ... is certainly thick enough to bear the weight of a small-sized bird," remarked the editor. 18

Despite this discouraging lack of real progress, the military and civilian population alike rejoiced by the end of the summer in the city's freedom from serious epidemics. "The health of the city continues admirable," Butler reported to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton in September; and the True Delta suggested that "fervent thanks should be offered for our happy exemption this season, when so much unacclimated material is accumulated [sic] here..." 19

18

New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 18, August 20, 1862.

19

Throughout the war period, yellow fever, quarantine, and sanitation were to be questions of vital interest to the citizens and authorities of New Orleans. The quarantine was regularly imposed, though there was a tendency, after Butler's departure, to reduce it to the traditional ten days so as not to interfere too seriously with trade. After 1862, no one seems to have suggested, as did the editor of the Picayune in May of that year, that the opposing armies make some "arrangement . . . quite within the range of the regulations . . . enabling those who desire it, and to whom use has made it an absolute necessity, even sanitarily considered, to pass the coming hot months away from town . . . ." But the question of the health of New England troops remained a matter of concern for their friends at home, and at least one Bostonian passed along to the commanding general a fool-proof cure for yellow fever. 20

Only a few cases of the disease appeared in New Orleans throughout the entire war period, but it remained an important topic for New Orleans medical men. When Banks appointed a commission of physicians in 1864 to "report upon the sanitary condition of the city, and to recommend such precautionary measures as may be necessary to insure public health," its members devoted themselves almost exclusively

20 See quarantine proclamations of G'.F. Shapley (New Orleans Picayune, April 7, 1863), Michael Hahn, (New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 1, 1864), and J. Madison Wells (ibid., April 2, 1865), and comment of New Orleans Picayune, May 9, 1862; Tecumseh Thayer to Banks, Boston, May 1, 1865, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 4, National Archives.
to the means of preventing yellow fever. Their suggestions for the most part duplicated Butler's program of 1862.21

Unlike the quarantine, the problem of municipal cleanliness could not be solved by an annual proclamation from the governor, and it remained a problem throughout the war period (and probably long after that). Some idea of the variety of items that called (usually through the citizens' olfactory senses) for attention may be gained from a check of the city ordinances concerned with sanitation, which had to be published frequently. Ordinances 506 through 510 forbade citizens to throw garbage, offal, and so forth, on sidewalks and provided that it must be placed in boxes for collection; to keep garbage or offal in yards or private alleys for more than twenty-four hours; to dump garbage in the river, except at the "nuisance wharf"; to obstruct gutters, drains, and ditches; and to dig up streets and remove dirt therefrom without permission. Other ordinances of the same type forbade them to keep hogs within the limits of the First and Second Districts; to allow vicious, loud, or troublesome dogs to run at large; to delay in the disposal of the carcasses of dead animals; to allow stagnant water to stand on their property or to use manure for filling low lots; to sell

21 Denison to Chase, New Orleans, August 12, 1863, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 402; Stephen Hoyt to George B. Drake, New Orleans, October 1, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 7, National Archives; General Orders No. 36, New Orleans, March 11, 1864, in Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 560-61; for report of commission, see Report of Board of Health, March 18, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 7, National Archives. Though he promised the members a "liberal compensation," for their efforts, they complained in September that they were still unpaid. See Charles Faget and Daniel Holliday to Banks, undated (probably July, 1864), and Faget to Banks, September 14, 1864, ibid., 1865, Box 11.
tainted meat; to adulterate food or drink; to keep spoiled food on their premises; and to carry night jars through the streets in the daytime. Still others prescribed the size of holes for privies and the time and manner of emptying them. Fines of $20.00 to $100.00, plus thirty-day jail sentences were provided for violators, but newspaper reports would lead to the belief that the jails could not have accommo-dated them had all the violators been apprehended.  

When the Board of Health made its report to Banks in the Spring of 1864, it was still calling for a better system of drainage; extension of the water system and a reduction in rates so that bathing might come into more regular use; prohibition of the adulteration of milk; and efficient garbage disposal. And throughout the war period the newspapers complained that goats were allowed to run at large; that tainted meat was being offered for sale in the French Market; and that so many citizens, particularly among the theater-goers who fre-quented the St. Charles and Varieties theaters, were relieving them-selves in the streets of that area that they were "impassable to ladies."  

Despite the preoccupation of its medical men with yellow fever and the means of preventing it, this disease was not New Orleans' only
health problem. Throughout the war period weekly reports were made by the city board of health on the number and causes of death in the city, and these were published regularly in the newspapers. Though the mortality rate decreased steadily during the latter half of the nineteenth century, New Orleans had gone from a rate of 65.98 per thousand in 1788 to the shocking high of 147.01 during the cholera epidemic of 1832. This was an unprecedented figure in the city's medical annals, but even with the improving conditions of the latter half of the nineteenth century, the average Orleanian could expect a life span of only thirty-seven years up to 1900.24

Since no records of births were kept and no accurate figure on the wartime population of New Orleans was ever arrived at, it is impossible to calculate with any exactness the mortality rate for the period under consideration. A study of the "mortuary reports" which were published is, however, fairly revealing.25

For one thing, the reports show that often as many as 30 per cent of the reported deaths were of children under ten years of age. Of the 6,523 deaths reported in the city during 1863, a year in which

24 P.J. Rinderle, "Health in New Orleans" (typescript in Louisiana State Museum Library, New Orleans, Louisiana), 1. See these weekly reports in New Orleans Daily True Delta, Era, Picayune, and Bee throughout the war period.

25 A rough estimate, based on the figures available, produces a rate of 55.45 per thousand. The death rate for New Orleans in 1930 was 17.24 (Rinderle, "Health in New Orleans"). New Orleans was said to have a death rate "fully five times that of New York City" (Picayune, November 4, 1863), so it is possible that the mortuary reports did not include all deaths for the period.
epidemic smallpox was not reported, 2,230 or 34 per cent were in this age group. 26

Though diagnosis was certainly not as accurate as it is today, the listed causes of death reveal other interesting facts: The principal killers were not what are generally regarded as childhood diseases, despite the high mortality rate among the younger population group. Tuberculosis, which accounted for 676 of the total recorded deaths for 1863, was a steady drain on the population and may be charged, presumably, with many of the deaths among the poorer classes of adults. Other diseases which accounted for a high death toll were the ever-present fevers (other than yellow fever), to which were credited 677 of the reported deaths in 1863; and diarrheal diseases, which knew seasonal fluctuations but which took 962 lives, or more than 25 per cent of the deaths reported during the period August through December, 1863, alone. 27

In addition to breaking down the figures into age groups, the reports also divided them according to race. With the flood of former slaves that came to the city after its fall to the Federals, it is hard to arrive at any reliable figure at all for the mortality rate among the Negro population, which in 1860 formed only about one seventh of the total population. But the estimate of the Picayune that over 27 per cent

26 See published reports in the New Orleans Era and Picayune for this period.

27 Ibid.
of the reported deaths for the month of October, 1863, were of Negroes and mulattoes is indicative of an unusually high mortality rate among this segment of the population.  

Throughout 1864, and the Spring of 1865, smallpox appeared in epidemic form in the city and was the cause of much concern among the authorities. Though the New Orleans papers customarily made it a point not to print alarmist stories about health conditions in the city, frequent references to this disease appeared. "Every day since his appointment Coroner Hire is called upon to hold inquests on the bodies of persons . . . who died of small-pox," declared the Picayune. A large number of these also were Negroes.  

By January, 1865, the situation had grown serious enough to call for action on the part of the Federal authorities, and Dr. R. H. Alexander, medical director of the Department of the Gulf, wrote to General Hurlbut and to Governor Michael Hahn, asking that measures be taken to put mass vaccination into effect. On January 23, the city council adopted an ordinance to this effect and directed the mayor to designate a doctor in each district of the city who would administer vaccination to all who asked for it, either in his office or at their residences. Apparently even this did not satisfy everyone, and, as smallpox carried off more and more persons (forty-nine during the week

28
New Orleans Picayune, November 4, 1863.

29
Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle, 54; New Orleans Picayune, April 6, 1864.
beginning February 6), the True Delta demanded compulsory vaccination. Dr. Warren Stone, chief physician of Charity Hospital, attributed the spread of the disease to the failure of many persons to receive vaccination in the previous few years.30

By the end of March, the number of deaths due to smallpox had decreased slightly. But one New Orleans mother wrote her absent soldier-husband that she was grateful that she and her children had "escaped all sickness that has prevailed in the city," despite the prevalence of a "great deal of small Pox."31

However, not all the diseases which afflicted Orleanians were fatal. Venereal disease, which only rarely appeared as a cause of death, was widespread in the Crescent City; in fact, if one were to judge from the number of advertisements offering cures for it, it sometimes must have been far more epidemic than either yellow fever or smallpox. Even present-day physicians cannot estimate accurately the number of cases of this type of disease, since many sufferers never report themselves, and this problem was even more acute in Civil War New Orleans. That venereal disease made serious inroads upon the health

30 R.H. Alexander to S.A. Hurlbut, and id. to Michael Hahn, New Orleans, January 20, 1865, in Letters Received (Civil), 1865, Box 10, National Archives; New Orleans Tribune, January 28, 1865; New Orleans Daily True Delta, February 15, 22, 1865.

31 New Orleans Daily True Delta, April 5, 1865; Carrie Hyatt to Arthur W. Hyatt, March 10, 1865, in Hyatt Collection, II.
and usefulness of a large part of the community may be judged, however, from the figures of Dr. Edward P. Vollum, medical director of the Military Division of West Mississippi, who conducted an investigation in the late summer of 1864.

Checking only on cases reported among the troops, Dr. Vollum found that among cases treated in the general hospitals alone "an aggregate of 50,000 days has been lost to the service . . . since August 1862 . . . " He had no way of estimating, he said, the number of cases treated in regimental hospitals any by private physicians in New Orleans, but "it is quite probable that as many cases of Venereal Disease among the troops are treated by the practitioners of the city as appears upon the Medical Records." The time lost was therefore probably much closer to 100,000 days, and venereal disease cases accounted for at least 6 per cent of all diseases treated among the troops in New Orleans. 32

Most of the cases among the troops (and probably among civilians as well) were contracted in the multitudinous houses of prostitution, declared Dr. Vollum, and control of the disease would be possible only when prostitution itself was controlled. He recommended that the mayor be asked to compile a list of the houses of prostitution, along with a register of their inmates; that regular semimonthly examinations be required of the women; that a Women's Venereal Disease

32 See front page advertisements in New Orleans Daily True Delta, throughout period, some of which described the nature of the cure—easily worse than the disease—and, of course, worthless. Edward P. Vollum to C.T. Christensen, New Orleans, August 27, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 10, National Archives.
Hospital be established (financed by monthly fees of $5.00 per house and .50 per inmate) in which diseased prostitutes would be confined until they were cured; and that terms in the Workhouse be meted out to unco-operative madames and their girls. 33

His letter was referred to the medical director of the Department of the Gulf, who was asked to estimate the number of houses of prostitution in the city. This gentleman threw up his hands and answered that he had no idea and did not know how he could find out, and Dr. Vollum's program apparently got no further than this. 34

No discussion of health and sanitary conditions in New Orleans would be complete without a reference to the one institution which was truly an ornament to its medical annals—and indeed still is—Charity Hospital. Located between Howard and Locust streets on Common, the hospital's beginnings went back to the earliest days of the Louisiana colony. Taken over by the city in 1811, it had been operated continuously and was supported, until the outbreak of the war, by contributions from the state and by a head-tax of two dollars on the immigrants that often filled its beds. 35

33 Vollum to Christensen, New Orleans, August 27, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 10, National Archives.

34 Ibid. See endorsements for ultimate failure to take any action.

35 Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle, 56.
During the war period of the Federal occupation, it was staffed by twenty-seven to thirty nursing Sisters of Charity, and its medical staff was headed by Dr. Warren Stone, one of the ablest medical men of his day. Dr. Stone was a fervent secessionist and, for his political opinions, was imprisoned at Fort Jackson by Butler. The Sisters apparently begged successfully for his release, however, for he was allowed to return after a short time and spent the rest of the war period, as did the Sisters, ministering to Yankee and Rebel alike. 36

The hospital had a capacity of four to five hundred patients, and throughout the war period, these beds were generally filled. The foreign-born outnumbered the native-born by a ratio of four to one among the civilian patients. With the beginning of fierce military action in Louisiana in 1863 and 1864, Charity became a semimilitary hospital, and in May, 1864, over six hundred soldiers (and less than three hundred civilians) were treated there. 37

Eight other structures, two of them former hotels, were used as military hospitals in New Orleans during the war period, and there were at least three privately operated hospitals in existence at the same time.

36 New Orleans Times, June 3, 1864; Roger Baudier, "Hotel Dieu—A Century of Service" Chapter VI, 6-7 (typescript prepared for Sisters of Charity, 1943), in Baudier Historical Collection, New Orleans, Louisiana.

One of these, the Luzenberg Hospital on Elysian Fields Street, was recommended for seizure and conversion into a charity pest-house for white smallpox victims during the summer of 1864; but there is no record to show that the recommendation was followed. 38

Though New Orleans was well-equipped to care for diseases of the body, here—as in most other American communities of the period—diseases of the mind received almost no care. As late as April, 1864, persons confined as insane were housed in a lightless and airless room in the Parish Prison—a situation which commanded the sympathy of even crusty Colonel James Bowen, Provost Marshal General of the Department. After a visit to their quarters he wrote a member of Banks's staff and asked that the commanding general seize a house, convert it into a mental hospital, and order the insane prisoners moved. Again, there is no evidence that this merciful recommendation was followed. 39

One other aspect of public health in New Orleans attracted the attention of the Federal authorities and seems to have been far more fascinating to General Banks than was the question of proper housing for the insane—the custom of intramural burials. Because of its low-lying terrain, spongy soil, and frequent subjection to floods, New

38 Norman's New Orleans, 117; Stephen Hoyt to Banks, New Orleans, July 7, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 7, National Archives.

Orleans buried its dead (and in many instances still does) in tombs above the ground rather than in graves, as was the custom in New England. In the summer of 1864, Banks appointed a Board of Officers to inspect the city's cemeteries and advise him if, in their opinion, the local burial customs constituted a menace to the public health. The Board turned in a most unfavorable report on August 4. With the exception of the new National Cemetery at Chalmette (recently dedicated by General Banks himself), they found that most burials were unsatisfactory. Where they had been made below ground, the graves were far too shallow—only two and one half to three feet deep in many instances; those made above the ground were often in tombs that were not airtight and that were in a state of decay. The Board recommended prohibition of further burials of any kind within five miles of the city limits, but this recommendation too apparently went unheeded.40

The fact that New Orleans had no morgue indirectly provided another health hazard, and the paragraph which appeared in the Bee in August, 1862, was not too unusual:

"For the past three days—or we believe, four or five days, a dead body has been lying at the corner of Baronne and Common streets opposite the Jesuits Church, opposite the Medical College, right under the observation of the troops quartered in the latter place, and shocking the senses of passersby." And as late as February, 1865, the True Delta was pointing out still other instances in which a morgue was called for.

40 Report of the Board of Officers... , New Orleans, August 5, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, National Archives.
However, none was established before the end of the war period. 41

Healthwise, New Orleans' record for the period of the occupation has generally been regarded as unusually good--and in the sense that there was no serious outbreak of yellow fever it was. In other aspects, though, the record was not good. Whether or not the poor showing should be attributed to the effects of the military occupation is a justly debatable point. New Orleans was not an especially healthy city when the Federal troops arrived. The failure of yellow fever to occur may have been due in part to the sanitary efforts of the Federal authorities, but it also was due to a number of other things—the reduction of the Caribbean trade as a result of the blockade; a series of dryer-than-usual summers and bitterly cold winters; and, probably, some plain ordinary good luck. Had the yellow fever come, the mortality rate for the war period would have been much higher than it was; but even without yellow fever, the rate was very high. The incidence of diarrheal diseases undoubtedly was increased by the presence of the troops, as was the rate of venereal disease, but the source of infection was in both cases local. On the whole, however, these and other factors connected with the occupation probably balanced out the good done by the introduction of a few sanitary measures by Butler; and, if the arrival of the Federals did not result in the deadly plague or the deliverance at first envisioned by the inhabitants, neither did it introduce an era of bouncing good health for them.

41

New Orleans Bee, August 11, 1862; New Orleans Daily True Delta, February 16, 1865.
Chapter V

NURSERIES OF TREASON

To the small fry of New Orleans, the arrival of Farragut's fleet before the city was an occasion of great and pleasant excitement. Apprehensive about the course that events would take, the city's school officials dismissed classes and sent the children home with the news that Forts Jackson and St. Philip had fallen. The holiday was of short duration, however, and with the publication of Butler's order to the inhabitants to "pursue their usual avocations," the schools reopened and the teachers took up their duties again.¹

The history of education in New Orleans went back for more than a century, for the Ursuline nuns had arrived in the city as early as 1722 to offer a limited education to the daughters of its Creole inhabitants. Education was a private and church-sponsored affair during the French and Spanish periods of the city's history, but before the middle of the nineteenth century a beginning was made in the field of public

¹ See "Diary of Clara Solomon," entry for May 4, 1862; newspaper notices for days immediately following Butler's arrival; and George W. Cable, "New Orleans before the Capture," in Battles and Leaders, II, 20-21.
education. The system was so well-established by 1845 that the state legislature asked New Orleans educator Dr. Alexander Dmitry to set up a system for the entire state based on the New Orleans plan.²

For many years New Orleans had three separate systems of public schools, supported respectively by the taxpayers of the French and American sections. Unification of the three municipalities under a single city government did not result in a similar unification of the educational facilities, however, and at the time of the arrival of the Federal troops, French was the language of instruction in all the schools located below Canal Street, while English texts and English-speaking teachers were to be found in the American districts. In spite of this lack of unity, the public schools of New Orleans were of a high standard of excellence for their time, "being unsurpassed," in the words of the chauvinistic Delta, "by any in the United States, those of Boston not excepted."³

Support for public education came from the state, which put up one fourth of the funds for the New Orleans system, and from city poll and millage taxes. To prepare teachers for their work, the state and city jointly established (in 1858) and supported a normal school. This institution was a part-time affair which, because it lacked physical facilities of its own, conducted its classes after regular school hours and on Saturdays in the First District Girls' High School. Certificates

² See section on the Ursulines in Baudier, "Notes on Religious Orders of Women," Baudier Historical Collection, New Orleans; Rightor, Standard History, 240.

³ Rightor, Standard History, 236-38. Schools in the First District had the best equipment, ibid.; New Orleans Daily Delta, August 17, 1862.
were awarded to successful graduates on completion of a two-year course in such subjects as elocution, grammatical analysis and prosody, rhetoric, arithmetic, physical geography, and mental philosophy. An arrangement for providing the students with practical teaching experience was made by assigning them as substitutes for absent teachers.

In addition to the public school system, New Orleans had a large number of private schools, which apparently offered instruction to part of the 50 per cent of New Orleans white children not enrolled in the public schools. Many of these were operated under the auspices of the Catholic and Lutheran churches, while others had no sectarian connections at all. In the private schools, as well as the public ones, feminine teachers predominated in all but the secondary schools for boys.

With secession, the school curriculum had undergone some changes in both public and private schools. "Confederate history" had been substituted for United States history, and classes in "vocal singing" included renditions of "Dixie" and "The Bonnie Blue Flag" in place of "The Star Spangled Banner" and other musical reminders of the city's

4 Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle, 72. See also Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education, 1860 (Baton Rouge, 1860) and 1864 (New Orleans, 1864). In 1861, city millage and poll tax assessments amounted to $123,275.68 and $13,250.00 respectively. For 1865, they were only $102,298.88 and $10,634.00, despite the addition of nearly six thousand Negro children to the city's 37,418 educable white children.

5 See the list of private schools compiled by the Banks commission on private schools in 1864 in Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education, 1864, Appendix B and table; "Diary of Clara Solomon," entries for May 29, 31, 1862. For a discussion of Negro schools and education in New Orleans, see Chapter XV infra.
past political affiliations. Though the change to the new order had been quite rapid in 1861, the old order did not regain its former popularity immediately in 1862. The Federal anthems were slow in reappearing in the classes in vocal singing; indeed, when young Clara Solomon attended a teacher's meeting at the Webster Elementary School at the end of May, 1862, she reported that the teachers' voices were "almost drowned by the screeches of the B[onnie] B[blue] F[lag] and other melodies from the various rooms." And the Unionist Delta, recapitulating later in the summer, charged that in addition to this form of musical treason, pupils were taught "low songs"; young ladies in the "higher departments" learned to refer to the Federal troops as "Yankee scum"; and teachers and pupils alike wasted school time in "repeating every idle tale that could feed the hopes of rebellion. . . ." Most shocking of all, however, was the revelation that the directors of the school system had continued to pay the salaries of male teachers absent in the Confederate service.°

The school year was not yet out when Butler issued General Order No. 41, requiring loyal citizens to swear allegiance to the United States. Since it was specified that all municipal employees must comply with the order or lose their jobs, it stirred up a veritable tempest in the teaching teapot. "I am of the opinion that it extends particularly to teachers," Clara Solomon noted accurately, "as it is not their [the Federals] wish that Secession principles shall be instilled in the minds

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6 See New Orleans Daily Delta, August 17, 1862, and entries for weeks just preceding fall of city in "Diary of Clara Solomon," for a picture of the schools under the Confederate regime; also ibid., entry for May 31, 1862.
of the rising generation. ..." She expressed the hope that parents would refuse to send their children to Union teachers, but admitted that she did not expect it to happen since even the patriotism of the teachers would be tested beyond the financial endurance of many.  

Butler shortly turned more direct attention to the public schools, and under his direction the city council reorganized the entire system in an ordinance promulgated by Military Commandant Shepley early in September. Under its terms, the city's school system was unified, and a single course of instruction was prescribed for all the municipal districts. English alone was to be the language of instruction, and new textbooks, imported from the North and distributed on a citywide basis, insured politically pure reading matter for the pupils. The purity of the teaching staff was assured by the provision that all teachers be required to give proof that they had taken the oath of allegiance before their appointment. A board of visitors for each district was empowered to screen applicants for teaching positions, thus making it possible to select only those of unimpeachable loyalty.  

General control and management of the school system was placed in

7 General Orders No. 41, New Orleans, June 10, 1862, in Butler Papers; "Diary of Clara Solomon," entries for June 13, 15, 1862.

8 New Orleans Picayune, September 3, 1862; Report of the State Superintendent of Education, 1864, Appendix A. See also Caskey, Seccession and Restoration, 52. Some loopholes apparently existed, however. See complaint of Mrs. A. Maria Taylor to B.F. Flanders, New Orleans, August 14, 1862, in Benjamin F. Flanders Papers, Louisiana State University Archives, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
the hands of a bureau of education, consisting of the mayor, the chairman of the bureau of finance, the chairman of the bureau of streets and landings, the city comptroller, and the treasurer. They were to appoint boards of visitors for each district—twenty-one for the First District; twelve for the Second; twelve for the Third; and eleven for the Fourth. A comparison between the published lists of appointees to these boards and of the members of the various district Union associations reveals much identity of membership, which obviously provided a further check on teacher loyalty.  

A sum of $220,318.80 was appropriated for the support of the school system, and, assessing the proclivities of its membership with remarkable realism, the bureau was forbidden to draw more than one twelfth of its annual appropriation each month. The new superintendent of education, unflinching Unionist John Butler Carter, was appointed a salary of $3,500 per year. Salaries of the teachers were to be set by the bureau.  

For the further guidance of teachers, pupils, and parents, the bureau of education prepared a manual on the "Organization and Government of the Public Schools of New Orleans." This handy publication set forth

9 New Orleans Picayune, September 3, 1862. For members of boards, see New Orleans Daily True Delta, September 7, 1862.

10 New Orleans Picayune, September 3, 1862. Of this sum, the First District received $69,456.00; the Second District, $50,419.69; the Third District, $44,736.00; and the Fourth District, $44,707.20. A sum of $5,000.00 was appropriated to continue the Normal School but it did not reopen.
the dates and hours of the school term (from the third Monday in September until the last Friday in June, five days a week, from 9 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.) and announced that citywide oral examinations would be conducted annually beginning the first Monday in June. Parents were advised to "see that their children go to school regularly and punctually, and that they attend faithfully" to their homework; to restrain them from "street recreations, and from all evil associations"; and they were asked to "co-operate with the Teachers in the discharge of their arduous duties..." If they had any complaints, they could make them to the superintendent of education or to the boards of visitors. Under no circumstances should they be made to the teachers themselves.\footnote{New Orleans Daily Delta, December 4, November 16, 1862.}

In addition to being required to present themselves punctually "with hands, face and clothes clean," the pupils were enjoined to "promptly confess their faults, and in all cases speak the truth"; to be "kind and polite to each other out of school"; and to "return directly to their homes after dismissal." The use of tobacco and profanity was expressly forbidden. Misbehavior, it was understood, would not be tolerated at all, and when three boys who had been temporarily suspended from the Jackson School expressed their resentment by launching an attack on the school with stones and brickbats, they were hauled off to court by the Honorable Michael Hahn of the board of visitors and there sentenced to terms in the House of Refuge.\footnote{Ibid., November 16, 1862.}
However, intimations by Yankee visitors that New Orleans school children were not naturally inclined to model deportment were presented by at least one Southern mother. Answering the charges of "Ned Spruce" in the columns of the Delta in September, 1862, "Dorcas" snapped that "every Southern mother knows herself to be fully qualified to 'rear her children in the way they should go' without the gratuitous and generous assistance of these Yankee pedagogues. It is a well-established fact," she continued, "that Southern children are possessed of a purity of thought and delicacy of feeling superior to that of any children in the world. . . ."13

Indeed, so sensitive were the children of New Orleans to the "gratuitous" Yankee influence that half of them left their classes in May, 1863, in protest against the introduction of "musical patriotism" in the school curriculum. Most of them returned, but two little boys who refused to "co-operate" with the school authorities by singing at the inaugural of Governor Michael Hahn in 1864 were permanently suspended, and their father's appeal for their reinstatement was denied by the courts.14

Superintendent Carter was lavish in his praise of the new school system in reporting to the state legislature at the end of 1864. "Public schools," he enthused, "free from sectarianism and political partisanship--are the true democratic institutions of education. . . . They are

13 Ibid., September 28, 1862.
and ever will be the bulwarks of freedom." There is evidence, however, that not all parents agreed with him, for of the 37,664 educable children in the city according to the Assessor's Report of 1863, only 12,511 were attending the city's 44 public schools.15

There were other evidences that all was not as rosy as Superintendent Carter believed. A jurisdictional quarrel between the bureau of education and the various boards of visitors threatened to wreck the entire system in the Spring of 1863. Both sides hired and fired teachers, and each challenged the fitness of the other to act in any capacity. Public opinion, according to the True Delta, was on the side of the boards; but they lost nevertheless and were dissolved.16

Another type of controversy threatened in the Fall of 1864, when the state constitutional convention turned to the subject of support of public education. In an open letter to the "People of New Orleans and Louisiana," Patrick Harnan asked that the convention provide a pro rata share of educational funds for the support of Catholic schools because state support of public schools alone constituted "moral coercion . . . to force parents to send their children" to schools other than those of their choice. A correspondent who signed himself "Nemo" suggested in reply that Catholic schools should be among the last to get public support,

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15 Report of the State Superintendent of Education, 1864, Appendix A. In 1864, the New Orleans Era (June 14) complained of a widespread lack of interest in the schools on the part of parents and others.

16 New Orleans Daily True Delta, March 10, 1863; New Orleans Era, March 11, 1863, June 14, 1864.
asserting that while it was "pleasant to see blue coats in the Catholic churches of this city it was also pleasant to see many more in the Protestant churches," and that though there were Louisiana Catholics in the Union army, "how many times as many may be in the rebel ranks at this moment..." The whole thing, he declared, was a plot on the part of the clergy to get control of the state school funds. 17

Popular dissatisfaction with the public school system continued until after the end of the war. In the summer of 1865, however, the system introduced by Butler was scrapped, and the new state superintendent reported "a large increase in the attendance of pupils. Many who have been attending private schools have returned..." He attributed the falling off of attendance during the war years to a feeling of uncertainty induced by one-year terms for members of the bureau of education and the boards of visitors; by the annual elections and examinations of teachers well-known to be qualified, thus putting their positions and professional futures in annual jeopardy; by the low rate of pay for teachers; and by the refusal of the authorities to recognize outstanding work with merit increases. 18

His point on teacher salaries certainly was well made, for from the time of the arrival of the Federals until the end of the war period, public school teachers, regardless of their political complexion, were shabbily treated in New Orleans. Before the school year ended in 1862, the teachers were told that their salaries would be paid only through the end

17
New Orleans Era, March 27, 31, 1864.

18
of June rather than through the summer, as was customary. And when the newly appointed bureau of education met in the Fall of that year, they fixed salaries at $600 to $2,000 (for high school principals) per year for teachers in the boys' schools of the city, and $600 to $1,200 (for high school principals) for those in the girls' schools. Apparently these figures remained fixed during the war period, for a delegation of teachers visited the constitutional convention in 1864 and petitioned for a salary raise. Though J. Madison Wells gallantly introduced a resolution calling for a 25 per cent increase, no action ever was taken.\(^{19}\)

The system of annual examinations and elections also was especially vicious, since it meant that appointments were based not on the qualifications of the teacher but on the performance of her classes in the annual oral examinations and on her contacts with officials in charge of hiring. She also was expected to evince more than the ordinary brand of patriotism and to lead the way in suggesting new means of displaying it among her classes. So onerous did this responsibility become that the *Picayune* charged in the Fall of 1864 that the "good of the scholar is

\(^{19}\) "Diary of Clara Solomon," entry for June 15, 1862; New Orleans Daily True Delta, July 15, 1862; New Orleans Picayune, November 26, 1862; *New Orleans Era*, June 29, 1864. The city superintendent of education, on the other hand, was receiving a salary of $5,000 per year by 1864 (*New Orleans Bee*, September 10, 1864)---the same year in which the teachers petitioned the bureau of education for an increase in salary. The bureau refused to take up the question (*New Orleans Daily True Delta*, January 8, 1865). Teachers in the private schools received even less; $30.00 per month was an average salary in one of the largest boys' schools. See Polyclene Reynes to Emile Reynes, New Orleans, December 11, 1863, in Reynes Family Papers, 1862-64, Louisiana State University Archives, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. About the only favor shown the teachers was Banks's offer in 1864 of free transportation to the North for the summer vacation (*New Orleans Era*, June 30, 1864).
quite subordinate to that of the teacher, and especially to that of the politician, to whom she is an instrument or an associate. . . .

Parrots themselves, they produce parrots. . . ." One cannot help but feel too that the elementary school teacher who taught her little girl pupils to sing the following chorus as its subject marched between their drawn-up ranks must have been desperately anxious to please her political masters:

We are marching along, we are marching along,
For God and our country we are marching along,
Banks is our leader and he's gallant and strong,
So we'll gird on our armor and be marching along.\(^{20}\)

Though the curriculum of the public schools technically called for a thorough grounding in the three R's, plus French, Latin, and Greek; Algebra and Trigonometry; History; Geography; Botany; and Natural, Mental and Moral Philosophy, there is evidence that much time was spent in less academic pursuits. Early in 1863, the board of visitors of the First District passed a resolution requiring the "singing of the National airs in our schools and the inculcation of Union sentiments by the teachers." And uncounted hours were devoted to preparing school children

\(^{20}\) See "Manual of the Bureau of Education" in New Orleans \underline{Daily Delta}, December 4, 1862; also New Orleans \underline{Daily True Delta}, September 10, 1862, September 25, 1864; New Orleans \underline{Picayune}, November 11, 1864; and New Orleans \underline{Era}, May 31, 1864.
of the city for their part in the spectacular inaugural ceremonies for Governor Hahn in 1864.21

Faced with these conditions, it is small wonder that many New Orleans parents chose not to send their children to school at all. Others, who could afford it, sent their children to one of the city's 140 private schools. Here they were instructed by many of the teachers ousted from the public school system after the arrival of the Federals. Though all of these schools disclaimed any desire to use political influence on their pupils, it was no secret that the majority of teachers and students alike shared an antipathy for the occupying forces.22

As early as September, 1862, Butler's official newspaper suggested that teachers in private schools should be "required, not only to take the oath of allegiance to the United States, but to give bonds—and heavy ones, neither to encourage nor permit the expression of sentiments unfriendly to the United States government in the schools under their charge." But the commanding general was busy with other matters, and

21
For the complete curriculum, see Report of the State Superintendent of Education, 1864, Appendix A; for the resolution, see New Orleans Era, March 6, 1863; and for time spent in preparing the children for their part in the inaugural, see New Orleans Era for February, 1864, passim.

22
Almost 21,000 of the 37,644 educables were not enrolled in 1864, Report of the State Superintendent of Education, 1864, Appendix B. For attitude of parents, see Carrie Hyatt to Arthur W. Hyatt, New Orleans, June 26, 1864, in Hyatt Collection, I.

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there is no evidence that he ever gave much attention to the private schools. 23

This situation was not to be continued under General Banks, however. The new commander employed a staff of "special police," attached to the Office of the Provost Marshal General, and assigned to them the job of ferreting out "seditious nests" among the private schools. On May 8, 1863, the special police descended without warning on several of the most fashionable girls' schools in the city, jubilantly discovered a few freestyle sketches of the rebel flag in schoolgirl copybooks, and promptly haled the schoolmistresses into the Provost Court. Charged with promoting treason in her school, the first schoolmistress—a British subject—indignantly insisted that though some of the younger pupils might have made such drawings without her knowledge, the older students had exhibited an "unsurpassed ladylike deportment" and had been guilty of no political crime. "Judge" A. DeB. Hughes admonished her that it was her duty to see that the "mind of the rising generation should be trained with proper loyal feelings," and fined her $100. 24

Then, warming to the work, he took up the case of Madame Locquet, whose institute on Camp Street numbered among its students the daughters of some of the city's best families. Madame Locquet declared that she

23
New Orleans Daily Delta, September 18, 23, 1862.

24
New Orleans Daily True Delta and Picayune, May 9, 1863. For an eye-witness account of the raid on Madame Locquet's, see Journal of Josephine Moore, April 1–May 23, 1863, in Southern Historical Collection, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
did not feel that it was any of her business if her pupils wanted to draw flags. The judge fined her $250 and said he regretted he had been so lenient with her predecessor. He was equally severe with the third schoolmistress, a Miss Picot, who appeared with her mother and earnestly pleaded that she had tried to "enforce the rule that no political demonstrations, offensive to the government, be indulged in."25

The Era, Banks's official organ, expressed great satisfaction over the arrests and sentences and congratulated the chief of police on his "bringing to light the evils prevailing in these treasonable nurseries..." Back at the Locquet Institute on Camp Street, sympathetic students took up a collection and managed, before the end of the term, to make up $177 of the headmistress' $250 fine.26

Not all the schoolmistresses were so fortunate, however. When, in the following week, the special officers descended upon the school kept by a Mrs. Morrison, "an elderly lady" and a registered enemy scheduled to leave the city on May 15, the judge imposed a $200 fine which she could not pay. "When we left the courtroom," noted the Picayune reporter, "... She was still seated there, crying."27

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25 New Orleans Daily True Delta and Picayune, May 9, 1863.

26 New Orleans Era, May 9, 1863. Moore Journal, entry for May 23, 1863. "Judge" Hughes was actually only the clerk of the Provost Court but had elevated himself to the bench on the departure of Butler's appointee early in 1863. For a fuller discussion of the abuses of this court, see Chapter XII, infra.

27 New Orleans Picayune, May 13, 1863.
Two weeks later, a Federal officer connected with the University Hospital located opposite the Jesuit School on Baronne Street noticed some boys walking around rather than under a Union flag nearby. At his suggestion, the special officers conducted a search of that school and again uncovered hand-drawn Confederate flags in some of the student copybooks. Father Anthony Jourdan, the principal, declared that there were 250 pupils in his completely nonpolitical school and that it was quite "impossible for the teachers to know and unreasonable to hold them responsible for the acts" of so many boys. "Judge" Hughes disagreed, however, and fined him $250.  

Other private schools were searched during the remainder of May, but the spiteful attempt of little Augustine Poree to include her teacher, Miss Louisa Mullen, among those fined happily failed. Augustine had been sent home by Miss Mullen for cursing her in the classroom, but told her parents that her teacher had sent her home for wearing a Union flag. This case was heard in the court of Provisional Judge Charles Peabody who, on learning the facts, threw it out of court.

During the 1863-64 school year, the private schools apparently were left alone, but in mid-July of 1864, Banks again turned his attention to them. On July 13, he appointed Judge E. S. Hiestand, the Reverend Elijah Guion, and Dr. A. P. Dostie to a commission to "visit,

28
New Orleans Bee, May 22, 23, 1863; New Orleans Picayune, May 23, 1863. Luther Sawtell, the soldier-informer, was miffed when he failed to receive credit in the press for his part in the case and pointedly called it to the attention of the Era. See issue of May 24, 1863.

29
examine, and report upon the organization, studies, and general
tendencies, and the character of the teachers of all private schools. . . ." Their report was to "embrace a full description of such schools, the
number of pupils, the objects for which they are organized, and the
general influence produced upon their pupils and the community." Thus
charged, the commission armed themselves with a list of forty questions
and set out to determine the state of patriotism in the private schools.30

The members of the commission apparently had a pretty good
idea of what it would find for, on beginning its work, one of the members
(Judge Hiestand) gave a preliminary statement to the press in which he
indicated his belief that many of the schools had been "gotten up
within the last two years . . . with the design of keeping the children
from what is vulgarly termed Yankee influence." This promptly stirred
the wrath of the Reverend Jeremiah Moynihan, pastor of St. Alphonsus
Catholic Church and principal of the parish school. "I never was, nor
am I now, afraid of 'Yankee influence'. . . .," stormed Father Moynihan
in a lather of Irish indignation, and he challenged Hiestand to see
for himself what a superior education the pupils at St. Alphonsus School
were getting. Hiestand, backing water quickly, answered that he had not
meant Father Moynihan's school at all; the commission had not even visited
it yet.31

30 For a list of the questions, see Report of the State Superintendent
of Education, 1864, Appendix B.

31 New Orleans Daily True Delta, July 17, 19, 1864. Father Moynihan
no doubt felt his resentment justified; in 1860, he had gone to some
trouble to import six Irish Dominicans from Cabra, Ireland, to open his
parish school (Roger Baudier, The Catholic Church in Louisiana [New Orleans,
1939], 421).
By the time they had been around to all 140 of the private schools, however, they had obtained what they considered to be a shocking picture of the low condition of patriotism in these institutions. Less than half the schools visited were eligible for a clean bill of health as unquestionably loyal. Of these, many were Lutheran parochial schools in which German was the language of instruction—a circumstance that the commission tactfully deplored almost as much as it did disloyalty.32

In fifty of the schools, "loyalty" was specifically not taught, and in the First District alone, thirty-one principals refused to answer this question at all. Asked if they would object to flying the United States flag above their desks, eleven had answered emphatically that they would; fifty-three ignored the question. Six teachers admitted that their sympathies lay with the Confederacy; five said they were neutral. Twenty were characterized as disloyal, though the report did not indicate whether this information was obtained from the teachers themselves or represented the guess of the commissioners. Two teachers, Mrs. Mary Boyle and C. A. Badad, refused to answer any questions and insulted the commissioners besides. Thirty-one gave "evasive" answers, which the commissioners felt concealed a most reprehensible disloyalty.33

32 See Report of the State Superintendent of Education, 1864, Appendix B.

33 Ibid. and table. Archbishop Jean Marie Odin had to intercede for Badad whose school was closed as a result of his answers to the commissioners. See J. M. Odin to James Bowen, New Orleans, December 4, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 7, National Archives, and Charles P. Stone to Harai Robinson, New Orleans, December 4, 1864, in Endorsement Book, Volume 303, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, Ibid.
Equally disturbing was the fact that the Catholic schools of the city, with the largest per school enrollments, uniformly ignored both the commission and its questionnaire. No reason was ever given, though the treatment meted out to the Jesuit School in 1863 may have influenced all the principals, and, with the exception of the commission report, the subject never was brought up again.34

"The general tendency" in the majority of schools visited, according to the commission, was "pernicious; as such a course, undoubtedly is to allow a feeling of hostility to the government of the United States . . . to be fostered and encouraged. Such we actually found to be the case on questioning some of the older children . . . who seemed to take pride in declaring that they are rebels." So exasperating was this situation that the commission concluded its report on the private schools with the statement of a rather advanced philosophy of education:

"THE CHILDREN OF CITIZENS ARE CITIZENS, AND BELONG TO THE COUNTRY AS MUCH AS THEIR PARENTS. . . . IF THE STATE HAS A RIGHT TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR EDUCATION, THE STATE MAY ALSO PROVIDE HOW THEY MAY BE EDUCATED. . . ."35

Apparently a few of the schools visited were closed as a result of the commission's report, but there is no evidence to indicate a widespread reform among them. No doubt the departure of Banks in September and the pre-occupation of the members of the commission with politics

34 Report of the State Superintendent of Education, 1864, Appendix B. A search of the papers of Archbishop Odin for this period gives no evidence of episcopal interference, though this too is a possibility.

(two of them were members of the constitutional convention) resulted in its dismissal from official thoughts.

Other than its public and private schools, which provided education on the elementary and secondary levels, New Orleans offered little in the way of higher education during the war period. The normal school, which had flourished in the first four years of its existence, apparently was discontinued during the absence of its founder, Confederate Robert Mills Lusher, and, though various attempts to revive it were made and small sums appropriated for it in the city budget, none of the attempts seem to have been successful.36

The Medical College of Louisiana had been founded in 1856 by Dr. Erasmus D. Fenner, a noted Kentucky-born physician, apparently as part of the Southern nationalist movement. Its building at the corner of Common and Philippa streets had been designed by the popular architect James Dakin and had been presented to the college by the legislature. Nearly 250 students were enrolled at the time of the outbreak of the war, but the departure of many of them for service in the Confederate army forced the college to close its doors. During the war the building was used as a general hospital by the Federal forces, and classes for Negroes were held in its museum.37

36 Ibid., p. 20. A half-hearted attempt was made in 1864 to revive Normal School classes at night, and attendance was at first compulsory for all public school teachers. They became so unpopular in a short time, however, that classes were cut to one night a week and attendance made voluntary. See New Orleans Era, November 3, 13, 1864.

37 Norman's New Orleans, 168-69; Rightor, Standard History, 217.
Despite this discouraging picture, the city was not completely devoid of intellectual life. The various municipal districts had had for some time before the war public (though not free) libraries. These were consolidated in 1862 into the "City Library and Lyceum Society," and free use of its services was extended to teachers, school system employees, and members of the city government. Clergymen, newspaper editors, city employees, and Federal troops also enjoyed a limited free use, and public school children and other citizens became members of the society in return for fees ranging from twenty-five cents per month to thirty dollar life memberships.  

In addition to the 20,000 volumes in the city library, a portion of the state library was saved when the capitol was burned during the battle of Baton Rouge in 1862 and was brought to New Orleans. This library had been founded in 1838 and numbered 50,028 volumes at the time the capitol was destroyed. Apparently only about half of these were saved, and many sets turned up in New Orleans incomplete. They were housed temporarily in the City Hall and later moved to the University of Louisiana (which became Tulane University) library.

The city library apparently enjoyed a wide popularity during the war years as a means of escape from current problems. The Bee reported during the summer of 1862 that of the 12,122 volumes drawn for use since

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38

39
Rigtor, Standard History, 435.
1861, 51 per cent were works of fiction and 13 per cent were juveniles.\textsuperscript{40}

In general, however, the lack of interest in education of which the \textit{Era} complained in 1864 seems to have been characteristic of the popular attitude. To those citizens who gave any thought at all to the schools (and there is not much evidence that many did), they were either institutions where the younger generation could be inculcated with "loyalty"—as the politician thought—or protected from contact with it—as the patrons of the private schools felt. For most citizens, the question of how to obtain the daily necessities of life and keep free of the law were a sufficient tax upon the mind. Nourishment of the intellect was a luxury indulged in by few.

\textsuperscript{40} \textit{New Orleans Bee, July 21, 1862.}
Chapter VI

THE HEATHEN INHERITANCE

O God, the heathens are come into
Thy inheritance: they have defiled
Thy holy temple: they have made
Jerusalem as a place to keep fruit.
Ps. LXXVIII, 1

If there was one element of the population of New Orleans that was to prove a constant thorn in the Federal flesh, that element was to be found in a strange corner indeed—for it was made up of the representatives of organized religion. With a unanimity of feeling that completely transcended the boundaries of sectarianism, the clergy of New Orleans were united almost to a man in their devotion to the Southern cause.

This paradoxical adherence to the cause of rebellion among the traditional pillars of law and order is not so strange, however, when it is examined more closely. For several of the denominations represented in New Orleans, secession simply meant the political confirmation of a spiritual break that had occurred almost two decades before the first shot was fired at Fort Sumter. And for the two groups that had not split—the Catholic and Episcopal churches—the break did not appear inconsistent either. Catholicism had weathered more than one civil war; and had not the Episcopal bishop of Louisiana, donning his sword like the Norman Odo, given his positive approval and blessing to the Southern cause by accepting a commission in its armies? Many another churchman with a less military bent than Bishop Leonidas Polk nevertheless
accompanied Southern armies as chaplains—among them, New Orleans' noted Presbyterian pastor, Dr. Benjamin Morgan Palmer.¹

"With a few honorable exceptions," a correspondent of the Daily Delta wrote in the Fall of 1862, "the whole clerical body of this city are alike, and have turned aside from the plain teachings of Holy Writ, and from their solemn obligation to preach only 'Jesus Christ, and him crucified.'" The action of those clergymen who had gone into the Confederate service as chaplains was sharply criticized by the writer, who asked, "Are these ministers of the Gospel justified in leaving their flocks without shepherds . . . that they may indulge in political feeling as unrighteous as unprofessional?" The answer was plainly negative in his view. "Their congregations have . . . taken the oath of allegiance . . . . Let the ministers of the gospel do likewise."²

The conflict between church and state in New Orleans arose almost immediately when, two weeks after the arrival of the troops, President Jefferson Davis of the Confederacy decreed that Friday, May 16, be set aside as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer. Butler promptly forbade its observance. "Churches and Religious Houses are to be kept open as in times of profound peace," he directed, "but no religious services are to be had upon the authority of the above mentioned." The churches abided by his decree, but the citizens were not so compliant.

¹ "Leonidas K. Polk," in DAB, XV, 39-40; "Benjamin Morgan Palmer," ibid., XIV, 175-76. Of all New Orleans churches, only the German Lutheran congregations seem to have been exceptions to the general Rebel rule.

² New Orleans Delta, October 3, 1862.
"General B. F. Butler forbade that the day be observed," noted diarist Zoe Campbell. "In spite of that I fasted."³

Federal officers who attended New Orleans churches soon complained too that they were being forced to pray for the President of the Confederacy and for the success of Southern arms. The military commandant moved to put a stop to this seditious practice and ordered on May 28 that "hereafter in the churches of the city of New Orleans prayers will not be offered up for the destruction of the Union or Constitution of the United States, for the success of rebel armies, for the Confederate states, so called, or any officer of the same, civil or military. . . ." Protection would be afforded to all religious establishments, the order continued, but it would not be "allowed to be perverted to the upholding of treason or the advocacy of it in any form."⁴

Apparently churches in which a prayer for the authorities was an established part of the service sidestepped the issue during the summer by omitting it altogether and substituting a period of silent prayer when it was supposed to occur. This sophistry soon was the subject of new Federal action.⁵

³ General Orders No. 27, New Orleans, May 13, 1862, in Butler Papers; "Diary of Clara Solomon," entry for May 13, 1862; Zoe Campbell Diary, entry for May 16, 1862.


⁵ For an example of the type of prayer used, see prayer of Bishop W. M. Green of Mississippi in New Orleans Civil War Papers, Folder M 32, Tulane University Archives, New Orleans, Louisiana; Journal of Julia LeGrand, 121.
In Special Order No. 33, Shepley now warned that the "omission in the service of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New Orleans of the prayer for the President of the United States and others in authority, will be considered as evidence of hostility to the Government of the United States." In a joint reply, the Episcopal clergymen of the city advised him that the "Protestant Episcopal Church in the diocese of Louisiana has ordered the discontinuance of that prayer ... and that the Bishop of the diocese has ordered the clergy to act accordingly." Since there was no connection between church and state, they felt that they could "recognize no interference on the part of either civil or military authorities in ecclesiastical matters." Their only choice, they continued, had been to "omit such services as contain the prayer which you have held to be offensive." Furthermore, they informed the military commandant, they resented his imputation that in complying with their "canonical obligations" they were giving evidence of hostility to the United States; "you have no right to regard as evidence of hostility ... a failure on our part to use a prayer which is not in our liturgy."6

Having thus voiced their protest, the clergy continued to omit the controversial prayer, but the storm was brewing. On Sunday, October 26, Butler's adjutant-general attended the services in St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

6 Special Order No. 33, New Orleans, September 29, 1862, in New Orleans Picayune, December 18, 1862; Rev. Drs. Leacock, Goodrich, Fulton et al. to Shepley, New Orleans, October 2, 1862, ibid.
Before the time had come for praying for the President of the United States, or the time for the omission rather, Colonel Strong who had been mistaken by the congregation for one of our own people, arose and whispered something in Mr. Goodrich's ear. Col. Strong... was very pale and much excited, and as he was wrapped in a cloak which covered his military dress he was thought to be some mourner who had requested prayers of the minister. He had appeared so nervous and depressed and so deathly pale that he excited the sympathy of the people; great was the surprise therefore when he arose and in the name of the Government of the United States, forbade the ceremonies of the church to proceed, and ordered the congregation to disperse.  

A near riot followed this interruption. Women surged around Strong, threatening him. The Reverend Dr. Goodrich declared his intention to pronounce benediction on his flock, and Strong forbade it. The minister went ahead anyway and spoke to his now sobbing congregation, after which Strong led him away.  

Dr. Goodrich and two of his fellow Episcopal clergymen, Dr. Leacock, the rector of Christ Church Cathedral, and Dr. John Fulton, rector of Calvary Episcopal Church, had all registered themselves as enemies when Butler issued General Order No. 76, and apparently both Leacock and Fulton had observed the same practice that caused the arrest of Goodrich. Later that day, therefore, Butler moved to make an example of them, and they were ordered to report themselves aboard the U.S.S. Cahawba at 4 P.M. the next day. "Your absence is likely to be of 

7 *Journal of Julia LeGrand*, 121-23.

8 *Ibid.*; the incident inspired a lengthy lyrical protest, "The Battle of St. Paul's," which was secretly circulated among the population. A copy is in *New Orleans Civil War Papers*, Folder M 32, Tulane University Archives.
considerable duration," Butler told them dourly, "and it would be advisable to prepare accordingly." Then, apparently with his mind on the church plate, he added, "You can take nothing, however, but your personal baggage." Three other Episcopal clergymen were arrested at the same time.9

With the departure and arrest of the officiating clergy, the Episcopal churches of the city were closed. Hardly had the ministers departed, however, before Chaplain T. E. R. Chubbuck, an Episcopal lay reader who was serving with the Thirty-first Massachusetts, presented himself to Warden Charles L. Harrod of Christ Church and asked for the keys to the church. Since he reinforced his request with an order from Butler, Harrod turned over the keys, first obtaining a receipt for them. During the interview, Chubbuck gave evidence of his intention to conduct services in the church himself, but it remained closed for the time being. The silver communion service which he asked to borrow disappeared from the church, however, and was not returned.10

With the arrival of Banks in December, 1862, the ban on the Episcopal churches was raised, and they were allowed to reopen on Christmas Day. The new commander took note, however, of the reason for their previous closure and warned that "clergymen are subject to the

9 Butler to the Reverend John Fulton, New Orleans, October 26, 1862, in New Orleans Picayune, December 18, 1862. See also New Orleans Delta, September 19, 1862, for a savage attack on the Episcopal clergy.

10 See John S. Kendall (ed.), "Christ Church and General Butler," in Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XXIII (October, 1940), 1241-57.
restrictions imposed upon all other men . . . No appeal to the passions or prejudices of the people or to excite hostility to the Government, open or covert, can be allowed. As public teachers, ministers should give some guaranty of their purpose to the public."\textsuperscript{11}

Apparently the opportunistic Chaplain Chubbuck moved in upon publication of the order and took over the pulpit of Christ Church. Since this was the church attended by most Episcopalians among the Federal officers, the liturgy they heard included the prayer for the right President. In most of the other Episcopal churches, however, the Banks order was interpreted as condoning the omission of that part of the service, and the practice continued. The \textit{Picayune}, emboldened by the general relaxation of Federal restrictions following the arrival of the new commander, supported the action of the clergymen. "By what authority of law, or privilege, or precedent," it demanded," . . . can the temporal power undertake to prescribe the service of any church, or to interfere with it in any manner? . . . The attempt to do so is a stride toward the invasion of the rights of conscience . . . ."\textsuperscript{12}

In February, 1863, the three exiled ministers returned to New Orleans in the hope of regaining their pulpits. Ordered to take the

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\item \textsuperscript{12} See Charles Harrod to Banks, New Orleans, January 9, 1863, in \textit{Letters Received (Civil)}, 1863, Box 2, National Archives. In 1866, the congregation was still trying to oust Chubbuck who, to cement his hold on Christ Church, had gone to Boston to be ordained in 1864 (\textit{New Orleans Daily True Delta}, May 12, 1864). See Kendall (ed.), "Christ Church and General Butler," \textit{loc. cit.}, 1257; \textit{New Orleans Picayune}, December 28, 1862.
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oath of allegiance required of all who wished to land in the city, they declined and were promptly shipped back to New York "after being refused even one visit to their homes, or a simple walk on the shore they loved so well." Lay readers selected from the congregation apparently continued such services as were held in St. Paul's and Calvary churches.13

Though Banks seemed inclined to abide at first by his announced intention not to "interfere with the rights of others," a new source of friction soon presented itself. On the twenty-fifth of April, the combined clergy of New Orleans were informed that the following Thursday, April 30, had been "designated . . . as a day of National humiliation fasting and prayer. . . ." They were requested, accordingly, to read the proclamation of the President from their pulpits and to arrange that "their places of public worship be opened on the day designated for public worship and prayer."14

Word of the proclamation quickly reached the members of the congregations of all denominations throughout the city, and services on Sunday, April 26, took place amid an air of tense expectancy. In several of the Catholic churches, it was not read at all; in the Jesuits'...

13 James Bowen to Banks, February 3, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 1, National Archives; Journal of Julia LeGrand, 120-21, 125; New Orleans Picayune, February 5, 1863.

Church, it was read at the end of the High Mass, when the congregation was able to demonstrate its displeasure by making more noise than usual in leaving, "upsetting stools and making all sorts of noises..."

At St. Anne's Church on St. Philip Street, the pastor not only failed to read the proclamation but he announced a Mass for the dead on April 30. And in St. Mary's Italian Church, which adjoined the residence of the Archbishop, it was read in English, a language understood by almost none of the congregation.\(^1\)

In the Protestant churches of the city, the proclamation was read only in those churches serviced by Federal army chaplains. In one Methodist church, the minister earned the approbation of most of his congregation by announcing that "he was not the regular pastor of the church, and that he had no power to read any notices except such as were authorized by the session of the church, and that therefore he had nothing more to read." One "notorious Yankee family" in the congregation "looked somewhat disappointed" when a scene did not materialize, but the majority of the members, who "intended to have gone home if the proclamation had been read," professed themselves "very much pleased."\(^2\)

The Federal-supported Era was outraged by this reaction. "The

\(^1\) New Orleans Era, April 28, 1863. The Era said the Mass for the dead was only to be for Rebel dead.

\(^2\) Moore Journal, entry for April 27, 1863. "I suppose the church will now be closed," concluded the insouciant diarist, "as the Yankees assume to be the directors in religious as well as military and political affairs."
churches of New Orleans are public institutions," it fumed, "and in our opinion should be subject to the same control exercised over public institutions. They cannot be permitted to propagate treason under the mantle of religion. We had better go without churches than to have them aid and abet the wickedness and sin of this rebellion. . . ."

On the following Thursday, young Josephine Moore reported that she had seen a "few persons going to church. Our own church was opened . . . and the congregation consisted of the minister, sexton, one other man, and an old colored woman." Catholic Zoe Campbell, her sister, and her cousin, spent the day in Algiers visiting her brother who was a prisoner of war in the Belleville Iron Foundry.

When President Lincoln decreed subsequent days of humiliation in November, 1863, and August, 1864, the provost marshal of New Orleans was ordered to serve copies of the proclamation "on each of the preaching Clergymen in the City," but to omit its publication in the newspapers. As a result, they attracted little notice.

The popular reaction to the question of reading the first proclamation apparently made Banks feel justified in discontinuing his

17
New Orleans Era, April 28, 1863.

18
Moore Journal, entry for April 30; Zoe Campbell Diary, entry for April 30, 1862. See also New Orleans Era, May 2, 1863, for a report on the churches serviced by Army chaplains.

19
James Bowen to H. M. Porter, New Orleans, November 18, 1863, in Letter Press, Volume 297, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, National Archives.
course of noninterference, and from this time forward he began to
take an active interest in the affairs of New Orleans churches.
An occasion for interference shortly came up literally under his
nose. Within view of his official residence on Coliseum Place was
the Coliseum Place Baptist Church, largest church of that denomination
in the city. The pastor was absent in Confederate service, but
regular services had been conducted by the trustees and deacons.
On July 28, they were ordered to surrender "possession of the body
of the Church ... to the Reverend Mr. Horton and W. C. Duncan for
the purpose of holding public religious worship therein." The trustees
and those of the congregation who held the same political views were
at first allowed to retain the basement for their own services, but
on August 29, the entire church was turned over to Horton and Duncan
and the regular congregation displaced.20

In November, 1863, interference received official War Depart-
ment sanction when, at the importuning of Northern Methodists, command-
ing generals in the areas of the South and West which had been restored
to Northern control were instructed to co-operate with that group in
placing Northern Methodist ministers in "all houses of worship belonging
to the Methodist Episcopal Church South in which a loyal minister, ap-

20
See James Bowen to Trustees of the Coliseum Baptist Church,
New Orleans, July 28, 1863, and id. to W. D. Duncan, New Orleans,
August 29, 1863, both ibid.
pointed by a local bishop of said church, does not officiate."

Early in 1864, armed with this directive, Methodist Bishop Edward R. Ames arrived in New Orleans "to look after the spiritual and temporal interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church. . . ."

His reception by the flock there lacked warmth--at least in so far as the pastor of the McGehee Methodist Church on Carondelet Street was concerned. Though the bishop had let it be known that he would speak at the services in this church on Sunday, January 17, he got no closer to the pulpit than a seat among the congregation.

This state of affairs was not allowed to continue. When the acting pastor, a Mr. Davis, not only refused to turn over the church to Bishop Ames--saying he had been "appointed by the 'Louisiana Conference' to take charge of the church"--but also had the effrontery to pray for the "'President of the States!'" without specifying to which federation he was referring, the bishop had him removed by the Federal authorities. The move met with the emphatic approval of the Era, which voiced the hope that the bishop would "root out all the pernicious secession seeds from his spiritual garden, so that the gospel may go hand in hand with patriotism."

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22 New Orleans Era, January 19, 1864.

23 Ibid., and issue of January 24, 1864.
Spurred by this hope, the bishop wasted little time in bringing it to fruition. The Reverend Mr. Bass was appointed temporarily to fill the pulpit in the McGehee Church. On January 25, he requested that Chaplain E. Jones of the Thirty-Fourth Indiana regiment be appointed to the pulpit of the Monroe Street Methodist Church, and Banks approved the request.24

By April 3, the Era was able to report that "all of the Methodist churches are now on the side of the Union, and soon, no doubt, others will follow." Five hundred children were said to be in attendance at the Sunday School conducted in the Unionist Episcopalian stronghold at Christ Church, and one hundred and fifty were members of classes held under the new dispensation at the Coliseum Place Baptist Church. In addition, a Union Ministerial Conference had been organized by the dynamic Dr. J. V. Newman, a protege of Methodist Bishop Ames, in order to "secure more systematic effort" and stimulate the progress of "loyal Christianity."25

Impressed by the success of the Northern Methodists in thus utilizing the armed might of the Union to recapture the lost spiritual realm of the South, in March, 1864, the Northern Presbyterians obtained

24 Ibid., January 24, 1864; John F. Collins to Banks, January 25, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, National Archives.

25 New Orleans Era, April 3, 1864. This represented a healthy change from the situation in 1863, when "secession sentiments" were said to infect a number of Sunday schools "to the great scandal of true Unionists." (New Orleans Picayune, June 21, 1863). See also New Orleans Times, April 27, 1864, and Era, July 3, 1864, for further evidence of "progress."
a similar order from the War Department, giving them permission to
send missionaries into the Military Divisions of the Mississippi, the
South, and Virginia and North Carolina, and the Department of the Gulf.
Commanders in these areas were urged to give the missionaries "all the
aid, countenance, and support which may be practicable ... in the
execution of their important mission." 26

Banks was apparently more than willing to give the support
suggested, for in June, 1864, his Provost Marshal General appointed a
commission consisting of the Reverend Charles Strong, D. H. Alden, and
R. H. Shannon, to conduct a loyalty check on the trustees "of the several
Presbyterian and Baptist Churches. ... " While the commission was
conducting its investigation, the commanding general's watchful eye fell
upon still another instance of disloyalty in the ranks of religion, and
he ordered the Synodical Depository of Presbyterian Publications on
Camp Street seized as rebel property. 27

Late in August the commission turned in a damning report on the
affairs of the local Presbyterian and Baptist churches, demonstrating that

26
E. D. Townsend to the Generals Commanding the Military Divisions
of the Mississippi and the Department of the Gulf, of the South, and of
Virginia and North Carolina ... , Washington, March 10, 1864, in Letters
Received (Civil), 1864, Box 1, National Archives. See also Louis Voss
(comp.), Presbyterianism in New Orleans (n.p. [New Orleans], 1931), 68.

27
James Bowen to the Reverend Charles Strong and D. H. Alden,
New Orleans, June 4, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 299, Correspondence of
the Provost Marshal General, National Archives. Strong preached regularly
in the Felicity Road Methodist Church; Shannon was United States Commissioner
in New Orleans. See also Banks to Bowen, n.d. [August 6, 1864], in Letters
Received (Civil), 1864, Box 8, National Archives.

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most of their regular pastors were absent in the Confederate service, that a majority of their elders and deacons were disloyal, and that they were in a state of financial disintegration. Furthermore, the commission reported in the case of the Presbyterian churches, they were really the property of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, rather than of the General Assembly of the Confederate States as their leaders claimed. Armed with this damaging evidence, the way was open for Banks to turn all the churches of the two denominations over to the representatives of their Northern bodies. 28

During this period of reorganization among the more evangelical sects, the Episcopalians were still stoutly resisting the influence of Unionism in the churches which remained in their control. Late in January, 1864, however, the spirit of leniency under which this had been possible was completely dissipated, and their lay readers were told that the prayer for the President of the United States was to be read in subsequent services. When the prayers were still omitted in the service of January 30, the wardens and trustees of St. Paul's, St. Peter's, and Trinity churches were again warned to include them. The vestry of Trinity Church promised to see to it, but those of St. Peter's and St. Paul's continued recalcitrant. The Provost Marshal General therefore

28 "Report on the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches," in New Orleans Daily True-Delta, September 4, 1864. A search of the Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General failed to turn up the manuscript copy of this report.
appointed a new—and loyal—set of trustees for these churches. At the same time, a Northern rector—the Reverend Elijah Guion—

took over the pulpit of St. Paul's and, in the hope of keeping his

congregation, proposed to present his views to them "in favor of

recognition of the Government. . . ." Apparently his views were not

acceptable immediately, for the prayers for the President of the United

States continued unsaid for another month, and it was not until April 12

that Provost Marshal General Bowen was able to report that Mr. Guion had

succeeded in reading the prayers at the afternoon service on April 10.

Other Northern pastors arrived to take over the pulpits of

Calvary and Trinity churches during the Spring of 1864, and by mid-June,

General Bowen was able to report complete and uniform loyalty among

the Episcopal clergy. That the congregations were still not quite as

pure as their new pastors was evidenced, however, by his order of June 3

to the trustees of all Episcopal churches to submit lists of the wardens,

vestrymen, trustees, pewholders, and other members, "with their places

of residence," along with a detailed account of all financial transactions

29

James Bowen to Thomas J. Dix, New Orleans, January 27, 1864, in
Letter Press, Vol. 298, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General,
National Archives; id. to Wardens and Trustees of St. Peter's, St. Paul's,
and Trinity Episcopal Churches, New Orleans, February 2, 1864, ibid.; id.
to Charles P. Stone, February 3, 1864, ibid.; id. to Wardens and Vestry
of St. Peter's and St. Paul's Churches, March 1, 1864, ibid.

30

Id. to Trustees of St. Paul's Church, New Orleans, March 2, 1864,
ibid.; id. to Rev. Mr. Guion, April 9, 1864, ibid.; id. to Banks, April 12,
1864, ibid.
and the "present pecuniary condition of the corporation with an
inventory of church buildings and their valuation."31

As was the case with the investigation of the private schools,
official interest in the affairs of the Episcopal and other churches seems
to have dwindled with the departure of General Banks for the North in
September, 1864. In this instance, however, very little work remained to
be done among the church leadership. Among the laity, the situation
was handled by staying away from the services altogether when political
differences seemed insurmountable.32

Few of the difficulties encountered by the Protestant churches
of New Orleans were experienced by the clergy and laity of the Catholic
church, the largest single religious group in the city. Perhaps because
of their very numbers, or because Union leaders feared to offend the
large Irish element among their own troops, or because His Excellency
the Most Reverend Jean Marie Odin, Archbishop of New Orleans, provided
his flock with a masterly example of piety, prudence, and tact, clashes
between Catholic Orleanians and the Federal authorities were rare.

This does not indicate, however, that either the Catholic clergy
or laity was any less devoted to the Southern cause than the members of

31 Id. to George R. Drake, New Orleans, June 15, 1864, in Letter
Press, Vol. 299, ibid. See also endorsement of Bowen, quoted in that of
T. E. Chickering on W. C. Hopkins to Banks, July 18, 1864, in Letters
Received (Civil), 1864, Box 7, ibid.; and New Orleans Daily True Delta,
May 22, 1864.

32 See Carrie Hyatt to Arthur W. Hyatt, New Orleans, June 26, 1864,
in Hyatt Collection, I.
other congregations. Like other Louisianians, they had husbands, sons, brothers, and sweethearts in the Confederate armies, and their sympathies remained with their fighting men. When the call for troops by President Davis came in 1861, Archbishop Odin had promptly asked for chaplain volunteers from among his clergy—the ranks of whom were not crowded to begin with—and his correspondence for the war period reveals a deep devotion to the South in which he had worked for many years prior to his elevation to the archbishopric of New Orleans.33

Gentle and self-sacrificing, Archbishop Odin was idolized by his people and wielded an immense influence on the French, Irish, Italian, Spanish, and (to some extent) German segments of New Orleans' population. His was the second oldest diocese in America and one of the largest, both from the point of view of numbers of communicants and of square miles covered. To administer successfully so large a spiritual domain required great executive ability and unbounded wisdom, and in both, Archbishop Odin was extremely well-qualified.34

There was probably no design in his doing so, but by leaving New Orleans on June 15, 1862, to make his ad limina visit to Rome, he removed himself from the possibility of friction with Butler for the rest of the latter's administration. In his absence, and probably under his instructions,

33 Baudier, Catholic Church, 425. See also correspondence of Archbishop Jean Marie Odin, 1862-64, in Archives of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, Chancery Office, New Orleans, Louisiana.

34 Baudier, Catholic Church, 425.
his clergy followed a policy that never brought them into direct conflict with the authorities, though a few—like Father Ignatius Mullen, the pugnacious 70-year old pastor of St. Patrick’s Church—expressed open defiance of the Federal leader with impunity. Nor did the question of which President to pray for ever become an issue in Catholic-Federal relations, since a formal prayer for the authorities is not a regular part of the Catholic liturgy. 35

This does not mean, however, that the war period of the occupation was without problems for the Catholics, clergy and laity alike, of New Orleans. To Archbishop Odin personally, the years of the war presented a particularly difficult problem, for part of his diocese was within the Federal lines and part (the larger by far) was outside. Cut off from frequent and easy contact with these more distant regions, Monseigneur Odin was beset by constant worries about the Church there. Not until the Fall of 1864 was he able to obtain Federal permission to visit Catholic churches in the parishes outside the limits of Orleans, and his reports on that visit indicate the accumulation of a large number of persons who had never received the sacrament of confirmation. 36

35 The ad limina visit is required of all Catholic bishops at least once in every ten years. Monseigneur Odin combined his with a recruiting trip to obtain new priests for the archdiocese of New Orleans. See Journal of Julia LeGrand, 269-70, and Baudier, Catholic Church, 427, for story of Father Mullen’s daring. Archbishop Odin handled the problem of politics in prayers by making “peace” the object of Catholic devotions.

36 See correspondence of Archbishop Jean Marie Odin with Etienne Rousselon, August-September, 1864, in Archives of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.
In addition, diocesan finances had been in a deplorable state when he arrived from the See of Galveston to assume his duties in February, 1861, and he had been forced to lay a special ecclesiastical tax on the churches of his diocese in order to bring about some semblance of financial order. Revenue from this tax, the ius cathedraticum, was of course cut off with the exception of the city of New Orleans after Butler's arrival. Other problems faced him: his predecessor, Archbishop Blanc, had successfully ridden out a serious internal storm in the Church in Louisiana, but many reforms were still called for and would not wait for the end of the war.37

But the most disturbing problem to arise during the war years of his tenure was that which concerned Father Claude Pascal Maistre, an uncompromising Unionist and abolitionist who, as early as 1862, began to incite Negroes against whites. Ordered to desist by the archbishop, he defied his ecclesiastical superior and was put under censure. He ignored this, however, and continued his activities. His church, St. Rose de Lima, was then placed under interdict and the congregation forbidden the use of it. Father Maistre took no notice of this action except to refuse to deliver up the keys of the church to a representative of the archbishop. They were, he said, in the hands of the Provost Marshal General of the Department of the Gulf, under whose protection he was continuing to exercise his spiritual office. Exasperated, the archbishop

took his case to Provost Marshal General Bowen. "I would not importune you with this request," he concluded mildly, "were it not that the unfortunate priest avails himself of your authorization to continue in his scandalous ministration." 38

Father Maistre finally vacated St. Rose's Church, taking with him all the parochial records, and set himself up as pastor of the schismatic Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, which had an entirely Negro congregation. On the first Sunday of Lent, 1864, Archbishop Odin finally was able to reconsecrate St. Rose's and return it to use by its rightful congregation. 39

Another source of concern stemmed from the activities of fiery Abbe Napoleon J. Perche, the ardently pro-Southern editor of Le Propagateur Catholique, who attracted the unfavorable notice of the editor of Butler's official journal in the Fall of 1862. The Propagateur was the weekly French-language organ of the archdiocese of New Orleans, but in the eyes of the editor of the Daily Delta, it was "crammed with rank treason." As a result of this discovery, Abbe Perche was placed


39 Baudier, Catholic Church, 413. Father Maistre was not reconciled with his superiors until 1871. For activities of the Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, see New Orleans Tribune, August 2 and November 27, 1864.
under house arrest and his editorial expressions in the *Propagateur* strictly censored. Its publication ultimately was suspended by Banks in May, 1864.  

Despite these problems, the archdiocese of New Orleans was extremely fortunate during the years 1862-65. The deep concerns of the times evoked a new and deeper fervor among the Catholic population, and they filled the churches of the city regularly. Among the Creoles, there was evidence of a true and sincere piety not ordinarily attributed to Latin peoples, and the fortitude exhibited by them and the other segments of the Catholic population inspired the admiration of non-Catholics.  

Outside of the Protestants and Catholics, the Jews of New Orleans constituted the only other significant religious group in the population. Though this community was said to be fairly numerous at the outbreak of the war, and included such prominent citizens as Judah P. Benjamin, only one synagogue was open during the war period of the occupation. Occasional evidences of anti-Semitism appeared in the Federal-supported press, but on the whole this part of the city's religious community managed to escape any clash with the occupying forces.  

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40 New Orleans Delta, November 13, 1862; Le Propagateur Catholique, September 30, 1882; New Orleans Era, May 28, 1864.  

41 See the inspirational letters of the Reynes family in Reynolds Family Papers, 1862-64; Zoe Campbell Diary, 1862-65, in which she gives vivid pictures of the crowds and their fervor; and Journal of Julia LeGrand, 269-70.  

42 Charles Patton Dimitry, "Miscellaneous Articles" (typescript in Louisiana State Museum Library, New Orleans, Louisiana).
Chapter VII

THE PRIMROSE PATH AND OTHER ROADS TO JAIL

On the day that Butler arrived in New Orleans, the editor of one of the city newspapers noted the appearance in the vicinity of Canal, Girod, and St. Charles streets of gangs of men whom he recognized as "professional ruffians." Fearing the outbreak of one of New Orleans' periodic crime waves, he urged shopkeepers to reopen their shops so that the unemployed could go back to work and not be allowed to form mobs led by these ruffians.¹

Actually, though the crime wave was a regular social phenomenon in New Orleans, the city's record of lawlessness was so disgraceful that it was sometimes difficult to tell a crime wave from any other period in its annals. The apprehensive editor admitted this himself when later in the week he provided his readers with a vivid picture of this aspect of New Orleans life: "... our city ... has become a perfect hell; the temples of justice are sanctuaries for crime; the ministers of the laws, the nominees of blood-stained, vulgar, ribald caballers; licensed murderers shed innocent blood on the most public thoroughfares with impunity; witnesses of the most atrocious crimes are either spirited away, bought off, or intimidated from

¹ New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 1, 1862.
testifying; perjured associates are retained to prove alibis, and ready bail is always procurable..."^{2}

A police force of less than four hundred men had utterly failed in providing protection to life and property for the city's prewar population of nearly 170,000, and their morale had so disintegrated with the arrival of Farragut's fleet that Mayor Monroe had found it necessary to call out the European Brigade and other volunteers to restore order when news of the fall of Forts Jackson and St. Philip led to rioting, looting, and violence.\(^3\)

Though Butler had at first declared his intention of retaining the members of the European Brigade for police duty, he very shortly dismissed them— influenced no doubt by evidence that the various units of the Brigade were not completely neutral in their sympathies. He then appointed a member of his staff, Provost Marshal Jonas H. French, chief of police and directed him to reorganize the city police along loyal lines.\(^4\)

\(^{2}\) See Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle, 59; New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 6, 1862.

\(^{3}\) Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle, 58-59; see also official notices in New Orleans newspapers for April 26-30, 1862; Cable, "New Orleans Before the Capture," in Battles and Leaders, II, 20.

\(^{4}\) See his Proclamation of May 1, 1862, in Butler Papers. He later charged that the British Guard had sent its arms and uniforms to Beauregard. See Butler to George C. Coppel, New Orleans, May 11, 1862, ibid.; Dabney, "Butler Regime," loc. cit., 513.
As municipal employees, the police were informed, they would be expected to take the oath of allegiance, and this news proved unusually disturbing to men who had participated unblinkingly in many an election fraud. The True Delta reported "considerable uneasiness among [them] . . . as to what would be the result of a refusal on their part to take the oath of allegiance . . . simple dismissal or imprisonment." A belated wave of nobility swept the station houses as Provost Marshal French made his rounds, and in the first three districts he visited, only eleven men agreed to take the oath.5

Apparently expecting a flood of applications for positions on the force, French began advertising on May 23 for five hundred "honest, intelligent, courageous and loyal" men. Interested parties were asked to apply in writing and "be vouched for by a gentleman of character and respectability." By June 1, he had announced the appointment of a new force, which had a strongly Irish flavor but which did not number five hundred by any means. Nor, during the war years, did this new force give much evidence of meeting the qualifications for honesty, intelligence, and courage.6


6 New Orleans Picayune, May 23, 1862; New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 23, 1862. The Picayune explained that French had told the police that taking the oath alone would not ensure their jobs, but that if they took it and obtained the recommendation of a reputable citizen in addition they would get first consideration.
In the same month in which the new policemen were appointed, one citizen complained to Colonel French that when he had asked for police assistance in resisting a gang of ruffians who set upon him in the French Quarter he had been told that he must first file an affidavit and take the oath of allegiance. The day after that, the Provost Marshal discovered that police officers in charge of the parish jail were charging prisoners held overnight for the session of the provost court $1.25 each. And it soon became evident that one of the favorite sports of local wags was stealing the caps and badges of policemen found asleep on the banquettes when they were supposed to be patrolling their beats.  

This situation apparently continued through Butler's administration and for some time after the arrival of his successor, for in March, 1863, Banks told his Provost Marshal General, James Bowen, "the Police of New Orleans is now and has been utterly useless." Taking cognizance of the dearth of suitable material in New Orleans itself, he authorized Bowen to import policemen from New York to help in reorganizing the department.

7 New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 19, 20, and October 10, 1862.

8 Banks to Bowen, New Orleans, March 12, 1863, in Endorsement Book, Vol. 309, Correspondence of the Major General Commanding, National Archives. Four detectives were subsequently sent to New Orleans by New York Police Chief John A. Kennedy. See Bowen to Brigadier General Van Vleck, New Orleans, March 14, 1863, in Letter Press, Vol. 296, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, ibid. Bowen was himself a New Yorker.
At the same time Bowen was directing Chief of Police J.A. Hopkins to "carefully select not exceeding twenty discreet sagacious and reliable men" to act as "detective policemen." These men, who were to become Banks's local intelligence agents, were to receive a salary of $2.50 a day—and, according to custom, a share of the fines imposed when their arrests led to convictions. ⁹

The importation of the New York policemen does not seem to have worked the desired miracle on the New Orleans force, however, for Bowen wrote C.W. Killborn, the provost marshal of Orleans Parish, later that month that the police were continuing to arrest too many persons on the charge of vagrancy, among them the wives and mothers of United States soldiers; and Chief Hopkins found it necessary to warn his men that they could not use their positions on the force to avoid paying their rent; that liquor was forbidden in the station houses; that policemen found asleep on their beats would be discharged from the force; and that no officer could enter a coffeehouse except in the line of duty. ¹⁰

The fact that the police force was not uniformed until May, 1863, meant of course that it was equally hard for their superiors and the taxpayers to check on their activities; and there is evidence that

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¹⁰ Id. to Killborn, New Orleans, March 18, 1863, ibid.; Police Record Book, Vol. 312, entries for March 10, April 17, 1863, ibid.
many of them shamefully abused both their positions and their fellow citizens. Stories like that of C.C. Morgan, who was stopped and searched by a policeman and simultaneously relieved of $30.00, only to find himself arrested on a charge of bribing an officer when he complained, were not at all uncommon.

Even more reprehensible, however, was the conduct of the force of "special officers" retained under Banks's direction. These men were sometimes sent within the lines of the Confederacy to do secret service work for the commanding general, but when they were in the city they seemed to specialize in uncovering evidences of disloyalty—and in this they must have been the terror of the citizenry. In October, 1863, Banks authorized his Provost Marshal General to raise their number to between fifty and one hundred men, depending upon the number of "intelligent and trustworthy" candidates available.

The supply of these must have been scanty indeed, for among those hired was P.F. Mancosas, a Confederate deserter who, in February, 1863, had been on trial for the murder of two Confederate officers in

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11 New Orleans Picayune, May 19, 1863; Morgan to Banks, New Orleans, January 26, June 13, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 8, National Archives; F.A. Starring to Whitney Frank, New Orleans, March 1, 1865, in Letter Press, Vol. 300, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, ibid.

12 One of them even arrested the keeper of the Parish Prison for having rebel sympathies. See New Orleans Era, March 3, 1863; Banks to E.G. Beckwith, New Orleans, October 2, 1863, in Endorsement Book, Vol 309, Correspondence of the Major General Commanding, National Archives. For pay of police informers see Cash Book of Provost Marshal General, Vol. 327, ibid., and Payroll of Office of Provost Marshal General, Vol. 327, ibid. There were fifty of these Special Police at the war's end. For some of their activities, see Police Reports of Seizures and Arrests, Vol. 318, ibid.
Lake Ponchartrain. Mancosas did not stay with the work long and resigned in a huff; but in the following July he applied for the position of chief of these special police, reinforcing his application with the signatures of several members of the old "City Hall gang" who were now prominent Unionists. Banks professed himself "desirous" of making the appointment, but when he asked the advice of Provost Marshal General Bowen the latter drily replied that it would be improper to offer Mancosas any appointment at all.  

So flagrant were the abuses committed by these special police that they earned the censure of Provost Judge Henry C. Warmoth, a young man whose strong sense of justice was soon to be blunted. He reported quite righteously in the summer of 1864, however, that "detectives arrest men & put them in prison subject to their own order. The prisoners are kept in confinement during the pleasure of these detectives & finally released upon payment of a sum of money."

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13 Henry D. Pierson to Bowen, New Orleans [November 6, 1863], in Endorsement Book, Vol. 303, Correspondence of the Major General Commanding, National Archives. He received a salary of $100 per month. See also Charles Campbell to Banks, New Orleans, February 5, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 1, ibid., and endorsement of John S. Clarke on Thomas J. Durant to id., New Orleans, February 26, 1863, ibid.; also Joseph H. Wilson et al. to id., New Orleans, July 6, 1864, ibid., 1864, Box 8, with Bowen's endorsement.
To make matters worse, he concluded, it was "all done in the name of the military authorities & is a system of blackmailing headed by prominent attorneys in this city."\textsuperscript{14}

And running like a thread through the pattern of the activities of the special police and many other aspects of the occupation was the name of a mysterious figure—Dr. Issachar Zacharie. Zacharie could usually be found in the anteroom of Banks's office. To some he announced himself as the confidential agent" of President Lincoln; to others, as "Chief of U.S. Detectives." In the eyes of Treasury Agent George S. Denison, he was nothing but a speculator, but even Denison admitted he certainly had the ear of General Banks.\textsuperscript{15}

Though the police of wartime New Orleans failed to reach the prewar arrest record of 44,000 for a two-year period, their average of 1,500 per month for the years 1862-65 did not fall far behind the record.

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{14} H.C. Warmoth to George B. Drake, New Orleans, August 28, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 8, \textit{ibid.}, and endorsement of Provost Marshal General Harai Robinson, who insisted that though the "abuses complained of ... have undoubtedly heretofore existed—measures have been taken to prevent their recurrence." Probably there was much truth in Warmoth's charge, however, for the same few prominent Union lawyers seemed to handle all such cases. See Letters Received (Civil), 1863-65, Boxes 2-11 \textit{passim}, in National Archives.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{15} Denison to Chase, New Orleans, February 1, 1863, in "Chase Correspondence," \textit{loc. cit.}, 353; James S. Richardson to Banks, New Orleans, June 22, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 4, National Archives. See also correspondence between Banks and Zacharie, \textit{ibid.}, for evidence of their intimate connections.
\end{quote}
Of these, approximately one third were women, white and Negro; between 52 and 60 per cent were men, other than servicemen; and only about 12 to 14 per cent were members of the armed forces. 16

The arrests were made on a variety of charges that ranged from simple vagrancy to murder by abortion, and just one day in the inferior courts during the summer of 1862 saw the following range of cases brought up for airing: the body of a white man found floating in the river; two women charged with robbing a Connecticut soldier; an Irishman charged with drunkenness, use of seditious language, and disturbing the peace; a Frenchman charged with the same crimes; the nude body of a 16-year old boy found floating in the river; a woman charged with drunkenness and disturbing the peace; a man charged with assault and battery upon his wife; a woman charged with the same upon a girl; four women charged with disturbing the peace and sleeping in the streets; and an Irishman for stabbing another Irishman; a man for habitual drunkenness; a parolee for disturbing the peace; a coffeehouse customer for attacking another customer with a knife; a man for insulting Federal officers; a free Negro man for larceny; a man for criticizing Butler's hanging of Mumford; two men for using seditious language; and a

16 Shugg, Origins of the Class Struggle, 59. See published statistics on arrests for Fall of 1864 in New Orleans Daily True Delta, November 2; Era, December 2, 1864; and Bee, January 5, 1865.
Federal officer for selling government property. Similar lists could be found in 1864, demonstrating that human nature among the citizens of New Orleans had not been improved after two years of occupation.17

Most of the crimes committed during the war period, however, fell into a few major categories: gambling, prostitution, theft, and violence. And all of these were indirectly multiplied in number by an activity that was not necessarily a criminal offense—the sale of intoxicating liquors.

"Probably no other city in the United States harbored so many unsavory resorts in proportion to the number of its inhabitants," one social historian of the city has declared; in the few squares between Canal Street and the City Hall on St. Charles Street, there were forty-five places where liquor was available, "and nearly all of these were thoroughly disreputable." Nor was St. Charles Street alone in this kind of traffic; Girod Street, Gallatin Street, St. Thomas Street, and the unsavory Corduroy Alley, all vied for the title of "toughest thoroughfare" in New Orleans.18

17 New Orleans Daily True Delta, July 20, 1862; New Orleans Tribune, July 23, 1864. It is interesting to note that the large percentage of these cases involved Irish men and women—a natural result of their extremely low economic status in New Orleans.

18 Asbury, French Quarter, 318. There were so many coffeehouse owners that when Butler ordered them to take out licenses in May, 1862, all who came to provost marshal's office could not be handled. New Orleans Commercial Bulletin, May 20, 1862.
One needs little imagination to picture what might be the result of the arrival of fifteen thousand Federal troops in such a locale. Three days after the arrival of Butler and his men, the True Delta noted that there was "more drunkenness in the city yesterday than we have noticed for some time previous. Among the many we saw drunk were a number of Federal soldiers."19

It was not until September, however, that Federal authorities moved to halt the sale of liquor to troops, and even then the prohibition was limited to enlisted men. Apparently this still did not correct the situation, and in November Butler ordered that "any commissioned officer ... found drinking intoxicating liquors in any public house within this department ... be recommenced to the President for dismissal from the service."20

Many charges of violations of both orders promptly began to appear on the dockets of the city's courts. In most cases, the defense answered with a countercharge that they had been tricked into the violation by fine-conscious police.21

19 New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 4, 1862. Five cents a glass was the going rate for raw whisky. See ibid., January 4, 1863.


21 See, for example, letter of A. Guion to Banks, December 23, 1862, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 2, National Archives.
Indeed, it does not seem strange that the wave of violations followed when one considers that the Federals seemed to follow a policy of never letting their right hand know what the left hand was doing in this matter. In the wake of the troops' arrival came two new types of public house, "introduced into New Orleans by the Northern riff-raff which flocked into the city. . . ." These were the barrel-houses and the concert saloons, which were added to the already numerous coffee-houses and "groceries." The former devoted itself entirely to the serving of beverages which masqueraded under the names of brandy, Irish whisky, and wine. The one-for-the-road type of customer was not welcome in these establishments, and the patron who did not have the physical fortitude to stand a succession of draughts usually was robbed as well as poisoned. The concert saloon, on the other hand, aimed at more elegance and provided its customers with a sleazy form of entertainment and plenty to eat and drink. Repuffed socially by the citizens of New Orleans, the troops were not unwilling to buy hospitality in these places despite regulations forbidding their presence there. 22

In addition to allowing the introduction of these new forms of entertainment, the authorities pursued a vacillating policy on the question of the distillation and importation of liquor, which in the

22 Asbury, French Quarter, 319-20; Sinclair, Port of New Orleans, 259.
and never seems to have reduced the quantity available for sale.\textsuperscript{23}

Early in 1864, in a letter to Banks, Provost Marshal General Bowen deplored the effects of the sale of "ardent spirits" to laborers and suggested that "an order be issued prohibiting its sale except for family supplies." Banks responded with an order prohibiting the importation of liquor without his approval. But at the same time, Bowen --apparently with Banks's approval--issued 858 importation permits between March 1 and December 31, 1864, of which 387, or almost half, were for the importation of spirituous liquors. By 1865, the issuing of permits had been transferred to the hands of Special Agent B.F. Flanders, who told General Hurlbut that he saw no "satisfactory reason for not allowing liquor to come here freely. . . ." It is inconceivable to think that the temperance movement would receive much support from soldiers or citizens under such circumstances.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{23} See Officer Fitzgerald to Charles Dwight, New Orleans, February 25, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 2, National Archives; A. Piaget to Banks, New Orleans, February 28, 1863, \textit{ibid.}, Box 4; General Order No. 21, New Orleans, May 12, 1863, in New Orleans, Bee, May 14, 1863.

\textsuperscript{24} Bowen to Charles P. Stone, New Orleans, February 17, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 298, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, \textit{ibid.}; \textit{id.} to G.S. Denison, New Orleans, March 19, 1864, \textit{ibid.}; see list of permits granted for importation in Vol. 331, Records of the Office of the Provost Marshal General, \textit{ibid.}; B.F. Flanders to S.A. Hurlbut, New Orleans, January 16, 1865, in Letters Received (Civil), 1865, Box 11, \textit{ibid.}

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Hand in hand with the sale of liquor went the city's most characteristic vice, prostitution, and it is entirely possible that the freedom from fear of rape enjoyed by the respectable women of New Orleans during this period may have stemmed in part from the ready willingness with which their less principled sisters opened their arms to the soldiery of the occupation. Practitioners of the "oldest profession" were said to have come to New Orleans with Bienville, and it was well known that it was firmly established in the city when the Federals arrived. But the period of the occupation, followed by that of Reconstruction, stimulated it to a flourishing point unknown before or since. 25

Butler had barely established himself in the St. Charles before Federal troops were conducting private investigations of the red-light area, and the Delta pointed out in pious horror "several instances of officers ... escorting in public thoroughfares, these disreputable characters." The Picayune too deplored the brazen appearance of prostitutes on streets which they were forbidden by city ordinance to traverse and called for an end of the "shocking nuisance." 26

25
See Asbury, French Quarter, 351-52.

26
New Orleans Delta, May 6, 1862; New Orleans Picayune, May 9, 1862. See also New Orleans Daily True Delta, July 18, 1862.
Inmates of the houses, which covered a wide economic range, generally came from the poorer classes, and many an Irish colleen who emigrated for domestic service wound up in one of them instead. Sometimes the life must have seemed to offer a certain glamor to girls of gentler breeding too, however, for there were several cases like that of 16-year old Mary Ann Taylor who voluntarily left her father's house to enter a brothel from which he was unable to reclaim her even by legal action.27

Periodically the police made wholesale arrests among the residents of the red light district, which moved steadily from the recognized underworld sections into such respectable areas as St. Charles, Girod, Perdido, and Baronne streets, and into the French Quarter. But the arrests were usually made for commercial rather than moral reasons, for prostitution was the city's most lucrative source of graft. Sometimes the officers of the law were so rapacious that they, rather than the prostitutes, drew popular criticism. This was the case in December, 1864, when the police of the First District rounded up over a hundred women of the streets and hauled them into court, thereby earning the disapproval of the Era.28

27
Asbury, French Quarter, 351-54. See also such newspaper reports as New Orleans Daily True Delta, July 22, September 16, 1862, April 7, 15, 1863; New Orleans Picayune, August 22, 1862; Warmoth Diary, VI, 1864, entry for June 8, 1864; and New Orleans Era, December 3, 1864; New Orleans Picayune, September 14, 1864.

28
New Orleans Bee, June 17, 1863.
The magistrates before whom these unfortunate women appeared usually sentenced them to terms in the city workhouse, but when one customer had the gall to accuse his lady of the evening of "stealing his watch, sleeve buttons and other articles while he was enjoying the hospitality of her room," the judge dismissed the case and advised the plaintiff "never to cross Basin Street with any more than three dollars" in the future.29

Next crime in the rate of incidence in New Orleans was gambling, which had flourished in the city for so long that by 1862 it was almost a respectable profession. When Butler arrived there he is said to have issued two orders—one officially prohibiting gambling and closing all gambling houses, and a second, circulated privately, which "permitted any gambler to reopen who would pay a license fee to the Provost Marshal and accept the General's brother . . . as a full but silent partner." Whether or not this is so, gambling was soon going full tilt in parlors all over the downtown area. The reporters for the Delta visited several of these establishments on Bienville Street in the summer of 1862 and reported that they offered "every game that can possibly seduce the unwary. . . . Choice liquors and delectable wines are profusely served up to the habitues of the place, while the brilliant gas-lights, the excitement and the universal 'high old time' . . . seduces the gentle and unwary greenhorn. . . . "30

29 Asbury, French Quarter, 228-29.

30 New Orleans Delta, July 16, 1862.
Apparently only one crime on the part of a gambler was considered worthy of legal notice, and when noted sleight-of-hand artist George Devol cheated some Federal officers in a game of three-card monte he was sent to jail for a year and fined $1,000. Two First-District gambling houses were closed Easter Monday, 1864, for the same reason. 31

Though the constitutional convention that met in New Orleans during the summer of 1864 voted to license gambling houses (at a fee of $10,000 per year), this was not the plan of General Stephen A. Hurlbut, who succeeded Banks in September, 1864. As early as October 14 he had begun a crackdown on the gambling fraternity, and on October 28 he issued orders for the closure of all gambling houses by November 1.

Nor did he have any sympathy for Abner L. Gaines, who asked for his aid in the prosecution of two gamblers who had fleeced him of $15,000 in 1862. 32

Gambling was just one form of theft practiced in the Crescent City during the war period. It assumed many other varied forms, the most novel of which probably was the theft of sugar from hogsheads on the levee wharves, accomplished by thieves who rowed under the wharves.

31 New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 30, 1863 and March 29, 1864; Asbury, French Quarter, 228. Devol, released after six months, celebrated the event by winning $19,000 from a Federal paymaster, ibid.

32 New Orleans Tribune, October 14, 1864; Special Order No. 292, New Orleans, October 28, 1864, ibid.; Gaines to Hurlbut, New Orleans, November 18, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1865, National Archives. See also Harai Robinson to G. Norman Lieber, New Orleans, November 20, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 299, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, ibid.
at low water, drilled holes through wharf and hogshead, and drained off the contents. Rice casks and corn sacks were rifled in the same manner, though some thieves simply preferred to pick up anything left unguarded on the levee.33

At other times, the devout of New Orleans were shocked by the news of the theft of a silver crucifix presented to St. Louis Cathedral by Don Ramon Almonaster, and by that of the gold and silver plate and candlesticks from St. Mary's Italian Church by two Sicilians in 1864. Less spectacular thieves loitered around the Poydras Market, ever ready to separate a discharged soldier from his pay; and pickpockets were not above robbing ladies of their pocketbooks as they left church. Burglaries were common, and though they had not caught him in the act police booked one suspect on that charge when they found in his pocket a " jimmy, a bottle of chloroform, four handkerchiefs (to apply the chloroform with), a candle, matches, and a number of keys."34

Two new aspects of this type of crime appeared as the Federal occupation wore on: the traffic in the sale of stolen government property increased, and the thieves who roamed the deserted streets by

33 New Orleans Picayune, January 24, 1863; New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 10, June 4, 1862.

night began to garrot their victims as they voiced their demand for "Your money or your life!" After a wave of this type of robbery in the Spring of 1865 the Picayune called upon the authorities to "permit persons whose business takes them abroad at night, to carry arms for their protection. . . ."

Other more violent crimes there were too. Despite the fact that Butler had ordered all citizens to deliver up their arms in 1862, the number of murders showed no decrease as other weapons were substituted. And there were always the river, Bayou St. John, the New Basin, and the many drainage canals, into which a victim who had been knocked senseless could be tumbled and left to drown.

In addition to these violations of the law, New Orleans newspapers chronicled many a story of servant girls who were seduced by employers who promised to marry them—and did not; and of suicides, whose favorite road to the next world was a large dose of laudanum, followed by a plunge in the river. There were cases too of miscegenation, for which the penalty was six months in the workhouse; of kidnapping; and of juvenile delinquency. In a city in which prostitution was so prevalent it may seem strange that adultery was noticed at all, but when the Federal Provost Marshal General received a tip that one James H. McKay was occupying "quarters with his niece on Baronne Street while his wife and daughters resided at the corner of Eighth and

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35 New Orleans Tribune, September 29, 1864.

36 New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 3, 1862.
Chestnut streets, he asked the Orleans provost marshal to "inquire minutely" into the situation. 37

It is notable that of all the arrests reported in the city for the three-year period, 1862-65, so few concerned soldiers. In part this was due to a fairly strict military control, particularly of enlisted men; and where this control did not exist, the immunity of the Federal uniform after prevented arrest, no matter how serious the offense might have been. Not until December, 1864, were police officers ordered to arrest all law violators, regardless of whether or not they were in uniform, and even then there is evidence that soldier violators were released by the Provost Marshal General almost as fast as they were arrested by the city police. 38

The ordinary civilian offender, however, was not quite so fortunate as to have a watchful army to pluck him out of prison if he should cross the path of the law, and there were many cases of civilians confined and held without trial and without, in some cases, ever hearing the charges on which they were jailed. And being confined

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38

in one of the prisons or workhouses of Civil War New Orleans for an
indefinite period was not a pleasant fate. The city's newspapers
presented an occasional rosy report on these institutions, but the
vivid description of a British correspondent who visited them in 1861
seems far more reliable. 39

Men and women were separated, but prison authorities recognized
almost no other difference in their prisoners. Young boys and first
offenders were thrown in among "hardened murderers, thieves, and
assassins," and female mental patients were housed with other feminine
offenders of all classes. "On opening the door [of the women's
gallery], the stench from the open veranda, in which the prisoners
were sitting, was so vile that I could not proceed further," reported
the correspondent; "but I saw enough to convince me that the poor
erring woman who was put in there for some trifling offense and placed
in contact with the beings who were uttering such language as we heard,
might indeed leave hope behind her." 40

This was the Orleans Parish Prison which, in addition to
serving as a penal institution for the offenders of New Orleans, was
also made to serve as the state penitentiary when that institution at

39  See Henry L. Pierson to Capt. -- Smith, New Orleans, June 22,
1863, in Letter Press, Vol. 299, ibid., and New Orleans Daily True Delta,
January 19, 1864, for cases of "lost" prisoners. The rosy reports can
be found in New Orleans Daily True Delta, October 16, 1862, and January
19, 1864; Bee, May 8, 1863; Era, June 14, 1863.

40  Russell, Diary North and South, 245, 247.
Baton Rouge was "interrupted." Eighty-seven convicts, imprisoned for serious crimes, were housed there in 1865, serving terms that ranged from one year to life.41

Less serious offenses were punished by sentences to terms in one of the city workhouses, of which there were three. Here inmates performed some type of menial labor as they served out their sentences, and among the conveniences provided for them was a nursery and playground for the children that some of them performe brought to jail with them.42

On the whole, of all the aspects of civilian life in wartime New Orleans, the criminal side of it was one of those least affected by the Federal occupation. With the exception of prostitution, which took a tremendous upsurge during this period, New Orleans was neither better nor worse than it might have been had the occupation never taken place. Its record in the field of law enforcement had not been good before the Federals arrived; it was not good while they were there.

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41 New Orleans Daily True Delta, February 25, 1865.

42 New Orleans Era, June 14, 1863.
"The supply of food has failed; there is nothing to eat but salt meat and a little bread, and even that is only obtained with difficulty," noted 27-year old Zoe Campbell in her diary as Butler's transports moved up the Mississippi. At the Free Market, established in August, 1861, to feed the city's poor, authorities passed out the last of their supplies—eight bullocks, 140 bushels of corn meal, six tiers of rice, four hogsheads of sugar, fourteen barrels of molasses, two barrels of mackerel, two boxes of codfish, five hundred cabbages, eight hundred bunches of leeks, twenty-four sacks of peas, two sacks of turnips, two barrels of mess beef, one tierce of bacon, two sacks of beets, and two barrels of sauerkraut—and closed the market's doors. The 1,940 families who were accustomed to receive provisions there were told that it had been found "unpracticable" to distribute more provisions but that "other arrangements" would be made as soon as possible.¹

The arrival of the Federal fleet and Butler's troops meant that buyers sent by the city into other parts of the Confederacy to purchase supplies for the Free Market were cut off from New Orleans. So was

¹Zoe Campbell Diary, entry for April 30, 1862. See also Chapter III, supra.; New Orleans Bee, April 30, 1862; New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 2, 1862.
every other source of provisions, so that the rich suffered with the poor, and all classes faced two enemies—the Federal troops and hunger.  

Though General Butler immediately took steps to make it possible for such supplies as were available nearby to be brought in, he soon saw the political possibilities in the situation and changed his tack. On May 9, despite the fact that the Free Market had been opened again and had fed 1,743 poor families during the week ending May 6, he addressed a proclamation to the working classes of the city. He deplored the "state of destitution" among them, piously declared that he had "yielded to every suggestion made by the city government and ordered every method of furnishing food to the people of New Orleans that government desired," and charged that "no relief by those officials has yet been afforded." The fault, he indicated, lay with the "wealthy and influential, the leaders of the rebellion," who not only were continuing on their foolhardy course "unmindful of their suffering fellow-citizens," but were living in an ease and comfort not enjoyed by the working classes.  

The picture he painted was black indeed, but it was not entirely accurate. Though the citizens of New Orleans might have been unwilling to use tax money to clean their streets and canals, they had a most commendable reputation for charity in an age when all relief of the unfortunate was in the hands of private institutions. Ten asylums for orphans

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3 General Orders No. 25, New Orleans, May 9, 1862, in Butler Papers.
and for the aged and infirm and five charitable organizations existed in New Orleans prior to the war, all of them dependent upon volunteer contributions for their work. One of the organizations, Les Dames de la Providence, made the care of the aged and infirm its special object. Another, the Young Men's Howard Association, had grown out of one of the periodic epidemics and devoted itself to the relief of the indigent and sick. And when the Federal blockade had cut the shipping trade in the city so seriously that many had been driven to unemployment and destitution, the bankers, businessmen, and other citizens of New Orleans had set up the Free Market to distribute provisions to them.  

Nor was Butler accurate in his intimation that only the working classes faced the prospect of starvation. The city's food supply was exhausted; it was cut off from all sources of new supplies; and its well-to-do as well as its poor went hungry during the turbulent days following the fall of the Forts.

Despite Confederate guilt in bringing on New Orleans' desperate situation, Butler announced himself prepared to be magnanimous—the families of Confederates would receive some of the beef and sugar which his forces had captured from the Rebels and which he proposed to distribute in the city. Two days later, Captain John Clark, his commissary of subsistence, announced that he would receive applications for assistance

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1 Norman's New Orleans, 10-16; New Orleans Bee, May 12, 1862. For activities of Ladies' Association in the period just before the fall of the city, see New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 11, 1862; for the Rebel answer to Butler's allegations, see "Address of Thomas Overton Moore, Governor of Louisiana . . . ," undated, in Butler Papers for May, 1862.
in his office between 9 A.M. and 1 P.M., beginning Monday, May 12.
Applicants were told to bring with them letters certifying their
need from their clergymen, physician, or "any gentleman known or
knowing." The crowd of female applicants was so great on May 13,
noted the True Delta, that they had to be kept back at the point of
a bayonet.5

In the meantime, William Freret, chairman of the city's committee
of subsistence, announced the arrival of 1,850 of the 9,500 barrels of
flour which had been purchased at Mobile and which would be distributed
to bakers to make bread for sale at fixed prices; furthermore, a con­
tract had been made for the delivery of 15,000 head of cattle before
January 1, 1863, and this meat, along with expected boatloads of bacon,
flour, corn, and wheat, would be sold "at cost price for Confederate
States, city and corporation notes."6

The Free Market continued to supply the poor with such basic supplies
as corn meal, rice, bread, and molasses, and a few vegetables—mostly
cabbages and peas. Its supporters were greatly disheartened, however,
when Butler sent Thomas Murray, its presiding officer, to Fort Jackson
along with other city officials early in June.7

Neither its efforts nor those of Butler seemed of much avail when,

5General Orders No. 25, New Orleans, May 9, 1862, in Butler
Papers; New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 11, 14, 1862.

6New Orleans Bee, May 14, 1862.

7Eighteen hundred and thirty-seven families were supplied on
due to the exhaustion of supplies brought into the city in May, the citizens again began to feel the sharp pinch of hunger by the middle of June. "There is a great deal of suffering here on account of the want of food," wrote Treasury agent George Denison to his brother.

"There was a scarcity of food three or four weeks ago, which is becoming greater every day. Thousands of people in this city... are hungry & cannot obtain sufficient food. Well-dressed men & women apply to the soldiers for bread for themselves & children." One man who had applied unsuccessfully to Denison for employment burst into tears as he turned away. Questioned, he said that "his children had had nothing to eat for nearly two days." 8

By mid-July the True Delta was reporting that even the Free Market was having difficulty obtaining supplies and that "unless some important changes take place in... obtaining supplies, the Free Market distributions will have to be discontinued." Hungry laborers employed in cleaning the city's streets assuaged their empty stomachs with shots of "red-eye"—about the only commodity available in the grocery stores during that period. Newspapers deplored this method of spending the few nickels they earned, supposedly for the support of their needy families, but there was little else to spend them on. 9

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8 Denison to "Dear Jimmy," New Orleans, July 6, 1862, in James A. Padgett (ed.), "Some Letters of George Stanton Denison," in Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XXXIII (1940), 1186 (hereinafter cited as "Denison Letters"); see also John W. Turner to Butler, New Orleans, July 17, 1862, in Letters Received, 1862, Box 2, National Archives, for evidence that destitution was general and not limited to the lower classes.

9 New Orleans Daily True Delta, July 15, 1862; ibid., and New Orleans Commercial Bulletin, July 17, 1862.
In August, Butler took new steps to handle the increasing number of destitute persons and, incidentally, use the situation to political advantage. Pursuing his theme that the war was really only a phase of the class struggle, he issued General Order No. 55, imposing a levy of 25 per cent on all those who had subscribed to the fund raised by the Committee of Public Safety for the city's defense before his arrival. "Those who have brought upon the city this stagnation of business, this desolation of the hearth-stone, this starvation of the poor and helpless, should . . . relieve these distresses," he explained. Cotton-brokers who had signed a manifesto in October, 1861, urging the planters not to bring their produce to New Orleans, were also included in the levy, since they had "endeavored to destroy the commercial prosperity of the city, upon which the welfare of its inhabitants depends." Four days later, he closed the Free Market and substituted for it the United States Relief Commission, appointing Benjamin F. Flanders its first president.

Unlike the Free Market, which served the poor regardless of their loyalties, the Relief Commission's declared purpose was to "encourage loyalty to the Union," and it conducted a searching investigation of this aspect of the lives of the needy, as well as their economic circumstances. The poor in its books were divided into three groups--families of Federal soldiers, widows and friendless destitute, and families of Confederate soldiers--and supplies were distributed to them according to

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their degree of loyalty to the government of the United States. Families designated "Federal" received, in addition to meat and bread or flour, sugar, tea, rice, coffee, and soap.\(^{11}\)

Over sixteen hundred families had received aid from the Free Market in the last week of July, but under the Relief Commission the number jumped to 9,614 by the first week of October, 1862. Of these, 1,052 were "Federal" families; 7,534 were classed as "friendless destitute"; and 1,028 were the families of Confederate soldiers. It was estimated that they comprised a total of 32,150 persons—an extremely high percentage of the city's post-capture population.\(^{12}\)

Reporting on affairs in the city at the beginning of September, Butler told General-in-Chief Henry W. Halleck that the "condition of the people here is a very alarming one," and that he was spending an average of $50,000 per month to feed the white population alone. Negroes, who were coming in by the hundreds every day, he was feeding out of commissary stores, but he did not know what he would do to house them. Halleck agreed that the problem of feeding the Negroes was "one of serious

\(^{11}\)Special Order No. 246, New Orleans, August 8, 1862, in New Orleans Daily True Delta, August 9, 1862; see also Report of the Relief Commission, New Orleans, December [January] 6, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 4, National Archives. The Commission also noted the nativity of applicants, giving Butler ready ammunition for his quarrels with the foreign consuls, since the majority of the needy were foreign-born. See Butler to Stanton, New Orleans, October --, 1862, in Official Records, Ser. III, Vol. II, 719-25. In October, he forbade aid to families in which an able-bodied man, 18-45, was not regularly employed or in the United States Army. See New Orleans Daily True Delta, October 26, 1862.

importance," but beyond suggesting that "some measures . . . be taken to make them earn their own living," he left the entire matter to Butler's "discretion," adding only a caution that he watch his expenses in whatever he chose to do.\(^\text{13}\)

In addition to supplying food to the poor through the Relief Commission, Butler estimated that he was contributing $2,000 per month to the support of five asylums for widows and orphans. Another $5,000 per month went to the support of Charity Hospital, of which the regular sources of support had been cut off. He also said he was using money from the fund raised by the levy upon the Confederate sympathizers to pay 1,000 laborers to work upon the streets and wharves.\(^\text{14}\)

Private citizens had not ceased to do what they could to ease the circumstances of the less fortunate during this period. When the annual collection for the orphans was taken up at the gates of the city's cemeteries on All Saints' Day in November, it yielded enough to inspire the grateful thanks of the institutions which benefitted from it.\(^\text{15}\)

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\(^{14}\) Butler to Stanton, New Orleans, October --, 1862, \textit{ibid.}, Ser. III, Vol. II, 724-25. He now estimated the cost of the Relief Commission's work at $80,000 per month, though the Commission's figures showed that no more than $50,000 per month ever was spent—and that to support nearly 11,000 families. See E.G. Beckwith to Banks, New Orleans, October 21, 1863, \textit{ibid.}, Vol. III, 926-27, and also Butler to Halleck, September 1, 1862, \textit{ibid.}, Ser. I, Vol. XIV, 558.

\(^{15}\) See New Orleans \textit{Picayune}, October 29, 1862, and New Orleans \textit{Daily True Delta}, November 5, 1862. Since by custom most Orleanians visited the tombs and graves of their dead on this day, almost everyone in the city had to pass one or more of the collectors who stood at the gates and noisily rattled tin plates in which donations were collected.
On December 9 Butler announced that funds raised by the August levy upon "certain parties who had aided the rebellion" were exhausted, and he therefore imposed a new levy of 25 per cent. "The government sustained Order No. 55," he explained years later; but the arrival of Banks to relieve him on December 15 took the bite out of the new order "and of course nobody paid the assessment."\(^{16}\)

Shortly after the turn of the year, however, Banks—despite his announced policy of conciliation and liberal--ordered that the new assessment laid in December be taken up. "Assessments upon property furnish . . . the only means for the relief [of the poor]," he said, "and those who have publicly and voluntarily contributed financial aid, advice, and example to destroy public peace and deprive the poor of means of employment and support may be justly required to relieve their wants and solace their suffering." As a solace to the former, he promised that this probably would be the last assessment, and to those who might be wondering just where all the money raised by Butler had gone, he similarly promised a full airing of the affairs of the Relief Commission.\(^{17}\)

Those assessed apparently had not dared to protest under Butler's regime, but Banks's promise of liberality made a few feel more free in 1863. William F. Jordy, a partner in the Charles C. Gaines Hardware store, wrote Banks that he had had trouble scraping together the $1,250 levied on him under General Order No. 55 and that he now had nothing


left that would even sell for enough to make up the second assessment. He further denied any intention to harm his fellow-citizens in buying the city bonds; they were simply for investment purposes. And Dr. W.M. Mercer, banker and declared neutral, assured Banks that Butler's assessment had not been just since a large sum ($350,000) of the money raised by the sale of the bonds had been used to supply the Free Market, rather than on the defenses of the city, as Butler had charged. 18

There is no evidence that Banks was influenced by any of these pleas, and the second levy apparently was collected. Furthermore, a third assessment was made on the same list of subscribers in 1864. 19

This type of charity met with the emphatic disapproval of even those citizens who were not included in the assessment. They have "taxed all citizens here who have had anything to do with the war," reported former schoolteacher Julia LeGrand. "They boast of feeding our poor, but the city furnished the means; they do not contribute a penny themselves. "20

Others among the citizens sought different means to relieve the poor. Episcopal Rector Amos D. McCoy wrote Banks on February 6, outlining his plans for an institution he proposed to call "Brotherhood

18 William F. Jordy to Banks, New Orleans, January 14, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 2, National Archives; W. Newton Mercer to ibid., undated [January 15, 1863], ibid. See also Ed. Genquil to ibid., New Orleans, January 2, 1863, ibid.


House," in which meals and lodging would be available at a nominal
cost to 2,500 to 5,000 destitute poor. The ladies' aid and the men's
societies of St. Peter's Church would undertake to service the institu-
tion, he advised the commanding general, and only those poor would be
admitted who had purchased meal tickets and availed themselves of a
"comfortable bath of hot and cold water mixed to their liking." Banks
apparently approved of the undertaking, for the opening of Brotherhood
House was announced on February 15. 21

Banks himself next turned to a scrutiny of the affairs and rolls
of the United States Relief Commission, and on March 7 announced a
drastic revision of its policies. As of March 15, the Commission was
ordered to "discontinue the issue of rations under the present system
of division of classes, and . . . issue them only to the destitute poor,
and to families of soldiers enlisted in . . . the Army of the United
States, and to the latter only until the soldiers shall have been mu-
tered into service and received their bounty or advance pay." The term
"destitute poor" was to include only those who had "no means of support,
and who themselves are unable and have no one to labor for their support,"
and it definitely excluded any able-bodied persons capable of working
to support themselves. Rations of groceries would be issued only to in-
valids, and then in lieu of meat rations. 22

21Amos D. McCoy et al. to Banks (printed broadside), New Orleans,
February 6, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 1, National Ar-
chives; New Orleans Picayune, February 15, 1863.

22Special Order No. 66, New Orleans, March 7, 1863, in Official
Furthermore, investigators were instructed to go over the Commission's rolls with a fine-tooth comb and retain only the names of those whose need could be ascertained personally by the investigator. The Commission promptly reduced the number of families carried on its rolls by 1,596.23

The Commission reduced its rolls steadily through the Spring and summer of 1863 and by October of that year carried only 5,917 families. Its operating expenses had been similarly reduced from $49,141.29 for January to $30,005.31 for the month of September. Strangely enough, the number of starving and destitute seemed to increase rather than decrease to match the reduction in relief rolls. "We believe we [are] . . . within the strict facts when we state that we have at this moment twenty-five thousand men, women, and children entirely destitute, and not thrown upon the streets because of the non-enforcement of the laws for the collection of rent against them," reported the True Delta in mid-March. "In addition . . . there are . . . from fifteen to twenty thousand who are now supporting life by the sale of little things accumulated in prosperous times . . . and who have in the early future before them, no hope for escape from all the horrors of want and starvation. . . ." Its editor called for help to these people in place of bounties to immigrants by the Federal government. "It is a strange spectacle," he declared, " . . . to see thousands of people here entirely

23 Ibid.; see also Reports of the United States Relief Commission from December, 1862, to September, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 4, National Archives. Families of 984 Confederate soldiers had received aid prior to the issuance of Special Order No. 66. R.G. Smith
destitute from their inability to obtain employment, while in the Congress ... endeavors are made to have bounties offered to foreign laborers to come to this country. "\(^\text{24}\)"

The increase in the number of destitute meant that citizens who still had a little dug down into their own pockets again to help their less fortunate fellows. The German associations of New Orleans scheduled a charity entertainment at the Orleans Theater in April to raise funds for the widow and children of a Dr. Longbetter, who had been killed at the battle of Perryville; the entire collection taken up at the Mass for peace said in St. Louis Cathedral on March 31, amounting to $409, was given over to the relief of the poor; a grand concert for charity was presented at the Opera House on April 13; and in May, the proceeds ($1,165) of a race run at the Fairground race track were turned over to ten charitable institutions. "\(^\text{25}\)"

Personal appeals to the charity of the commanding general, however, were unavailing. When Banks did not answer her desperate plea of August 6, Mrs. E. Daniell, who described herself as friendless and alone except for her sick husband and "large and helpless family," wrote him a final despairing note on September 10. "We are at this time without one cent of money," she told him, "and entirely out of provisions, not even a


\(^{25}\) New Orleans Bee, March 30, April 6, 1863; New Orleans Picayune, March 31, 1863; New Orleans Era, May 17, 1863. The resident French nationals also managed to raise $788.30 for the relief of unemployed French cotton mill workers. See L'Abéille, April 23, 1863.
crum [sic] of bread, which is very mortifying and humiliating for me to say, nevertheless it is true." But no action was taken on her request.26

When the Sisters of the Holy Cross approached Colonel S.B. Holabird, Banks's Chief Quartermaster, and asked for help in clothing the orphans at the Asylum of the Immaculate Conception for the winter ahead, Holabird passed their request along to Banks's headquarters. Previously, he pointed out, funds to support the asylums "were collected by rents and sales [of seized property]. These funds now all go to Mr. Flanders. I am bankrupt. Betterton's fine was half of it to be paid to me & on the faith of the order I have dispensed the amount from other funds. The fine is not forthcoming & I hear has been remitted. . . ." He asked for permission to use money derived from the sale of confiscated cotton to clothe the orphans.27

The city of New Orleans voted to appropriate $100 per month for a period running from September 1, 1863, to September 1, 1864, for the support of "poor widows." Later in the year, the municipal council again voted a sum of $500 to be used for the relief of victims of the numerous fires in the Fourth District, and one of $300 to be paid to St. Mary's Orphan Boy's Asylum during three winter months of 1863-64.28

26 Mrs. E. Daniell to Banks, New Orleans, August 16, September 10, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 1, National Archives.


28 New Orleans Picayune, October 14, December 10, 1863.
But the situation grew steadily more serious, and just before Christmas Banks wrote his Provost Marshal General, James Bowen, that in addition to the six thousand families then on relief rolls, "it is probable that ten to twelve thousand families more need relief." He asked Bowen to make a thorough inquiry whether assessments for this purpose cannot be made upon wealthy secessionists or sympathizers with the rebellion. 29

Bowen made his report a week later. The remaining Confederate sympathizers would not be of much help, voluntarily or involuntarily, he reported, for, except for Mrs. C.A. Slocomb and her daughters, they were all in "reduced circumstances." To defray the mounting expense of caring for the poor he proposed that a sales tax of 5 per cent be laid on "all Merchandise, other than Army or Navy Supplies, sold in New Orleans and exported therefrom to the Parishes of the State." The average weekly exports for the week ending December 5 had been $199,376.63, and if this rate continued the tax he proposed would yield a return of $10,000 per week. 30

In addition, he pointed out, the Chief Quartermaster had sequestered "Bank deposits and other property of Rebels & registered enemies amounting to about $240,000"; this, plus any surplus revenue from the sales tax, could be used to reimburse the government for money "already expended in the support of the poor." Of course, he remarked in conclusion, the

29 Banks to Bowen, New Orleans, December 23, 1863, in Endorsement Book, Vol. 309, Correspondence of the Major General Commanding, National Archives.

most equitable way to raise any of these funds would be to add to the
city millage tax, but this he deemed impractical since the city was
already $2,400,000 behind in uncollected taxes.31

The situation did not improve with the advent of the New Year. In
January, 1864, the Orleans Parish grand jury visited the charitable in-
stitutions of the city, in which nearly a thousand orphans and destitute
adults were being cared for. In almost all of them great need existed.
In February, the young wife of a Confederate government clerk wrote to
her husband in Georgia that the "misery in certain families is fright-
ful," and in April her husband's mother wrote him that "there is especi-
ally great need among the families which once had plenty."32

In May the Oddfellows Lodge, which had been contributing small amounts
to the families of absent Confederates, announced that its General Re-
lief Fund was so depleted that they had scheduled a fair for the purpose
of replenishing it. And to add to the misery of those already in the
city, Union refugees from Texas began to flock into New Orleans. The
Federal authorities took over the Verandah Hotel at the corner of Julia
and Tchoupitoulas streets to house them but apparently felt that their
responsibility ended there. As a result, two hundred of them were
"huddled together in a state of wretchedness which beggars description,"
according to the Times.33

31 Ibid.

32 New Orleans Daily True Delta, January 19, 1864; Uranie Reynes to Emile Reynes, New Orleans, February 18, 1864, in Reynes Papers; Polyx-
enes Reynes to id., New Orleans, April 15, 1864, ibid.

33 New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 10, 1864; New Orleans Times, May 22, 1864. By July 15, the number had risen to 341, and they were
housed in the City Hotel and the Lake House at Hickok's Landing on Lake
Ponchartrain. The food in both places was reported to be bad and the
In June, Chief Quartermaster Holabird turned in a report to the effect that, together with the Commissary Department, his department had contributed $1,676.90 for the support of the city's nine orphan asylums during 1863-64. Apparently Banks found this disturbing news, for a week later his Provost Marshal General wrote Governor Michael Hahn to inquire if the state could not take over a portion of this load. The state constitutional convention then in session in New Orleans accordingly appropriated $35,000 and instructed needy institutions to apply to a board of almoners.

The number of families receiving aid from the Federal forces was reduced to 4,114 by July 21, 1864, but the number of needy showed no sign of decreasing at all. Since other sources had dried up, Banks turned to Butler's original assessment list of General Order No. 55, and on October 3 ordered a new levy of 25 per cent. It was a futile gesture, however, for by that time he had deported almost all the registered enemies and Confederate sympathizers and had confiscated their property.

(cont'd) quarters filthy. See W.W. Howe to George B. Drake, New Orleans, July 15, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 7, National Archives.

2 Report of Union Contributions to Orphan Asylums, 1863-64, in S.B. Holabird to Banks, New Orleans, June 4, 1864, Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 6, National Archives; Bowen to Hahn, New Orleans, June 10, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 299, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, ibid.; New Orleans Tribune, July 30, 1864.

3 S.H. Wilkeson to George B. Drake (with enclosures), New Orleans, July 22, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 9, National Archives; General Order No. 111, New Orleans, October 3, 1864, in Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XLII, 574-75. For results of this collection, see Haral Robinson to Drake, New Orleans, November 5, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 299, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, National Archives.
When the order failed to bring in further funds to operate the Federal relief program, Colonel E.G. Beckwith of the Relief Commission recommended that the program be scrapped and the city forced to assume the entire responsibility for its poor. He enclosed a draft of the order he felt the situation called for. 36

A series of charitable fairs were scheduled for the Fall of 1864, one at the Opera House being sponsored by the feminine leaders of Creole society (which received little notice in the Unionist press), and another, sponsored by Union social leaders, in the Masonic Hall. They seem to have been great social successes, and the one at the Opera House netted $8,500; but this was very little in comparison with the great need that existed and the high prices of even the necessities of life. 37

These privately sponsored attempts to raise funds for poor relief continued into 1865 and up to the end of the war, but they were never able to catch up with the need. When Robert Meyer and C. Curto obtained the voluntary services of 120 performers possessing the "best talent in the city of New Orleans" for a sacred charitable concert on Easter Sunday, 1865, they were able to raise only $1,500, and the Picayune commented that "want, sheer, naked, cheerless want, has never abounded so much as now." 38

36 E.G. Beckwith to Drake, October 15, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, National Archives. Actually, the city did contribute a total of $47,038.03 to charity during 1864. See Controller's Report . . . of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of New Orleans from January 1st, 1864 to December 31st, 1864. . . . (New Orleans, 1865).

37 New Orleans Daily True Delta, October 30, December 21, 1864; Diary of Zoe Campbell, entries for November 11, 18, 1864.

38 New Orleans Bee, March 9, 1865; New Orleans Picayune, April 9, 1865.
All in all, the picture of the Federal handling of the problem of poor relief in wartime New Orleans is not a pretty one. Care of the needy became a political football soon after the arrival of Butler, and it does not ever seem to have been regarded as anything else. As late as February, 1865, a negative report was made on a request for aid by the Boys and Girls Seventh Street Asylum because the members of its board of directors were said to be "disloyal."\(^{39}\)

From the point of view of modern warfare, it is perhaps unrealistic to think of the needy citizens of a captured enemy city as the responsibility of the victor; yet one cannot imagine Lincoln making any other choice. Nor does it seem that failure to help the poor and destitute while at the same time sponsoring such shamefully extravagant spectacles as the Louisiana state constitutional convention of 1864 could be of much help in reconciling a rebellious and embittered population. It is true that politics and poor relief were to go hand in hand everywhere for many years more. But a compassionate and undiscriminating dispensation of help to the poor of all political faiths would have strengthened the loyalty of those faithful to the Union and at the same time would undoubtedly have recalled to cheerful allegiance many others who had no economic stake in the Southern cause. By administering poor relief as they did, the Federal authorities only contributed to the bitter and cynical impression left by the occupation in the minds of a large number of the citizens and their descendants.

\(^{39}\)Mrs. L. Elkin to J.A. Bigler, February 9, 1865, and Bigler to S.N. Holabird, February 18, 1865, both in Letters Received (Civil), 1865, Box 10, National Archives.
Chapter IX
GREENBACKS, CAR TICKETS, AND THE POT OF GOLD

New Orleans was the great commercial heart of the Confederacy when the Civil War began, but by the time Butler arrived in the city it had been virtually transformed into an economic ghost town. Its many shops and stores were closed; its banks, once the strongest in the country, had shipped all their gold and silver into the Confederacy for fear it would be confiscated by the invaders; along Carondelet, Tchoupitoulas, and Levee streets, its great warehouses, cotton presses, and commission merchants' offices were locked and empty; crowds of the unemployed roamed the streets and gathered restlessly at the levee to survey the Federal fleet. Around them were the blackened ashes of the great stock of sugar and cotton which the Confederates, unable to ship it through the blockade in time, had burned rather than let fall into Yankee hands. In many places the wharves themselves had been so badly damaged by the fire that they were unsafe.

"Business of every kind still continues at a stand, and the trade of the city is virtually closed for the present," reported the True Delta three days after Butler had issued his proclamation ordering the resumption of local trade. "The banks confine their operations to the payment of depositors' checks and the renewal of maturing obligations, while most outside dealers in commercial and mortgage securities have entirely withdrawn from the market." A few stores had
cautiously reopened by May 7, and the same journal reported that some small lots of cotton and three to four hundred hogsheads of tobacco which had escaped the pre-occupation fires were sold during the first week after the Federals' arrival. But the fact that the details of these transactions were "suppressed" suggests that this minor effort to resume trade was not necessarily legitimate. ¹

Three days later, the Bee observed that though mint and ice were both scarce, most of the innumerable coffeehouses had reopened for business; but other types of shopkeepers still hung back. "There are no signs of a revival of business," noted young Clara Solomon, and she could not remember the last time that she had seen that harbinger of prosperity, an organ grinder. ²

Despite Butler's orders and the pleas of almost every newspaper in town, the businessmen of New Orleans had found little incentive for resuming business nearly two months after the fall of the city. "Shutting up stores, lolling listlessly about, assuming the look, guise and immobility of the loose hanger-on of Mexican villages, are utterly unworthy of the people of this city," scolded the True Delta. The arrival of some provisions from the North encouraged a few dealers to reopen in the summer months, but on the whole, said the editor of the Bee, commercial enterprise in the city

¹ New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 4, 7, 1862.

² New Orleans Bee, May 10, 1862; "Diary of Clara Solomon," entry for May 15, 1862.
was about as "lively as a chloroformed Bradypus [sic]." The True Delta too admitted that "financial affairs have been almost at a standstill" during the month of September, and that what little trade there was had fallen off. 3

As Christmas, 1862, approached, B. Piffet's toy store in the Touro Building on Canal Street announced itself as "Santa Claus' Headquarters" and advertised a full line of toys, dolls, velocipedes, hobby horses, and doll carriages. But on Christmas Day, the Butler-sponsored Delta declared that the Christmas shopping had been the slowest in the city's history. Not even the traditional fireworks had seen anything approaching a brisk sale. 4

"We have nothing very encouraging to say about the present state of commerce," observed L'Abeille as 1863 dawned, and the editor put his finger on the source of the trouble. "Blocked on the coast of the river and the lakes, [New Orleans] has only some few connections with Northern big cities for exchanging such rare products as remain on the market or come in from the immediately adjoining parishes."

And though the new commander, General Banks, declared his interest in promoting the resumption of trade, particularly in cotton, there was nothing he could do about restoring the city to its former place as the principal exit port for the products of the upper Mississippi

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3 New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 21, September 14, 1862; New Orleans Bee, September 1, 1862.

4 New Orleans Daily True Delta, December 17, 1862; New Orleans Delta, December 25, 1862.
Valley while the river remained closed. 5

The gloomy prospects that so discouraged New Orleans businessmen were viewed in a far different light by many a Northern entrepreneur, however, and they began to descend on New Orleans in droves. "They have continued to arrive and every steamer brings an addition to their number," reported Treasury agent George Denison in disgust. "Each expects to be a millionaire in six months. They have few scruples about the means of satisfying their cupidity." Compared with the respectable citizens of New Orleans, Denison found the speculators ostentatiously prosperous in appearance. "His vest is of flowered velvet," he said in describing one of them, "his hair beautifully oiled—and his presence distils continual perfume sweeter than the winds that blow from Araby the blest." 6

Rather than discouraging the advent of this new type of resident, Banks seems to have taken them to his bosom. He eased their way by allowing only loyal merchants to receive shipments of goods and thus forced others out of business. And the mysterious Dr. Zacharie who, Denison charged, left a career as a "healer of corns and bunions in New York," to come south with the new commander, became his confidante in matters of all sorts. From New York, exporter Andrew Wellman


6 See Micah Dwyer to Banks, New Orleans, January 2, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 1, National Archives; Denison to Chase, New Orleans, February 1, 12, 1863, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 353, 359-60.
wrote Provost Marshal Bowen asking that he use his influence with the commanding general to get him a permit to import wines and liquors into New Orleans. 7

By the summer of 1863 so many of these Northern fortune-hunters had arrived and set themselves up in business in the city that paroled Confederate prisoner Felix Grima saw little hope for the future of native businessmen. "We will see disappearing little by little our old business houses," he wrote his brother, "of which the great part of the merchants are ruined, and set up in their places the commission houses of Boston and the other cities of New England which enrich themselves from the spoils of our unhappy Louisiana. . . ." 8

The arrival of these additions to the commercial community inspired the Era to view business prospects more brightly in the Spring of 1863. "In the past few weeks a perceptible revival of business has been apparent. . . .," declared the editor hopefully. "The streets present a much more enlivened appearance. . . . Another set of business men have made their appearance on our levee and commercial streets, and the deserted stores and offices now have new signs." However the

7 James Bowen to C.W. Killborn, New Orleans, March 13, 1863, in Letter Press, Vol. 296, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, National Archives; Denison to Chase, New Orleans, February 1, 1863, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 353; see also Robert Wade to Dr. Zacharie, New Orleans, February 9, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 4, National Archives; Andrew Wellman to Bowen, New York, April 18, 1863, in Endorsement Book, Vo. 303, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, ibid.

Picayune looked at matters through darker glasses. To its editor, the "commercial avenues of our city present a dull and cheerless aspect. The great centrality of trade, Carondelet street, ... shows the sad effects of the disturbed state of the country. For weeks past the gatherings of its habitues, the devotees of cotton, sugar, tobacco ... exchange dealers and shipping agents, have been gradually diminishing and now seldom a half dozen individuals are seen together at one or two corners." Poydras, Tchoupitoulas, and New Levee streets, once the hub of the Western trade, "offer nothing for remark more than that scarcely a dozen of the old Western merchants and dealers ... are to be met with. Rows of vacant stores and warehouses" were the most notable landmarks in this area. On Common and Gravier streets, once the center of the grocery wholesale trade, "only closed doors and vacated counting rooms" with few exceptions met the eye. On Canal, "the grand boulevard," the editor noted the "weekly selling out and closing up of several establishments," and at the river front, rising water partially submerged the charred remains of the wharves, though a few vessels were discharging provisions. The "great staple cotton" was an "obsolete question" at that point, said the editor. "There were a few drayloads on the levee yesterday," but the entire week's receipts amounted to 74 bales cleaned and 654 sacks in seed. "That Boston paper which said there were 2,000 bales received here for the week ending the 21st March, may as well contradict its statement," the report concluded, "as there has been no such quantity received here in any week this season."9

9 New Orleans Picayune, April 19, 1865.
This sort of gloomy report might well be expected from the anti-
Federal Picayune, but it was confirmed by Banks's confidante, Zacharie,
in one of the regular reports sent to the commanding general while the
latter was in the field in the Spring of 1863. No revival of trade
could be expected, reported Zacharie, "until the country now regained
by the General throws off its shackles & is again opened to the
commercial world." Early in May, L'Abbeille painted a dreary picture of
the New Orleans levee, "once covered with the products of every country"
and now a "deserted shore." Not a "bundle, not a package of merchandise
gives evidence of commercial life," mourned the editor. "The chant of
the laborer is heard no more, nor the grating of wagon wheels on the
pavement. Instead of the noise, the movement, the hullabaloo of the
past, desolation and mournful silence reigns."

Throughout the summer and Fall, reports on the city's economic
situation remained gloomy. More and more the signs on the old business
houses were replaced with new ones, and a stationer wrote to his absent
partner, "there is no chance for a man here now unless he is identified
with the Yankees and Bostonians. . . ." Even these newer merchants felt
the pinch of hard times in the Fall of 1863, however, for few of the
population had the means to buy more than the necessities of life. "The
Great dry goods trade, the hardware and the wholesale grocery departments
of our commerce feel strongly the want of intercourse with the interior,"
noted the Picayune; and, though the Federal-sponsored Era declared on

10 Report of Dr. Zacharie, enclosed in Zacharie to Banks, New
Orleans, April 23, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 4,
National Archives; New Orleans Bee, May 5, 1863.
January 1, 1864, that it "requires no argument to any observing man that business has materially increased here during the last year," figures on the commercial activity for the period show that the improvement was purely relative.

There was a perceptible improvement in economic conditions during 1864, but it meant little to the majority of New Orleans citizens. "I have not earned a dollar for the past two years," stationer Thomas Shields wrote his partner, "nor do I see any prospects ahead." In the reorganized Chamber of Commerce, names new to New Orleans predominated, and the policy of the military authorities made it clear that only the unassailably loyal could hope to do business in the Crescent City. With the exception of sugar, figures on the commercial turn-over in the city were almost double those for 1863, but in no case were they more than half the prewar rates. In the important staples—cotton and sugar—the rate was far below the prewar figure. In the year before the war, 1,849,319 bales of cotton and 459,410 hogsheads of sugar had come into New Orleans; in the last year of the war, only 271,015 bales of cotton and 9,800 hogsheads of sugar reached the levee. So greatly had the war affected prices, however, that cotton

values had skyrocketed from $50.00 to $270.54 per bale and those of sugar from $53.88 to $203.50 per hogshead.12

As Grant and Lee battled through Virginia in the summer of 1864, even Northern businessmen watched the war with a judicious eye. "... at present there is no business," Gus Mandeville wrote his sister in June. "Everything seems waiting for the result of the Struggle between Grant & Lee and Johnston & Sherman." And the Picayune, speaking for such Confederate sympathizers as remained among the business community, noted that "most people look on with a decided disposition to 'wait for the wagon.' As we cannot drive ourselves it is probably best not to disturb ourselves about the driving of others..."13

Business continued at a relatively lively rate throughout the summer, but at one time in the early Fall, goods available for export were so scarce that several steamers offered to carry goods to New York without charge in order to have the necessary ballast. By the end of November, however, this situation was so completely reversed that two New York-bound steam packets had to reject part of the cargo offered.14


14 New Orleans Picayune, October 23, November 27, 1864.
At the end of the war, trade in New Orleans had recovered much of the ground lost when the city fell to Butler, but it was still running well behind prewar figures. In addition, prices of everything had shot so high that consumer buying power had been unable to keep up with them, and only a relatively small part of the population felt that good times had returned.

Unemployment was widespread during the first two years of the occupation and helped further to reduce consumer resources as those who had any means at all drew on them to keep from being reduced to beggary. "The sidewalks about the City Hall were black with unemployed laborers yesterday," noted the Picayune early in July, 1863, and an Orleanian wrote his sister in September and again in November, "I am doing literally nothing. . . ." When he did get a temporary job, he worked six days a week "from nine in the morning until five or Six & sometimes later in the Evg." Other workers had even longer hours, and in 1864 a group of them petitioned the constitutional convention to include a mandatory provision for a nine-hour work day in the new state constitution as "the most that can reasonably be expected."15

There was a growth of labor organization in New Orleans during the period of the occupation. A strong typographical union was already in existence when the Federals arrived and apparently remained in control of Southern sympathizers practically to the end of the war (see Chapter XIII).

15 Ibid., July 3, 1863; Gus Mandeville to "My dear Sister," New Orleans, September 15, November 5, 1863, February 9, 1864, in Mandeville Papers; New Orleans Daily True Delta, July 6, 1864. Laborers on public works succeeded in getting this benefit, though no other group seems to have been included. Ibid., July 26, 1864.
A baker's union was formed in the Spring of 1864 and promptly announced that its members would no longer bake bread on Sundays.\textsuperscript{16}

In December of that year, thirty employees of a cooper shop which was filling government contracts struck for higher wages. However, their attempt was not only unsuccessful but disastrous, for they were arrested, tried in the Provost Court, and each sentenced to three months at hard labor. But their grievance was a common one, and, though citizens fortunate enough to be employed by the occupying forces in some cases received better salaries than their fellows, paychecks were rarely large in occupied New Orleans. J. Bourga, a 19-year old government clerk who spoke three languages, received the princely sum of $45.00 per month; Joseph Reynes, a former bank official who turned to teaching in a private school, got $30.00 per month; while public school teachers, who were somewhat better paid, received $60.00 per month for ten months of the year. The state constitutional convention set a minimum wage scale for laborers on the public works which was felt to be so high that it was later scrapped. It provided a minimum of $2.00 per day for laborers and $3.50 per day for foremen; but it was customary to lay off most such employees in the Fall and winter months.\textsuperscript{17}


\textsuperscript{17} \textit{New Orleans Tribune}, December 24, 30, 1864; J. Bourga to "Mr. Tucker," New Orleans, August 28, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 1, National Archives; see Chapter V supra.; \textit{New Orleans Daily True Delta}, July 26, 1864; \textit{New Orleans Era}, October 25, 1864.
Closely tied to the wartime problems of trade and unemployment was another aspect of the city's economic life, and it assumed major proportions even before the Federal forces reached the city. This was the currency problem.

In the Fall of 1861, the city's banks, on orders from the Confederate government at Richmond, had suspended specie payment and substituted for it Confederate notes. As a result, the value of Confederate money depreciated steadily, even among the most ardent Rebels. By April, 1862, Judge John A. Campbell was writing from the city to his wife in the country, "In the event of the restoration of Northern rule, Confederate money may be worthless. I proceed on that assumption." He advised spending Confederate money first.18

His assumption was correct, for Butler's first intention seems to have been to outlaw its use. City officials hastily warned him of the nature of the problem, however, and he agreed to withhold his order concerning Confederate money in order that the force of the blow should not fall upon the poor. But some action on the currency was imperatively demanded, for New Orleans' paper money curse was not limited to the rapidly depreciating Confederate bills. Each of the banks had issued notes of its own, apparently without much regard for the state's fairly strict banking laws, and so had the city. With the disappearance of gold and silver coins, the various railroad and streetcar lines had allowed their tickets to be used as small change, and a number of

18 Virginia Clay-Clopton, A Belle of the Fifties ... (New York, 1904), 178. Banks in the loyal states had done the same thing.
business firms had issued private notes, or shinplasters. The situation had so deteriorated by the time Farragut arrived that even the labels from olive oil bottles were being passed as currency.\textsuperscript{19}

The Committee of Public Safety issued a list of firms whose shinplasters were considered sound enough to be circulated as currency on April 29, 1862, but this seemed to increase rather than abate the excitement. When the Committee announced that it would exchange city notes for certain other issues, the \textit{True Delta} reported a "perfect rush to the City Hall to obtain the issues of the city in exchange for those of individuals." Omnibus and city railroad tickets were said to be the "best currency we have as no one refuses to receive them in large or small quantities," but when Clara Solomon's mother tried to change a large Confederate bill in order to make a small purchase, she was unable to get change even in this medium.\textsuperscript{20}

After a few weeks of this monetary confusion, Butler decided to go ahead with his earlier decision to outlaw the use of Confederate money and on May 19 issued General Order No. 30, in which he charged that the banks were continuing to pay out Confederate notes while refusing to receive them as legal tender. In the future, he said, they would pay out only gold, silver, bank notes, or United States Treasury notes. All persons or firms who had issued shinplasters would be

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Dabney, "Butler's Regime," \textit{loc. cit.}, 509-10; Cable, \textit{"New Orleans at the Time of the Capture,"} in \textit{Battles and Leaders}, II, 21.}

\footnote{\textit{New Orleans Daily True Delta,} April 29, May 2, 1862; \textit{"Diary of Clara Solomon,"} entries for May 15, 17, 1862.}
\end{footnotes}
required to redeem them in specie or Treasury notes on presentation under penalty of confiscation of their property and imprisonment at hard labor. Since no one could issue notes in denominations of less than $1.00, however, it was inevitable that the circulation of city railroad tickets for small change would continue. 21

Counterfeiters quickly moved into the railroad ticket field and began to flood the city with a bogus version of this already shaky item of currency. Early in July, New Orleans newsboys announced that they would accept as change only the blue tickets of the New Orleans City Railroad Company, and the True Delta commented, "The boys are right." The situation became so desperate by October that the city authorities were forced to accede to public demands and issue notes in small denominations to the amount of $185,760—that being the amount of city notes already redeemed and cancelled. Four clerks were appointed at a salary of $100 per month to affix the signatures necessary to make the notes genuine. The fact that citizens were forbidden to cut the bills in half (to make them half value) is an indication of the lengths to which some of them had been driven. 22

By Christmas of 1862, even the tickets of the City Railroad had been so cleverly counterfeited that the line's manager, J. B. Slawson, repudiated the blue tickets. A howl of rage went up all over

21 General Order No. 30, New Orleans, May 19, 1862, in Butler Papers. For the most part, the New Orleans press approved the order. See Picayune, May 21, 1862.

22 New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 28, July 11, 30, October 25, 1862.
the city, and General Banks, who had replaced Butler as commander of the Gulf Department, moved promptly to countermand the repudiation. The responsibility for the suppression of counterfeiters rested on the issuing firm, not on the soldiers and laboring poor who received the bogus tickets, said Banks. Since the railroad was not governed by the state banking laws, it could not invoke the privileges of a bank in a similar circumstance. "The commanding general, in consideration of all the facts, advises their immediate redemption." he ordered abruptly.23

The City Railroad Company protested bitterly, but Banks, influenced more perhaps by such protests as the one received from a widowed victim who wrote, "I cannot help it [if the tickets are counterfeit] for I did not issue them" was adamant. Postmaster John M.G. Parker was equally firm in forbidding the use of postage stamps when he learned at the end of 1862 that they too were being used as currency.24

The small change shortage continued into 1863. After the Picayune reported that "five and ten cent tickets of coffeehouses and other private establishments" were again in circulation, the city authorities moved to issue more city notes in small denominations.

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M. Thuling to Banks, New Orleans, January 5, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 4, National Archives; New Orleans Picayune, January 1, 1863.
As the taxes for 1863 came in, they announced, more five and ten-cent notes would be issued up to $150,000. By 1864 the counterfeiters had moved into this field too, and the city treasurer was forced to announce on May 19 of that year that since counterfeit twenty-five-cent bills were in circulation holders of genuine bills would be asked to redeem them for a new issue.  

While the counterfeiters were busy making plates to duplicate city notes, Banks was having his own troubles with the circulation of United States Treasury notes. Like their Confederate counterparts, these notes fell steadily in value as more and more of them were issued throughout the war, and in New Orleans, they were worth 2 per cent less than the notes of the city's banks. Shortly after Banks received a complaint from "A Planter" that this currency was being discounted or refused by New Orleans merchants, he issued General Order No. 21, directing that Treasury notes "be received and paid out in all business transactions without discredit or depreciation" under penalty of forfeiture of the obligation for which they were offered. The order does not seem to have been as effective as Banks desired, however, and after the passage of the National Banking Act in 1864 he moved to take the city out of the currency business altogether, giving as his reason the inability of the city to back its notes with specie. In August, when the banks still discounted Treasury notes in favor of their own, he ordered them to accept the notes at par. The currency orders were very unpopular in the Crescent City. A correspondent of the Picayune argued

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that the United States Treasury could not back its issues with specie and that the move was "very much in the interest of speculators," but his protest was unavailing. A near panic "at the soda fountains, the coffee stands, the fruit stalls and the cake baskets throughout the city" followed the order concerning the city notes, reported the Bee. One French Market fruit vendor did a smashing business on Sunday and Monday, July 3 and 4, selling his wares for car tickets and city notes. On Tuesday, with his stall empty and his till full, he found he owned nothing but a lot of streetcar rides.

Specie itself soon became a new cause of concern as Banks discovered that large sums in gold and silver were passing through New Orleans into the Confederacy. In June, 1864, his Provost Marshal General ordered shipments of specie into New Orleans stopped and a thorough search made of each vessel clearing the port to be sure that further specie did not pass out of the Department; and New Orleans firms known to have large specie deposits in their vaults were told to transfer these deposits at once to the First National Bank of New Orleans.

26
"Planter" to Banks, New Orleans, March 1, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 3, National Archives; New Orleans Picayune, April 9, 1864; New Orleans Bee, July 7, 1864; General Order No. 112, New Orleans, August 22, 1864, in New Orleans Daily True Delta, August 24, 1864.

27
General Order No. 75, New Orleans, June 18, 1864, in Denison to Chase, New Orleans, July 1, 1864, "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 441; T.C. Chickering to J.C. Nicholls, June 22, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 299, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, National Archives; id. to L. Cohen et al., New Orleans, June 23, 1864, ibid. Denison told Chase that $2.5 million in gold was said to have passed through New Orleans into the Confederacy "in the past few months."
The Banks' currency policy, which sharply reduced the amount of circulating medium in a relatively short period, had a serious economic effect on New Orleans, for it coincided with a steep rise in prices. In September the Picayune remarked that Yankees who were surprised to find that five cents was the smallest unit of currency on their arrival in 1862 now would find that prices were so high that the dime represented the smallest unit. And in December, the editor of the Tribune reported that the city's commercial community was looking forward anxiously to the arrival of four million dollars in United States currency with which to pay the troops of the Gulf Department. Despite its arrival early in January, money remained tight in New Orleans until the end of the war. 28

Next to the citizens who had to use the money, the group most concerned with the problem of the unstable currency was the banking fraternity of the Crescent City. Once among the strongest in the country, the banks of New Orleans had suffered greatly from the collapse of the river trade and from the efforts to finance the Confederacy. When Farragut arrived, most of them hid their gold or sent it into the Confederacy, fearing it would be seized as a prize of war by the Federals. Butler summoned these bankers on his arrival and told them to get the money back in their vaults, wherever it was. That sent into the Confederacy was not returned, and when Butler learned that other

28

New Orleans Tribune, December 7, 1864, January 3, 1865. The money arrived on January 1, 1865.
sums had been deposited for safekeeping in the vaults of certain foreign consuls, he seized them without hesitation.29

His actions were applauded in two quarters—the True Delta, which charged that the banks had engaged in "patriotic swindling" since 1861 and that they were interested in nothing but shifting the burden of the financial troubles onto other shoulders; and a group of French citizens, who addressed Butler on May 12 and attributed all the city's troubles to the suspension of specie payment. Among these citizens, General Order No. 30, outlawing the circulation of Confederate money, was extremely popular, for it left the banks holding the worthless Confederate notes.30

Butler took a firm attitude toward the banks, seizing the funds deposited to the account of the Confederate government and ordering them to release Northern assets sequestered by the Confederacy. But he needed their help to manage some of his personal financial transactions, and he apparently came to some sort of terms with them.

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30
New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 9, 1862; Neutral Citizens to Butler, [May] 12, 1862, in Letters Received, 1862, Box 2, National Archives. The attempt on the part of the banks to force their depositors to withdraw their accounts in Confederate funds before the deadline was frustrated by Butler and became the source of many later legal actions. See, for example, Compendium of the Case of Quertier vs Louisiana State Bank, January 25, 1865, in Letters Received (Civil), 1865, Box 11, ibid.
In any case, the banks, crippled as they were, were doing as much business as the times permitted during the Fall of 1862.  

His successor was less interested in coming to terms with the banks, however, and cast a critical eye on their affairs soon after his arrival in the Department. When he learned they were discounting United States Treasury notes in favor of their own he apparently resolved to destroy them. In May, he approved the order of Provost Marshal General Bowen which sent the Louisiana State Bank and the Bank of Louisiana into receivership. A month later he set up liquidation commissions for both institutions when Bowen reported them hopelessly unable to redeem their circulation and deposits. "I believe the liquidation of the two banks will bring a sharper conviction of the unprofitableness of treason than any other civil measure," Bowen predicted.

In the Fall of 1863, following the passage of the first of the National Banking Acts, a group of New Orleans Unionists, headed by Treasury agent George Denison and Federal Marshal James B. Graham,  


32 Banks to Bowen, Port Hudson, May 2, 1863, in Letter Press, Vol. 309, Correspondence of the Major General Commanding, National Archives; Special Orders Nos. 138 and 140, New Orleans, June 11, 13, 1863, ibid.; Bowen to Banks, New Orleans, May 22, June 20, 1863, in Letter Press, Vol. 297, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General. The notorious Alexander Atocha (see Chapter XII) represented the government in these liquidations.
joined to organize the First National Bank of New Orleans. The law required a minimum capitalization of only $100,000, but Denison and Graham aimed at $500,000. General Banks and Denison were soon to split on the issue of Louisiana politics, but the commanding general seems to have regarded the new enterprise with favor from its inception until he himself left the Department. 33

During the Spring of 1864, he turned his attention to the other local banks and on March 18 appointed L.O. Wilson, Charles W. Hornor, and A. DeB. Hughes to a Financial Commission created to "examine and report upon the condition of all Banks, Insurance Offices, Gas and Railroad Companies and other Financial or business Corporations or Companies in New Orleans..." The Commission was asked to check into the capital, liabilities, and assets of each; the relation of the directors to their respective institutions, the amount of stock owned by each, their indebtedness and general business relations to the Bank; the location, character, and apparent or real private and public interest and influence of the stockholders; and the "status of the stockholders and officers... in relation to the Government of the United States." Banks urged a "prompt and fearless discharge" of these duties by the Commission. 34

33 See Denison to Chase, New Orleans, November 6, 20, December 4, 1863, and April 1, 1864, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 416, 423-24, 425, 436.

34 Special Order No. 69, New Orleans, March 18, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 6, National Archives. In addition to the three men named, two conservative Orleanians—Aristide Miltenberger and F.J. Ducourge—were later appointed.
The Commission immediately issued a series of printed questionnaires to all the banks and stock companies in the city, and by the middle of June they had completed their report. Though the two conservative members made a strong protest in a minority report, the three original commissioners recommended "in the interest of all the stockholders, bill-holders, creditors, as well as the public in general, that these Banks should be wound up as soon as possible; their Banking-houses sold or rented out; their Officers and Clerks discharged, and a vigorous and economical liquidation . . . instituted." The minority report complained that the Commission had lumped all the banks together in its condemnation when "many of them are entitled to a much more liberal course." They "did not think," object the minority, "that the suspension of specie payments, nor other acts of the several Boards of Directors, previous to the re-establishment of the Federal authority in May, 1862, [was] a sufficient cause of penalty against the present loyal Directors and Stockholders."35

But the majority had submitted the report that Banks wanted to see. He sent it to State Auditor A.P. Dostie for examination, and Dostie obligingly looked up the provisions of the state banking law which the guilty banks had clearly violated. He returned the report and asked for Banks's assurance that the commanding general would not interfere when he began legal proceedings to liquidate all the banks.

35
Report of the Majority and Minority of the Financial Commission of New Orleans . . . (New Orleans, 1864), in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 6, National Archives.
But Banks had no intention of interfering. He paid each of the Commissioners $1,849.60 for their three months' work (Wilson the chairman received $2,349.60), and discharged them.\textsuperscript{36}

On the second count with which they had been charged, however, the Commissioners failed to bring in a satisfactory judgment. After a cursory examination of such firms as the Commercial Water Works Company and the New Orleans Gas Light Company, they noted that they seemed to be in a "favorable condition financially . . . \[and\] require no further notice." Banks felt this indicated that the investigation had not been sufficiently thorough and therefore appointed Cuthbert Bullitt, Emery E. Norton, and John A. Roberts to a new commission to do a better job in this phase of the investigation. Bullitt and his conferees tried hard but could find nothing financially amiss with either the Gas Light Company or the City Railroad. They were able to repeat some rumors that the former had engaged in "highly treasonable doings for several months" prior to the arrival of the Federal forces, \textit{viz.} helping to raise a neutral military corps "whose occult design was to favor the Confederacy"; that the Company had manufactured bowie-knives "for hostile purposes"; and that it had supplied coke to blockade-runners so they would not smoke so much and attract the attention of the Federal squadron. But after repeating these rumors

\textsuperscript{36}
See Dostie to Banks, New Orleans, July 9, 1864, \textit{ibid}. Also see duplicate receipt from members of the Bank Commission, New Orleans, June 16, 1864, \textit{ibid}. Apparently the legal actions were suspended, however, with Banks's departure. See New Orleans Tribune, December 15, 1864, which reports on the election of officers of the Southern Bank.
in detail, the Commissioners admitted that most were fabrications. They did feel, they added, that the company's late president, P.N. Wood, had "exhibited extraordinary zeal and devotion to the cause of the so-called Confederacy," and the other officers, all absent from New Orleans at the time of the report, were equally wicked. As for the City Railroad Company, it was well known that its administration had "partaken . . . of the order of partisanship, and its disposition, favoring a detestable cause, forms a prominent feature of the management of its affairs."37

This sort of report probably would have presented sufficient reasons to Banks for the liquidation of these firms too; but by the time the report was made, he had been replaced by General Hurlbut, and that officer was too busy with other matters to pursue the report further.

37 Special Order No. 212, New Orleans, August 9, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 6, National Archives; Report of the Special Commission . . . relating to the New Orleans Gas-Light Company, October 6, 1864, ibid.; Report of the Special Commission . . . relating to the New Orleans City Railroad, October 24, 1864, ibid.
Chapter X

PLAYERS AND CANDLEHOLDERS

The New Orleans that Butler captured in May, 1862, was known throughout the world as one of the gayest cities on the American continent. Its five theaters and its French Opera House presented an entertainment bill of fare between November and May that was unrivalled for richness and variety; its colorful polyglot population celebrated a host of holidays all year long, but their annual observance of Mardi Gras was easily the best known. Charitable societies sponsored glittering balls and festive fairs, and private citizens regularly entertained at lavish banquets and elaborate formal receptions. Even the spiritual life provided a source of entertainment: pew-holders in the Jesuit Church on Baronne Street, where the famous organist Collignon provided the best church music in the city, were the envy of all their friends.

For the large segment of the population that participated in many of these activities from a distant spectator's place, there were other, simpler forms of entertainment. There were rides on the "cars" to Carrollton, where a picnic ground and race track lay within walking distance of the depot, or to Lake Ponchartrain, where the thirsty excursionist could enjoy a refreshing drink at Dan Hickok's Lake House before beginning the return trip. Everyone but known prostitutes could take part in the daily "promenade"—along Canal, Rampart, Esplanade, and
Dauphine streets if one lived in the French Quarter; or down Prytania, Jackson, St. Charles, and First streets if one lived "uptown." And for the lowest classes, there were always the innumerable coffeehouses and dance halls where, for a nickel a glass, one could get enough raw alcohol to make him forget the heat of summer and the cold of winter.  

The theater season, which traditionally closed just before the beginning of the fever season in New Orleans, was nearly at an end when Butler arrived, and though he specified that all places of public amusement were to be kept open, only the Poydras Theater still had a company in residence to comply. On Friday, May 9, however, Manager D. J. Miller resolutely announced that his little company would present The Idiot Witness; or, A Tale of Blood. The Picayune felt that the whole business was foolhardy indeed because the "people of New Orleans are not much in the habit of going to the theatre in warm weather. . . ." But this proved no hindrance to the officers of the occupying forces, who were to bestow a heavy patronage on all New Orleans theaters throughout the war period.  

Apparently the Poydras limited its offerings to week-end engagements, changing its bill each Friday and Saturday night. The True Delta reported "fair houses" and "satisfactory performances" for such

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For general summaries of New Orleans recreational offerings see such visitor's guides as Norman's New Orleans; Zacharie, New Orleans Guide; and J. Curtis Waldo, New Orleans Illustrated Guide (New Orleans, 1879).

2

New Orleans Picayune, May 8, 1862; New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 9, 1862.
standard Crescent City favorites as *La Tour de Nesle*, *Evadne*, and *The Lady of Lyons*. But the fact that actors Frank Paige and W. R. Hayden scheduled their "complimentary benefit" performance for Wednesday evening, May 21, suggests that the company at the Poydras soon had to yield to the exigencies of the weather. They were followed by Miss L. Creed and her Juvenile Ballet Corps, who announced on June 1 that they would open a "short season" there next day, prior to their departure for Europe. Prices of admission to the dress circle for their performance was 50 cents; to the gallery, 25 cents.\(^3\)

During the rest of the summer there seems to have been little offered in the way of regular entertainment, though the members of the French Opera House orchestra, stranded in the city, did present a series of concerts beginning July 28. Celebrated maestro Eugene Prevost usually was assisted in these performances by local talent, both professional and amateur. At the French-language Orleans Theater in the old quarter of the city, Mademoiselle Maillet and company announced that they would present *La fille du régiment* and *Les cheveux de ma femme* on July 29. This performance, as well as those at the Opera House, probably was presented more in an effort to aid the performers financially than to comply with orders of the Federal commander.\(^4\)

In mid-September the bored officers and men of the U.S.S. Pensacola decided to relieve the tedium of duty at New Orleans by converting their

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\(^3\) *New Orleans Daily True Delta*, May 10, 16, 17, 20, June 1, 1862.

\(^4\) *New Orleans Picayune*, July 22, 23, 1862.
warship into a showboat and on September 16 presented Robert Macaire, Box and Cox, and Servants by Legacy to a "select audience." The Picayune reporter found the latter piece vastly entertaining and complimented the crew of the Pensacola on "their efforts to amuse in the midst of war. . . ."\(^5\)

The real entertainment season did not get underway, however, until the traditional November 1 date. On that day the Camp Street Theater announced that its season would open with performances of Black-Eyed-Susan and In and Out of Place; and the German Turner Societies announced that they would have their Union Festival at the Delachaise picnic grounds near Napoleon Avenue on November 9 and 10. On November 6, Christy's Minstrels—"fifteen star performers--the Ne Plus Ultra of Ethiopian Minstrelsy"—opened at the Varieties Theater on Gravier Street with a program of songs, dances, witticisms, and burlesques. At the Orleans, Mademoiselle Celeste and company launched the French-language season with a presentation of Les Vivacites du Capitaine Tic, Le Piano de Berthe, and Le Caporal et la Payse.\(^6\)

Respectable ladies did not frequent the evening performances at the theaters without gentlemen escorts, but thoughtful managers arranged for those whose usual escorts were absent to be included in the

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\(^5\) Ibid., September 20, 1862.

\(^6\) New Orleans Daily True Delta, November 1, 4, 1862; L'Abeille, November 7, 1862.
entertainment nevertheless. At the end of November, Christy's Minstrels presented a special matinee for ladies and children, beginning at noon on November 22.7

Three days later the True Delta announced the arrival of the steamer Creole, and among its passengers were the members of the theatrical company of Lewis Baker. Baker's wife, the former Alexina Fisher; the talented Mrs. Mary Gladstone; and the charming ingenue Angela Sefton, all were New Orleans favorites, and their arrival caused a pleasant thrill of anticipation among theater-goers in the city. The Baker company was soon installed in the Varieties where, after the departure of the minstrels, they opened their season on December 1. On the same Monday evening, Messrs. Duprez and Green opened the season at David Bidwell's Academy of Music with the presentation by their Burlesque Opera Company of Scenes from the Tragedy of Othello, The French Dancing Master, The Dentist Perplexed, and White Wash Billy Patterson.8

The St. Charles, largest of the legitimate theaters in the city, did not have a resident company in the Fall of 1862, but it was available for the "Grand Union Dramatic Festival" presented on Christmas night. An original piece by a local playwright, Our Maryland, or, The Battle of Antietam, was performed. And in the museum adjoining the Academy of Music,

7 New Orleans Daily True Delta, November 22, 1862.

8 Ibid., November 25, 27, 28, 30, 1862.
theatrical producers Spalding and Rogers announced the appearance of Colonel Ellingen's Troup of Living Wonders. 9

The conduct of New Orleans theater-goers left much to be desired, according to the Picayune, which complained of the "intolerable amount of noise, laughter, loud talking and calling to acquaintances, at distant parts of the house" during a performance at the Varieties. The "crowded condition of the house" might be the excuse for a buzz of preperformance conversation, thought the editor, but it could not "excuse the continuing of the loud laugh, the coarse joke &c, when the curtain rises, nor does it excuse the police from promptly ejecting the unseemly disturbers. . . ." 10

During the pre-Lenten season at the beginning of 1863, regular weekly performances were presented at the French Opera House on Bourbon Street in the French Quarter, and the patrons of this establishment, who paid a top price of $1.00 for admission, certainly got their money's worth. On Sunday, January 11, they were treated to a presentation of La Court-Paille, a vaudeville drama in three acts; Freluchette, a one-act operetta; and La Vendetta, a one-act vaudeville piece. But even this program was surpassed by the joint offering by the Theatre Francais and the German Theater on Thursday evening, January 29, of the duet from Les Huguenots; the trio from Les Toreadores; Croque Paule; Frappe au Coeur; various unnamed orchestral works; Le Manteau de Joseph,

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9  Ibid., December 23, 1862; January 3, 1862.
10  New Orleans Picayune, January 3, 1863.
a vaudeville drama; and Kotzbue's *The Right Way is Best*, which was
played by the German company. The curtain for this remarkable
performance went up at 7 P.M. There is no indication of when it finally
came down. 11

As the theatrical season again drew toward its traditional
closing date, performers in the various companies began to schedule
their "benefits"—performances for which the management awarded them
a share of the proceeds from the ticket sale as a bonus in addition
to their regular salaries. The popular dramatic actress Mrs. Gladstane
gave *As You Like It* and *Nicholas Nickleby* on March 13 and so pleased
her audience that she was later "serenaded by her friends at her
residence on Baronne street, with one of the best military bands in
the city." And when young Angela Sefton had her benefit a few weeks
later she was "warmly applauded" by a host of her masculine admirers
and "nearly overwhelmed with bouquets and garlands." 12

When actor George Ryer scheduled his benefit for the night of
April 22, however, a near riot occurred at the Varieties Theater. The
first act had proceeded smoothly when, during the intermission, a member
of the audience called upon the orchestra to play "Hail, Columbia."
The orchestra did not play the number, and the audience began to mutter
restlessly. A number of ladies rose to leave, and Dr. A. P. Dostie,
a prominent Unionist, stood up in the orchestra section, told the ladies

11
L'Abeille, January 9, 24, 1863.

12
New Orleans Daily True Delta, March 14, April 16, 1863.
to be calm, announced that the audience was made up of the Unionists of the city and that they had a right to hear "Hail, Columbia," and formally requested the orchestra to play it. But the noise just became louder and more ladies left (only to find themselves stranded in the lobby because a heavy rain had flooded the streets).

Back in the theater, another gentleman took the floor and said he hoped the noise would abate, that he did not want to hear "Hail, Columbia" anyway. This inspired three other members of the audience to climb into his box and attack him. His lady companion threw her arms around him and screamed. The entire audience was on its feet at that, and another lady fainted. Finally Lewis Baker appeared on the stage and announced that he was forbidden by the terms of his license to play "political airs" in the theater and was supported by the secretary to the mayor; but the audience refused to be put off and "Hail, Columbia" was played.

The second act then got under way. When actor Vining Bowers appeared, however, he was hissed. He asked why and was told "Because we choose." He then challenged the hisser to meet him next day, and the latter tossed his address on the stage. The play continued. In the intermission between the second and third acts, cries for more national music were raised and became so loud when it was discovered that the orchestra had left the pit that it was impossible to hear the beginning of the third act. At the appearance of Bowers in this act, one member of the audience tried to climb on the stage to attack him but was repulsed by a kick from Bowers, who was immediately surrounded by his fellow actors.
and spirited off the stage. At this juncture, the military police arrived and arrested the man who had tried to climb on the stage. There was no performance at the Varieties on April 23.\footnote{Ibid., April 24, 1863.}

The military authorities apparently blamed Lewis Baker for the disturbance, for the same night Provost Marshal General James Bowen sent him a letter denying the validity of Baker's interpretation of the term "political airs." "No such order can be recognized and held as valid," Bowen said tersely, "in the presence of the United States Army. You will therefore cause . . . 'Hail Columbia,' 'The Star Spangled Banner,' and 'Yankee Doodle' to be played before the audience leaves your Theatre this Evening."\footnote{Bowen to Baker, April 22, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 1, National Archives.}

On April 28, the Varieties announced that it would be open for one night only—that of April 29—at which time the "UNION CITIZENS of New Orleans" wished to tender a benefit to manager Baker. Patrons were promised that "NATIONAL AIRS will constitute a portion of the evening's entertainment." Banks seeing this notice promptly sent Baker an order to "keep his . . . Theatre open with the usual theatrical performances nightly . . . until further orders." But Baker had had
enough. He booked passage for his company and himself on the steamer
Morning Star, scheduled to depart on May 1. 15

A week later, Miss Emma Bournos, a young Creole vocalist,
announced that she would present a benefit performance at the Opera
house in an effort to raise enough money for her to go to Europe to
study voice. Appearing on the program with her were a number of local
professional and amateur performers who would, the True Delta thought,
give the performance "an eclat which will equal, if not surpass, that
of many more pretentious occasions." Unfortunately for Miss Bournos,
however, her concert was selected as the next event at which devotees
of "Hail, Columbia" would create a disturbance. At the first intermission,
a group in the audience began to wave American flags and call for the
controversial number. The band returned and played it. Quiet—and some
of the audience who had left—returned. Then two performers sang a
duet at the close of which new demands were made for "Yankee Doodle" and
"The Star Spangled Banner." Acting Mayor Stephen Hoyt, who was present,
stood up in his box, declared that he saw no necessity for deviating from
the program, and personally yanked a flag from the hands of one of the
demonstrators. The noise increased, and most of the audience as well as
the young lady performers left. The performance—and the hopes of Miss
Emma Bournos—came to a crashing end, while the mayor and the chief of

15
New Orleans Daily True Delta, April 28, 1863; Bowen to Baker,
April 29, 1863 in Letter Press, Vol. 296, Correspondence to the Provost
Marshal General, National Archives; New Orleans Bee, May 1, 1863. Even
then Baker had a last minute scare, for disgruntled Unionists had him
arrested as he went aboard. He was freed a few hours later when their
lawyer advised the Provost Court it was all a mistake.
police, with a watchful eye on the demonstrators, stayed until the house was cleared.16

As a result of this series of disturbances, Provost Marshal General Bowen issued an order on May 11 directing that, at every theater in which a band or orchestra was employed, a national air was to be played at the beginning and another at the end of every performance. In an effort to appease the outraged Creole population he made an exception of the French Opera House where, he asserted, it would not be in order to ask for any air not on the printed program; those who persisted in asking for others would be arrested for disturbing the peace.17

These upsetting events took much of the enthusiasm from New Orleans theater-goers, who had no desire to defend their political principles in a drawn battle with theater ruffians, and the 1862-63 season more or less petered out. Just before the summer came on in earnest, the city was treated to a series of performances by juveniles when the "Juvenile Thespian Association" staged a benefit at the Academy of Music on May 27 for Master J. B. Duff and little Miss Kean; and 13-year old Minnie Howe announced that she would present a "grand concert" at the Varieties on the evening of June 2. Little Miss Howe advertised that among the numbers to be heard there she herself would render "When Thy Bosom Heaves the Sigh," "Trifler, Forbear," and "The Captive Knight." "Hail, Columbia" and "The Star Spangled Banner" were also on

16 New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 7, 1863; New Orleans Bee, May 9, 1863.

17 New Orleans Bee, May 13, 1863.
the program which, according to the announcement, had been "submitted to the "proper authorities and approved."^{18}

The 1863-64 theatrical season in New Orleans got under way rather early when, on October 7, the Sanford Opera Troupe—back in the city for the first time in eighteen years—opened at the Academy of Music. The True Delta rejoiced in their arrival, for it meant that the "old balcony serenades of St. Charles street are resumed, and music lovers can take their seats as of yore on the steps of the Masonic Hall, listening to the notes of the band in front of the Academy." On October 29, Lewis Baker, who had substituted tragedian Lawrence Barrett and comedian Dan Setchell for the controversial Messrs. Ryer and Bowers, opened again at the Varieties; and on November 23, the Monitor Campbell Minstrels and the "amazing" Mademoiselle Carolista, aerialist, opened in the Masonic Hall across the street from the Academy of Music.^{19}

The seasonal opening of the theaters was saddened for many Orleanians, however, by the death of James H. Caldwell, long associated with the city's theatrical and public utility history. His body was brought from New York for burial on October 12, and a long cortage of "solid men of the city" followed the hearse from St. Anthony's Mortuary Chapel to the Fireman's Cemetery on Metairie Ridge.^{20}

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^{18} New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 26, 31, 1863.

^{19} Ibid., October 7, 29, November 22, 1863.

^{20} New Orleans Picayune, October 13, 1863; New Orleans Bee, October 13, 1863.
The arrival of John Wilkes Booth, whom the True Delta described as both handsomer and more talented than his famous brother Edwin, enlivened the New Orleans season in the Spring of 1864. His "Richard III" was regarded as so artistic a performance that he had to repeat it several times, and the management announced his programs three days in advance so that patrons could select the role in which they most wanted to see him.21

The Union Ministerial Association adopted a resolution in mid-May calling upon the authorities to take "such action as shall secure a quiet Christian Sabbath to the people of New Orleans," and suggested specifically the closing of theaters, race tracks, and other places of amusement on Sundays. But the Times chided them for their pharisaical attitude, and the managements of the St. Charles and the Academy of Music not only continued Sunday performances in their theaters but each announced the installation of a new ventilating system that would make it possible to offer performances all summer long.22

Just before the 1864-65 theatrical season got under way the Federal authorities turned their attention to the management of the Varieties Theater, which was incorporated under the name of Varieties Association.


22 New Orleans Times, May 13, 16, 1864; New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 20, June 2, 1864. However, when the Varieties presented Camille on September 28, 1864, the True Delta reprimanded the management for presenting a drama "so deficient in the essentials of a good moral lesson" and suggested that "it would be well for the youth of the country if the play . . . were banished from the stage."
Word reached the commanding general that members of the association's board of directors had not responded with sufficient decisiveness in repealing a resolution prohibiting members from bringing uniformed Federal officers into the stockholders' seats in the theater. "No declaration in favor of the Government, no recognition of the officers of the army and navy of the United States appears . . . and no intimation of the readiness of the association to receive in their Theatre officers of the army and navy, is suggested," complained the drama-loving Banks. He therefore asked the Provost Marshal General to procure a list of the stockholders of the association and check them all for positive assertions and evidence of loyalty under penalty of confiscation of their stock. If necessary, he threatened in conclusion, the government would take over the theater and operate it.  

Banks interested himself in another of New Orleans' theatrical enterprises too and just before his departure for the North in September, 1864, ordered the sheriff's sale of the French Opera House stopped. The order was rescinded on October 3, however, and the sale of the structure to the Union Insurance Company for $80,000 (representing two thirds of its $120,000 valuation) was approved.

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23 Banks to Harri Robinson, New Orleans, September 13, 1864, in Miscellaneous Papers of the Provost Marshal General, Box 6, National Archives; Robinson to William H.C. King, New Orleans, September 22, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 299, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, ibid.  

The 1864-65 season got off to a very slow start after this disheartening beginning, and it was not helped by the departure of the theaters' most enthusiastic patron, General Banks, nor by the absence of many Union soldiers in the campaign against Kirby Smith in the West. A really thorough damper was put on it January 1, however, when General Hurlbut announced that "attendance on Theatres, Billiard Rooms, and other places of amusement on Sunday, although tolerated in this community by local custom, is dishonorable and contrary to orders." From that day forward, he ordered, such places were to remain closed on the Sabbath. The effect of the order on St. Charles Street was immediately perceptible, declared the Picayune. "Quiet now reigns where, on Sunday evening, there was usually a crowd of persons--bands of music discoursing--and sometimes the effervescence or excitement incident to large crowds. This is all changed."25

Popular as the theater was, it was by no means the only form of entertainment available to Orleanians. Soon after their arrival, the bands of the Union forces began to play regularly in such locations as the rotunda of the Customhouse, the balcony of the St. Charles, and in Lafayette and Jackson squares. Many Orleanians stopped their ears at the sound of such tunes as "John Brown's Body," "Yankee Doodle," and "The Star Spangled Banner," but for those who were too poor to care about politics listening to the stirring music provided a pleasant way to pass

25 See New Orleans Picayune, October 23, 1864, and January 24, 1865; General Order No. 179, New Orleans, December 28, 1864, in New Orleans Era, January 1, 1865; see also New Orleans Times, January 3, 1865.
the hot summer evenings. In August, 1863, Provost Marshal General Bowen announced that he was using funds collected for the issuance of passes to pay for a series of concerts in Coliseum Place, in Jackson Square, and on Canal Street. He asked Police Chief J. A. Hopkins to see that the program for each day's offerings was printed in the Era "as the music is advertised in the Central Park in N.Y.," and specified that each concert must open with "Hail, Columbia" and close with "Yankee Doodle" and "The Star Spangled Banner." In the summer of 1864, Acting Mayor Hoyt sponsored similar programs in Lafayette Square.26

Though by custom Orleanians made their ball and theater seasons coincide, Federals and Unionists refused to be deterred by warm weather in the summer of 1862 and announced a "Grand Union Ball," music for which would be provided by the "magnificent brass band of the 28th Massachusetts regiment," to take place on June 21. And James Benton, the proprietor of the Delachaise Grounds advertised a "Pic-nic and Ball"--with entertainment for the whole family and enough police to maintain order--for Sunday, August 10. All such gatherings had to have the approval of the Federal authorities, however, and when the manager of the Park Hotel neglected to obtain a license for the ball he staged on September 12, he was haled into court.27


27 New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 18, August 10, September 13, 1862.
The management of the Orleans Ballroom, scene of the famous "Quadroon Balls," continued to schedule dances in their establishment throughout the war period. These were patronized chiefly by members of the free Negro elite, but the ballroom remained, as it had been, the best place to learn the latest and most fashionable dance steps from Paris.  

Other balls were staged by fire companies, fraternal organizations, and charitable groups. The season from Twelfth Night to Mardi Gras was still remarkably gay, though the once ebullient Creole population for the most part eschewed the wartime affairs, and St. Joseph's Night, customarily regarded as a respite from Lent, was often the occasion for March 19 balls.

Banks forbade the observance of Mardi Gras in 1863, but there was no dearth of masked balls during the carnival season in spite of this prohibition. At the shop of Madame Graux on Conti Street masquers who were not sure of the character they wished to portray at these affairs could examine a range of costumes at no charge. But Mardi Gras itself passed uneventfully.

This was not the case the following year when Banks, anxious to promote good feelings for the coming gubernatorial campaign, relented and

28 New Orleans Bee, January 17, 1863; New Orleans Delta, February 5, 1863.

29 New Orleans Daily True Delta, February 22, December 9, 1863, and April 10, 1864; New Orleans Bee, March 11, 16, 1863.

30 New Orleans Bee, February 16, 17, 1863.
put no obstacles in the way of the traditional celebration of the day. During the week before February 9, the Orleans Ballroom, the Lusitanos Association, and the Young Men's Benevolent Society all announced fancy dress balls for Mardi Gras evening, and the St. Charles Theater management advertised that it had secured the services of the entire orchestra from the Varieties to play at the ball to be held on its stage following the performance the same night. 31

In Catholic churches throughout the city, the days immediately preceding Mardi Gras saw many a wedding. Archbishop Odin had announced a strict Lenten observance for 1864, and these couples were hurrying to avoid the customary ban on Lenten weddings. 32

Local observers found the 1864 celebration tame by comparison with former years, but to Federal Sergeant W. S. Hemphill of Indiana it was "a little ahead of anything he had ever witnessed."

The day was given up to fun and frolic, and for once everyone was on equal footing. The streets were crowded with people wearing all kinds of costumes and masks. Many were provided with little sacks, or pockets filled with flour or bonbons. In 1863 there had been a fine of $20 assessed for throwing flour; this year there was none. A mask would meet a friend on the street and innocently inquire if flouring was prohibited this year. The answer would of course be "No," wherasupon the questioner would dash a handful of flour in the friend's face, and with a laugh rush away to find a new victim. Sometimes the laugh would be turned on him by the person addressed, who would with the word "No" send a handful of flour into the face of the questioner. Others would pelt every person they met with bonbons. No one would dare to get angry, or at least show it, if they did.

31 Ibid., February 5, 1864; New Orleans Daily True Delta, February 7, 9, 1864.

32 New Orleans Picayune, February 9, 1864.
Men and women joined in the boisterous fun, and no one could be right certain which sex he was meeting. On Canal Street a grand procession was formed, and it was grand. There were King and Queen, Princess, peasants, Satan and fair ladies, beggars and heiresses, clowns, nymphs, Friars, savages, dancing girls, sailors, soldiers, negroes, mulattoes, Creoles, octoroons; every shade from the blackest Ethiopian to the fairest Caucasian, every social grade, all on one grand level of equality, and all with one object in view, pure, unalloyed, boisterous fun. It was a scene that could not be easily forgotten, and extravagant as it was absurd, for the time being it soothed many heartaches.33

That night, disappointed throngs waited in vain along St. Charles Street until 10 P.M., hoping to see a revival of the famous masked torchlight parades of the Mystic Krewe of Comus. But the public masquerade balls "were all well attended and enjoyed," reported the True Delta. "Tinsel and muslin in endless variety ... with masks horrible in the last degree, and pretty silk ones" appeared at these and at the host of private masquerade parties.34

The 1865 celebration was not nearly as gay as that of the year before. The cost of flour had risen scandalously, and few thought of using it to throw in the faces of maskers. "Numerous soirees and private parties with permits were given," the Bee observed, "... mostly among the colored population. At times during the day the maskers had become so uproarious that the Federal mayor had to order all the coffeehouses closed; and a crowd again waited in vain for the

33 W. S. Hemphill, Journal of a Trooper (typescript in nine books, condensed and edited by Dr. A. M. Giddings, Battle Creek, Michigan), Book IV, 352-533.

night parade of the Krewe of Comus. A heavy rain finally drove them away, disappointed. "Brilliant assemblages" attended the four public balls held in the Opera House, the St. Charles Theater, the Masonic Hall, and the St. Charles (or German) Opera House. "But on the whole," remarked the True Delta, "everything was very peaceable. . . ."35

In addition to these more spectacular forms of entertainment, there were others which appealed to all classes of the population. The combined Sands, Nathan and Bailey circuses moved into the Academy of Music early in December and provided exciting entertainment throughout the 1863 Christmas season. In the following year, Seth B. Howe brought his big "European" circus to Congo Square for the same season and brightened the otherwise drab life of many a poor Orleanian with his regular circus parades on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Furthermore, after his Congo Square engagement ended, he acceded to the petition of a group of citizens and moved the circus to Tivoli Circle, where he put on half-price performances for the poor between January 9 and 17, 1865.36

In fair weather, citizens of all classes could be found riding the Canal Street cars to the Half-way House, or walking in the public squares, though even these innocent excursions had their hazards. Soon after the occupation began, several groups of excursionists were stranded at the Half-way House when the late car was taken off without notice; and

35 New Orleans Bee, February 6, 1865; New Orleans Daily True Delta, March 1, 2, 1865.

36 New Orleans Daily True Delta, December 2, 1863, and December 21, 1864.
on one occasion strollers in Lafayette Square were locked in when an
overzealous watchman closed the gates before the traditional 10 P.M.37

A century plant, ready to bloom at Dan Hickok's Lake House on
Lake Ponchartrain, proved an attraction for riders of the Ponchartrain
Railroad in the summer of 1862; races were run regularly at the Fair
Grounds Race Course at the end of the Carrollton Railroad line; cricket
fans could watch a series of matches between the officers of the British
sloop-of-war Rinaldo and local British residents (the latter won two
out of three); and rival fire companies provided both entertainment and
an excuse to wager when they conducted "squirting matches" (for which
the prize was two bowls of champagne).38

In 1864, the fire companies resumed their custom of staging an
annual parade on March 4 to commemorate the founding of the city fire
department; some young Federal officers organized a baseball team later
that Spring; and in the following year, the New Orleans Literary and
Debating Society staged a "quarterly exhibition," which featured "original
addresses and recitations" and was reported to be "quite a treat."39

Such Federal holidays as July 4 and February 22 were made the
occasion of special celebrations by the Federal forces and the various

37
Ibid., May 8, 1862, and July 28, 1863.

38
Ibid., May 21, 29, July 27, December 25, 1862, and January 18,
1863; New Orleans Bee, March 9, 1863.

39
New Orleans Daily True Delta, February 26, 1864; New Orleans Era,
April 19, 1864; New Orleans Bee, March 9, 1865.
Union associations of the city. Artillery salutes were fire, bands played, and—during the Banks regime, especially—balls generally were scheduled in the evenings. The election of a Free State governor for Louisiana in 1864 was the excuse for a "great number of assemblies and social parties"; and to provide superior musical entertainment, Banks imported celebrated bandmaster Patrick Gilmore from Boston. 40

Gilmore staged a "monster concert" at the foot of Canal Street on election day, which also happened to be Washington's Birthday, and his sound effects were so tremendous that residents in the vicinity of Canal and Tchoupitoulas streets were warned to open their windows to keep them from being shattered. But this was no more than a warm-up for Gilmore's most spectacular effort, made in connection with Hahn's inauguration on March 4. Lafayette Square was transformed for this occasion into a gigantic amphitheater. On one side were arranged the seats for spectators and for five thousand singing school children. On the other was the platform, banked with greenery and surrounded in the rear by a semicircle of fifty pieces of artillery. With the five-hundred-piece orchestra stood fifty blacksmiths and their anvils.

The proceedings got under way with a rendition of "Hail, Columbia" by the band alone, followed immediately by the band and the voices of the five thousand children. On the third round, all the bells in the city, ringing in time to the music, joined in; and on the fourth playing,
at an electric signal from Gilmore, the fifty blacksmiths and the fifty pieces of artillery entered the fray. "The feu de joie was glorious," reported the True Delta. "The audience with one accord rose and shouted with exaltation." 41

Such high jinks were regarded with scorn by members of the Creole population, who termed this celebration a "real charivari" and quite what one might expect from a governor whose surname sounded the same as the French word (ane) for donkey. They kept closely to their family circles and generally avoided public places of amusement—and even Canal Street, so far as possible—where they might be forced to mingle with Yankees. When a friend-turned-Unionist sent an invitation to the Banks-sponsored Washington's Birthday ball to Mrs. Uranie Reynes and her absent Rebel husband, she wrote him of it in great indignation: "Have you ever heard of such insolence? Inviting Rebels to a Unionist ball." 42

Musical evenings around family pianos, games of euchre and charades, and occasional amateur dramatics; church-going and family visits; and sometimes a wedding or funeral, filled the time of Creoles who stayed in New Orleans. Most of them had relatives in the Confederate armies, and too much gaiety was considered in bad taste under the circumstances.

41 New Orleans Era, February 22, March 6, 1864; New Orleans Daily True Delta, March 5, 1864; Emily Hazen Reed, The Life of A. P. Dostie . . . (New York, 1868), 95-96.

42 Uranie Reynes to Emile Reynes, New Orleans, March 8, 1864, in Reynes Papers; id. to id., February 22, 1864, ibid.
However, young women with Confederate sympathies might, with propriety, entertain Confederate prisoners, who were often released on brief paroles; and an excursion to the Spanish or British warships anchored in the river was considered the ultimate in pleasurable excitement. Aboard these vessels, Rebel misses were able to gaze freely upon the Confederate flag, hung in ships' cabins for their visit, and sing the rollicking and forbidden measures of "The Bonnie Blue Flag."\(^4^3\)

Large parties were seldom held because of the necessity of going to the hated Yankees to get the required permit. When one "G...", a big merchant, who had made a fortune," gave a ball which was interrupted at midnight by the arrival of police who demanded to see his permit, the host's discomfort was regarded with much merriment by the Creoles. "Do you think brave men who know what they want would humiliate themselves by going to our masters to ask permission to dance in their own parlors?" asked a Creole mother in recounting the affair for her absent son.\(^4^4\)

The old Creole festival days—Christmas, New Year's, and Epiphany—were no longer marked with gaiety and rejoicing. For the most part the Creoles had no reason to rejoice; and even if they had felt like it most of them were in such reduced circumstances that they could

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\(^4^3\) See Zoe Campbell Diary, 1862-65 passim; also letters of Reynes family, 1862-64; "Diary of Clara Solomon," entry for July 11, 1862; Journal of Julia LeGrand, 50, 52, 296.

\(^4^4\) Journal of Julia LeGrand, 303; Polyxene Reynes to Edouard Reynes, New Orleans, January 18, 1864, in Reynes Papers.
no longer afford the lavish entertainments of prewar days.  

In general, for the part of New Orleans' population that retained its Confederate sympathies, the war period of the occupation offered little in the way of entertainment. But for the troops of the occupation and for the Unionists who mingled with them socially it was, as one of them enthusiastically declared, a "great and glorious life."
Chapter XI
FEDERALS, REBELS, AND YANKS FOR THE MONEY

Butler set the tone of relations between his troops and the people of New Orleans before he laid eyes on the city. As his transport was coming up the river from the Gulf he received word that a member of a Rebel mob had torn down the United States flag which Farragut had ordered raised over the United States Mint. "I will make an example of that fellow by hanging him," Butler told Farragut grimly. The naval commander smiled drily. "You know, General, you will have to catch him before you can hang him." Butler was unimpressed. "I know that," he answered, "but I will catch him and then hang him."¹

He later claimed that he had spied William B. Mumford on the sidewalk opposite the St. Charles during his conversation with Mayor Monroe and that he identified him by the piece of American flag he was wearing as a rosette in his button-hole. It is more likely, however, that the Negro informers whom he used freely supplied him with Mumford's description. And full details of his exploit were provided in back issues of the Delta and Picayune.²

¹ Kautz, "Incidents in the Surrender of New Orleans," in Battles and Leaders, II, 93.
² Butler's Book, 376; Butler to Stanton, New Orleans, June 10, 1862, in Butler Papers. See Delta and Picayune for April 28, 1862.
Butler defended the arrest and sentencing of Mumford as well justified by the nature of the latter's crime, even though it had been committed before his own arrival in the city. Possibly he felt that this early blood-letting would be the best way of letting the people of New Orleans know that he meant business. In any case, he later described Mumford as the "head of all the gamblers in New Orleans," and indicated that he had done the community a service by ridding it of him. Mumford was executed on a gallows erected before the Mint on June 7; and though Butler's apologist declared that he died "with the composure with which bad men usually die," many Orleanians felt that he had exhibited heroic calm. To them he became a martyr rather than a warning.

Butler's execution of Mumford was regarded both in New Orleans and in other parts of the world as confirmation of a brutality of character which he had shockingly revealed three weeks before. When reports reached him that New Orleans women were going to some lengths to make clear to Federal troops that they were not welcome in the Crescent City, he decided to put a stop to the insults. On May 15, therefore, he informed the female part of the population that "as officers and soldiers of the United States have been subjected to repeated insults from women (calling themselves ladies) of New Orleans, in return for the most scrupulous noninterference and courtesy on our part, it is

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New Orleans Picayune, June 8, 1862; Parton, Butler in New Orleans, 351-52. "It is only the good people," explained Parton, "who, on the approach of death are dismayed and ashamed at reviewing their lives..." See also "Diary of Clara Solomon," entry for June 19, 1862.
ordered that hereafter when any female shall by word, gesture or movement, insult or show contempt for any officer or soldier of the United States, she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation. 4

New Orleans could not believe its eyes when this order appeared. "The cowardly wretches!" exclaimed schoolgirl Clara Solomon, "to notice the insults of ladies!" Mayor John T. Monroe, speaking for all Southern Manhood, coldly wrote the commanding general, "I cannot . . . suffer it to be promulgated. . . ." To allow it, he inferred, would "exasperate" the population "to a degree beyond control. Your Officers and soldiers are permitted by the terms of this order to place any construction they please upon the conduct of our wives and daughters, and upon such construction to offer them atrocious insults." 5

Monroe's interpretation of the order as licensing the wholesale rape of patriotic Southern women was not unique. Butler was denounced in the British Parliament, and even an old college classmate wrote from the North to chide him about the unfavorable notoriety the order received. Butler professed himself surprised at all the commotion. He thought his order a masterpiece of human psychology. If he had ordered the Rebel women arrested for insulting his soldiers, he said, he would have had a

4 General Order No. 28, New Orleans, May 15, 1862, in Butler Papers.

5 "Diary of Clara Solomon," entry for May 17; Monroe to Butler, New Orleans, May 16, 1862, in Butler Papers. For more on Monroe and the apology see Chapter XIV supra.
riot on his hands the first time he tried it. But this order was self-executing. "No arrests were ever made under it," he later explained. "All the ladies in New Orleans forebore to insult our troops because they didn't want to be deemed common women, and all the common women obeyed . . . because they wanted to be deemed ladies. . . ."6

More than anything else he did, these two early acts of Butler's administration insured him a place in the history—and literature—of New Orleans. Poet Paul Hamilton Hayne was moved to commemorate the "Woman Order" in a lengthy philippic in which he called upon Southern manhood to revenge the insult:

O soldiers, husbands, brothers, sires!
Think that each stalwart blow ye give
Shall quench the rage of lustful fires
And bid your glorious women live
Pure from a wrong whose tainted breath
Were fouler than the worst death.

And in parlors all over New Orleans a new game became popular—making complimentary acrostics using letters of Butler's name as the initial letter of each line:

6
Butler to O. C. Gardner, New Orleans, June 10, 1862, in Butler Papers; Butler's Book, 419; Parton, Butler in New Orleans, 328.
Bad spirits attend you wherever you go
For you murdered poor Mumford a long time ago;
But the widow yet lives, and her brave orphan boy
United will mix all your gold with alloy.
Thou art weighted in the balance with Bill No. 2,
Long used to foul deeds, he is nothing to you.
Even now the handwriting appears on the wall,
Reverdy surely peeped in at that ball.7

After thus establishing himself in the hearts of loyal
Confederates in New Orleans, Butler was soon providing them with more
fuel for the flames of their resentment. Informed that some prominent
Creole ladies had made an ornate flag to be sent to Confederate
General Beauregard, he sent for one of them and demanded the flag so
that he could send it to a Sunday school class in Massachusetts. Her
denials of its existence were unavailing, and when she did bring it in,
he threw it on the floor, remarking that it was the one he wanted. The
owner of a shoe shop refused to sell his wares to a Federal soldier, and
when Butler heard of it, he ordered the provost marshal to hang a red
flag over the shop door and sell its contents at auction. R. S. Bruce,
a partner in a jewelry store which Butler had ordered seized, was sent

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7 Quoted in Parton, Butler in New Orleans, 340; New Orleans Civil
War Papers, Folder M 32, Tulane University Archives, New Orleans.
"Bill No. 2" refers to one of two New Orleans toughs known as "Red Bill
No. 1 and No. 2"; "Reverdy" is, of course, Reverdy Johnson, who was
sent to New Orleans to investigate Butler's administration in June, 1862.
French residents made acrostics too. See Le Republique, January 4, 1863.
first to Fort Jackson and later to Fort Pickens—without having been charged or tried—because he had told the commanding general he could not retrieve a box of jewelry sent out of the city before its fall. 8

Butler dealt summarily with a host of other cases too. Young Dr. Theodore Clapp, son of the eminent New Orleans clergyman, was sent to Fort Pike because he had given medical aid to Confederate soldiers. Nathaniel Ingraham, a would-be job-seeker, was imprisoned in the Customhouse when, to get an appointment with the general, he falsely claimed to have been one of his old classmates. For whipping an unruly slave, Amadeo Landry was arrested and taken to Butler's residence on September 28, 1862, confined in the yard without food or water all that day, removed to the Customhouse for the next two weeks, and finally released on his agreement to free the slave in question and pay the general $500. 9

One of the most notorious of these cases was that of Mrs. Phillip Phillips, whom Butler sent to Ship Island for allegedly laughing at the remains of a Federal soldier. Mrs. Phillips protested that she and her family had been entertaining a group of neighbors.

8 Butler's Book, 450-51, 377,78; R.S. Bruce to Banks, Ft. Pickens, Fla., December 30, 1862, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 1, National Archives.

9 J. Heywood to Banks, Louisville, Ky., January 5, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 2, National Archives; Nathaniel Ingraham to id., undated, 1863, ibid.; Statement of Amadeo Landry, December 22, 1862, ibid. Boxes 1 and 2 in this collection contain many other pleas to Banks for redress of wrongs committed by Butler.
children on their gallery when the funeral cortège—consisting of fifteen to twenty empty mourners' carriages—passed. The empty carriages amused her, and she laughed. But Butler refused to listen to her explanation and shipped her off three days later. The wife of a well-known Jewish lawyer and the mother of eight children, Mrs. Phillips attracted much sympathy. As she was taken to the river steamer that would carry her to prison, men took off their hats; and after she left her niece reported that "pilgrimages" to her home became "quite the rage."  

Butler felt that he might have witnessed a "general manifestation of Union sentiments" in New Orleans during the summer of 1862 had it not been for the "continual bad news from the army of McClellan on the peninsula. . . " This fact restrained a number of Orleanians undoubtedly, but many others found his treatment of their fellow-citizens arbitrary and high-handed and felt little inclination to give allegiance to the government he represented.  

His official journal, the Delta, might wax enthusiastic about the cheerful change wrought in the city by Butler during his first few

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10 See Ship Island Diary of Mrs. Phillip Phillips, and Amanda Levy to Eugenia Phillips, New Orleans, July 26, 1862, in Phillips-Myers Letters, Phillip Phillips Collection. Mrs. Phillips had also been arrested in Washington in 1861 for Rebel sympathies. She was released from Ship Island after six weeks as a result, said her family, of the intervention of Reverdy Johnson.

weeks there; but his wife wrote bitterly to her sister that Orleanians were "as sullen and dangerous" as the people of Baltimore, and she complained that most of the scant dozen Unionist ladies who had called on her had acted as though they feared to be seen in her company. Indeed, though Shepley warned in his proclamation of May 20 that no one could "denounce or threaten with personal violence any citizen of the United States for the expression of Union and loyal sentiments" under pain of "speedy and effectual" punishment, there seemed to be no diminishment of antagonistic feelings. From New York an anonymous letter-writer warned Stanton to advise Butler that there was "mischief brewing" at New Orleans. And in the Crescent City itself, a correspondent of the Delta wrote that a secret organization had been formed there to make a "hostile demonstration against the scant military forces now in New Orleans." 12

By the end of May, Butler had determined to separate the loyal from the disloyal and put both groups on record. His official journal hinted on May 29 that signification of a willingness "to stand by the government" would be a prerequisite to the restoration of civil authority and urged Orleanians to "accept the inevitable, throw off the sour and wrinkled visage of hate," and take the oath of allegiance. On June 10, Butler announced that "'public exigency'" demanded that "those who are well-disposed toward the United States" be distinguished from "those who

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still hold allegiance to the Confederate States." From that day on, therefore, "all persons ever heretofore citizens of the United States, asking or receiving any favor, protection, privilege, passport, or to have money paid them, property or other valuable thing whatever delivered to them, or any benefit of the power of the United States extended to them, except protection from personal violence, must take and subscribe to the oath. . . .”

In thus calling upon Orleanians to take the oath Butler anticipated the passage of the Second Confiscation Act by Congress in July, 1862. This act required all persons then in rebellion to return to their allegiance within sixty days under penalty of confiscation of their property. Oath-taking was not too popular among the residents of New Orleans up to that point—indeed, when it was learned that one gentleman had taken it he was refused further admission to his boarding-house—but business at the provost marshal's office had become quite brisk by the first of August. Butler himself estimated that 11,723 persons had taken the oath by August 7. 14

However there were some hold-outs. The telegraphers in the police and fire alarm telegraph office refused to take it, lost their jobs as a result, and were reported to be destitute at the end of August.

13 New Orleans Delta, May 29, 1862; General Order No. 41, New Orleans, June 10, 1862, in Butler Papers. When foreign residents protested that the order forced them to violate their neutrality Butler drew up a special oath for them and ordered that they take it.

14 New Orleans Delta, August 1, 1862; Butler's Book, 473.
And when the Delta began to publish the names of those who had taken the oath, there was a flood of notices in other journals from citizens who feared their names would be confused with the similar ones of oath-takers. When word of this open defiance reached the commanding general he forced a number of the defiant ones to recant publicly. Many others waited hopefully for Lee, then battling McClellan in western Maryland, to crush the Army of the Potomac. But news of the outcome of the battle of Antietam had not arrived before the last minute rush to get the certificates indicating the bearer to be a loyal citizen occurred.  

An estimated 61,000 persons took the oath of allegiance before the September 22 deadline. Six thousand others had declared themselves foreign neutrals. Treasury agent George Denison thought this represented three fourths of the population; but 50 per cent would be a more accurate estimate, and the figures also included many Negroes, whom Butler had also encouraged to take the oath.  

Taking this into account, the 67,920 total of persons who did take the oath represents a fairly large segment of the population of a city so lately Confederate. It would be fantastic to assume that all of them perjured themselves to take the oath, though some of them admittedly did. More than five thousand men voted in the first Congres-

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15 New Orleans Bee, August 26, September 16, 1862; New Orleans Daily True Delta, September 13, 14, 22, 1862; New Orleans Picayune, September 23, 1862.

16 Bush "Federal Occupation," 111; Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 60; Denison to Chase, New Orleans, September 24, 1862, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 316.
sional election held in 1862 under Federal auspices, and it may be supposed that most of them were among the faithful who returned to allegiance before September 24. But most Orleanians who complied with the order probably did so because they were more interested in what became of their property than they were in the justice of either the Union or the Confederate cause.

For those who preferred to stick to their principles, Butler had more news on September 24. In General Order No. 76, he ordered all residents over eighteen years of age who had not yet renewed their allegiance to submit an inventory of their property holdings to the nearest provost marshal and there register themselves as enemies of the United States. In addition, each householder was required to turn in a complete list of all persons, eighteen years of age or more, living under his roof, along with their sex, age, occupation, and citizenship status. Stiff penalties were provided for failure to comply, and policemen were told that they would be held responsible for 100 per cent returns on their beats or pay a fine of $5.00 per day for each unreported person.17

A number of property-holders who had not seen the light before September 24 were endowed with fresh vision on the publication of this order. Others, including many women and propertyless young men, took a perverse delight in obtaining the forms that certified them to be enemies.

Records of the Adjutant General's Office show 3,101 persons obtained such certificates, but the list also indicates that 208 of them later took the oath to avoid confiscation or—in some cases—deportation to Confederate territory.\(^{18}\)

On December 5, Butler offered to allow "all the registered enemies of the United States . . . who desire to go within the rebel lines and not to return" to leave the city. By December 15, 1,103—of whom only 300 were women—had availed themselves of the offer. They were provided with transportation out of the Department on December 19.\(^{19}\)

When Banks arrived, he invited all who had registered as enemies and anyone else who for some good reason had not taken the oath earlier, to come forward and take it. There is no indication of how many registered enemies took advantage of the leniency extended by the new commanding general, but the two thousand who remained apparently continued a thorn in the side of ardent Unionists. Early in February the Union association of the Second District (where many of the registered enemies resided) forwarded to Banks a resolution calling for the publication of the names of the disloyal who were, it was charged, "making use of their social positions, influence, wealth and talents to vilify and traduce the United States Government" and influencing others to do the same thing. Loyal citizens had, they claimed, a "right to know who are the

\(^{18}\) New Orleans Picayune, October 1, 1862. See List of Registered Enemies, Vol. 319, National Archives, and Zoe Campbell Diary, entry for October 3, 1862. She later took the oath—but did not mention it in her diary.

\(^{19}\) New Orleans Delta, December 6, 16, 1862.
"Registered Enemies" in their midst; and who are Aliens de facto, from those who are acting under false pretences." The names were not published. 20

Banks was absent on a campaign in western Louisiana when General James Bowen, his Provost Marshal General, notified him that he had ordered the rest of the registered enemies to leave New Orleans by May 15, but he seems to have approved the move. Though those who desired it were again offered the opportunity to take the oath, Bowen indicated that he did not consider all the registered enemies worthy of the privilege and asked the Orleans parish provost marshal to weed out those "who ought not to be permitted to take the oath of allegiance. . . ." The order caused a great stir in Confederate circles, and there was a hasty round of preparations for departure. Before the deadline arrived, however, the registered enemies learned that only men of military age would be required to leave. This decision apparently was inspired Federal fears that Rebel groups within the city might try to seize control while a large part of the Federal garrison was absent on campaign. In all, 1,015 registered enemies left by May 15, and seventy took the oath of allegiance. 21

20 General Order No. 9, January 12, 1863, in New Orleans Picayune, January 14, 1863; Resolution of Second District Union Association in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 6, National Archives.

Five days after they left, however, it occurred to Federal authorities that they might possibly carry with them information that would be useful to Confederate military commanders. Banks accordingly sent word to Bowen to suspend immediately the further dispatch of registered enemies, though the Provost Marshal General was to "take care that the persons affected do not derive any encouragement or hope from this suspension. . . ." From time to time during 1863 the number of registered enemies was reduced as more left the city or took the oath to avoid going. By the summer of 1864 the Provost Marshal General estimated that only 778 still remained in New Orleans. Banks ordered that these be deported on June 23, but according to the Picayune others were still leaving the Department as late as mid-October, 1864. 22

Federal authorities seemed unable to rid the city completely of its disloyal element before the end of the war—indeed, one young Orleanian declined an appointment in the United States Navy in April, 1865, because he said he could not take the oath of allegiance—and ardent Unionists charged that the task was made much harder by the fact that many who had taken the oath had never really switched their allegiance from the Confederacy. Attorney L. Madison Day became so exercised about the number of "bogus Union witnesses" who testified for the defense in one of the loyalty cases tried in 1863 that the judge had to

reprimand him. But on direct cross examination most of the witnesses admitted that their sympathies still lay with the Rebel government. 23

Such persons, fumed the Era, were impelled by motives "of the most dishonorable and mercenary character. They do it only to save their property. ... This in our opinion is moral perjury, and perjury for a bribe." Not so, declared Confederate Felix Grima, whose family was later deported for their Rebel sympathies; "this oath is a formality of circumstance and it is not surprising that they so consider it in a country where it is profaned on all occasions. ..." 24

Many a Confederate who, like young Sarah Morgan, had closed their eyes, prayed, and used their "raised" hand as a shield to cover their faces, did indeed regard it as a forced oath, though the force used was, as the Era correctly charged, the threat of property confiscation. During his administration, Butler had not even waited for the passage of the 1862 Confiscation Act to begin the seizure of the property of Confederates. Given the wider application of the new act, he went to work with a will to make it materially unprofitable for Orleanians to retain their allegiance to the Confederacy. His apologist, Parton, claimed that he added a million dollars to the Federal Treasury by his

23
Charles Miller to F. A. Starring, New Orleans, April 1, 1865, in Endorsement Book, Vol. 302, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, National Archives; New Orleans Picayune, March 28, 1863; New Orleans Era, April 2, 1863.

24
strict enforcement of the confiscation laws, but, though he made a show of rendering inventories and keeping records, no one ever seemed able to trace the course of these funds once they reached Butler's hands.25

In any case, "provost marshal sales" became a regular feature of life in the Department of the Gulf during the Fall of 1862 as everything from French mirrors to blooded horses went on the auction block and—in many instances—found its way North. Treasury agent George Denison had to write his mother early in October and ask her not to mention to her Vermont neighbors the things he was shipping home to her as word of it had come back to New Orleans, where he had been accused of wanting to plunder the South.26

When Banks succeeded Butler as commanding general of the Department he ordered an end to the confiscation sales, and for a time Rebel property-holders in the city breathed more easily. But the suspension was short-lived, and in March the president of the Sequestration Commission asked Banks if taking the oath of allegiance could be considered "sufficient evidence of loyalty" in confiscation cases. Banks informed him that the oath was not enough but failed to

25 Sarah Morgan Dawson, A Confederate Girl's Diary (New York, 1913), 383; see Butler to Mrs. Butler, New Orleans, June 20, 1862, in Butler Papers; id. to Stanton, New Orleans, June 27, 1862, ibid.; id. to Lorenzo Thomas, June 17, 1862, ibid.; Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 60; Ficklen, Reconstruction, 38,40.
say what else would be required to save one's property from seizure. He suggested that the Commission refer such questions to the Provisional Court.27

Not all such decisions reached the Provisional Court, however, and as time went on, it became customary for the Assistant Chief Quartermaster, in charge of property seizures, to pass upon the loyalty of even purportedly loyal citizens. This officer was deeply suspicious of most Orleanians and was, in addition, under considerable pressure from Federal officers and others to supply them with housing from his list of confiscated Federal properties. As a result, the date on which one took the oath of allegiance became an important consideration in confiscation cases, and those who had taken the oath during the "days of grace" or later were not held to be truly loyal.28

So zealous was the Assistant Chief Quartermaster that he did not always check carefully into the background of persons whose property


28 See endorsement of J. W. McClure on Mrs. H. F. Baldwin to McClure, New Orleans, June 22, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, National Archives. See also Harri Robinson to J. W. Wilson, November 2, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 299, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, ibid.
he seized. In December, 1863, William Barry indignantly wrote Provost Marshal General Bowen that Captain J. W. McClure had seized his $2,000 savings account in the Louisiana State Bank in spite of the fact that he had taken the oath on June 16, 1862. And in 1865 the suspicious captain seized property worth $233,000 belonging to loyal citizens, because a paid informer had reported them to have been "strong rebels" in 1861. 29

As property seizure went forward on a wholesale basis during 1863-64 a jurisdictional quarrel arose between the two arms of the Federal government responsible for handling confiscated property. Provost Marshal General Bowen protested to Banks early in 1864 that Supervising Special Agent of the Treasury B. F. Flanders was selling seized Confederate property at sheriff's sales and turning the funds realized into the United States Treasury rather than into the coffers of the Department of the Gulf, and he asked if this was not in violation of General Orders. Banks apparently agreed that it was, for Bowen informed Sheriff Alfred Shaw on April 20 that he was not to dispose of further confiscated property without the approval of the Chief Quartermaster of the Department. 30

29 Barry to Bowen, December 4, 1863, in Endorsement Book, Vol. 303, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, ibid.; Smith Anderson to George B. Drake, April 8, 1865, in Letters Received (Civil), 1865, Box 11, ibid.

30 Bowen to Banks, New Orleans, January 13, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil) 1864, Box 5, ibid.; id. to Alfred Shaw, New Orleans, April 20, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 298, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, ibid.
With these and other examples of Yankee greed set before them, it is small wonder that Orleanians were slow in producing a genuine and widespread Union sentiment. But all Orleanians were not Confederate sympathizers—open or secret. Many of them began enlisting in the Federal army soon after Butler arrived, though they may have been motivated more by economic necessity than by a burning patriotism, for such volunteers received an advance bounty of $38.00. Others accepted jobs with the Federal forces and worked as civilian clerks, engineers, draymen, and so forth. They were "all yanks for the money," the wife of a Confederate officer wrote bitterly; but by 1864 one had to have Federal money to live in New Orleans, and it became much easier to give lip service to the conquerors. 31

There was also a small hard core of politicians, who comprised the leadership of the Union associations, and the new Orleanians—immigrants from the North who might never have given much thought to the Union but who were anything but Rebels. It would be impossible to estimate how many of the latter poured into New Orleans between 1863 and 1865, but even the Unionist Times declared that "not a hole or a cranny has been left by the ... rebel and secessionist, but there are a dozen free men at hand ... striving anxiously, perseveringly and at last successfully to 'get in.'" 32

31 Carrie Hyatt to Arthur W. Hyatt, New Orleans, July 6, 1864, in Hyatt Collection, I.

32 One ardently pro-Union paper charged that these new Unionists were "real chameleons" who would change their views "as easily as an undershirt." La Republique, January 4, 1863; New Orleans Times, January 6, April 28, 1864.
These two groups—the politicians and the emigrant Yankees—provided a sizeable and enthusiastic nucleus for all Union activities. Shut out socially by the rest of the population, they formed their own society. Their wives and daughters, led by Mrs. N. P. Banks, sewed Union flags, organized "promenade concerts," and held elaborate receptions (termed "reunions" by the Federal press) to which were invited "military, naval, and administrative" guests, as well as some "old residents" who were "beginning to mingle more cordially with the officers of the Government." Even 13-year old Binney Banks entertained for the children of "some of the most influential families in the city, as well as those whose heads are in the army and navy."[33]

On the whole, however, fraternization between young people was not extensive. This was often hard on New Orleans girls who, deprived of the company of male friends absent in the Confederate service, sometimes were tempted to accept the proffered friendship of polite young Federals. Some risked the condemnation of friends and neighbors and accepted; but one pair of sisters who did so were pointedly reminded by Julia LeGrand that "it is scarcely decorous to take a hand in friendship which is red with Confederate blood." A real gentleman—even a Northerner—she maintained, would be aware that "true Southerners are compromised by receiving Federals" and not expect it.[34]

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It must have been hard to put away such feelings when the war ended. Many of them obviously were carried over for a long time and formed the basis for a permanent bitterness in the years ahead.
Chapter XII

STRAINING THE QUALITY OF MERCY

With the fall of Forts Jackson and St. Philip, the legal system of Louisiana, as it applied to New Orleans, also collapsed, and by the time General Butler arrived in the city, only a few of the inferior courts were open. Butler's first intention seems to have been not to interfere with the civil courts, though he did announce that all crimes involving the military would be brought to trial in the court-martial.¹

The disorganized state of the municipal judiciary soon forced him to take more action, however, and on May 20, his military commandant, General George F. Shepley, suspended the "several Recorders of the city . . . from the discharge of the functions of their offices . . . ." From that time forward, he directed, "all complaints for the violation of the peace and good order of the city, of its ordinances, or of the Laws of the United States" would be heard in the Provost Court where Major Joseph M. Bell presided. The District courts, which heard civil cases, had already ceased to function. Hearing of Shepley's order that one judge was to hear all cases from the six recorder's courts, the

¹ See his Proclamation of May 1, 1863, in Butler Papers.
Commercial Bulletin emitted a figurative whistle and expressed the opinion that Judge Bell would have a "vast amount of work on his hands."  

Butler may have had more than a judicial reorganization in mind in making this change, for by abolishing all the inferior civil courts, he forced the citizens of New Orleans to take all their legal complaints to courts within the Federal jurisdiction. In such courts no lawyer could practice who had not taken the oath of allegiance, and no suit could be brought by any person who had not similarly indicated their loyalty to the Union. Judge Bell was indeed swamped with cases, and by October Butler had ordered the reopening of three of the district courts. In the meantime, a large part of the legal fraternity and a number of citizen plaintiffs had found it to their advantage to return to their former allegiance.  

The Provost Court, in one form or another, was to be a judicial landmark in New Orleans throughout the war, and its reputation was never good. Complaints about its operation soon began to be heard. In August the True Delta charged that, in addition to taking the oath of allegiance, plaintiffs in cases heard in this court had to pay $1.00 in United States Treasury notes to institute proceedings, and fifty  

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3 See New Orleans Picayune, May 23, 1862; New Orleans Commercial Bulletin, June 6, 1862; New Orleans Bee, October 15, 1862. Judge Bell was so overwhelmed with cases that on June 25 he published a notice that his court would no longer entertain any but suits of a "strictly criminal or military character." Ibid., June 25, 1862. The recorder's courts were reconstructed by July 1.
cents for each witness he intended to call up—all in advance. This money was paid to the clerk of the court, and apparently it never went any further than that.  

Judge Bell was soon transferred to another Butler-created tribunal—the Court of Military Commission—and another Butler appointee, a New England civilian named J. B. Kinsman, was imported to occupy the bench of the Provost Court. "The appointment to the position of Judge of the Provost Court vacillated between private citizens and officials seemingly without improvement as far as the ends of justice were concerned," noted a special commission which reported on affairs in the Department of the Gulf in 1865. Judge Kinsman's tenure was fairly short-lived, for he left the Department shortly after Butler did, and Judge Charles A. Peabody, sent by Lincoln to head the new "Provisional Court," was asked by Shepley to handle the duties of the Provost Court as well.  

Judge Peabody often found it impossible to handle the work of both courts, and as a result more and more of the sessions of the Provost Court were presided over by one Augustus DeB. Hughes, clerk of the court, and the travesties of justice reported in this court multiplied. "... it is a matter of standing wonder," commented the Picayune in the Fall of

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4 New Orleans Daily True Delta, August 16, 1862.

1863 in discussing Hughes's court, "that sober, quiet men from the economical North, who had come here to reform abuses and charm the rebellious back into loyalty, could ever screw their consciences up" to the approval of his acts. But consciences had been pricked. In May, Banks's Provost Marshal General called to his commander's attention the fact that the hours of the Provost Court—7 to 10 A.M. daily—constituted a "denial of justice," since anyone arrested after 10 A.M. each day was forced to spend the rest of the day and all night in the Parish Prison. He recommended that Banks appoint additional judges so that the court could have a later morning session and an afternoon session too; but Banks, apparently disgusted by the reports which had reached him about this court, created one of his own at the beginning of June and appointed one of his officers, Colonel Charles C. Dwight, Provost Judge.6

The jurisdiction of the new court was to include all cases involving violations of Federal military orders by military personnel, all civil crimes committed by military personnel, and "all other causes arising under the military jurisdiction. . . ." With so wide a range, the new court offered fully as many avenues for the enrichment of its personnel as the old one had, and when Banks replaced Colonel Dwight with

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6 Bowen to Banks, May 20, 1863, in Letter Press, Vol. 297, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, National Archives; New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 6, 1863; New Orleans Picayune, September 2, 1863. The Hughes court was abolished in General Order No. 65, New Orleans, August 31, 1863, Letter Press, Vol. 297, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, National Archives. See also Bowen to J. A. Hopkins, New Orleans, August 31, 1863, ibid.
a civilian friend of his own—Alexander A. Atocha—in August, 1863, most of the avenues were soon being explored.7

Persons appearing in cases heard by the court were required to post bond in the amount of $5.00—which, commented the Picayune, constituted rank injustice "when we consider the number of arrests made for trifling offenses, the number of bonds which have been furnished, and the number and enormous amount of the fines imposed. ..." Bitterly its editor continued that it was small wonder that the Provost Court "is looked upon as a fat place by its peculiar and well-salaried officials, and as a grinding oppression by our citizens generally."8

Apparently Judge Atocha mastered the revenue sources of the court very quickly, for he soon felt he could afford to keep a wife. On October 17, he imported a bride from New York and was married in a brilliant ceremony, illuminated by the presence of much Army "brass." Though he presided in cases argued by such outstanding Louisiana legalists as Christian Roselius, Atocha's legal knowledge seems to have been somewhat deficient. The Special Commission, checking into his court records in 1865, noted shockingly disparate and inequitable sentences imposed by him. And by March, 1864, other deficiencies had become apparent.

7 New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 5, 1863; Special Order No. 198, New Orleans, August 13, 1863, in Endorsement Book, Vol. 309, Correspondence of the Major General Commanding, National Archives. Atocha, though a native Orleanian, had grown up in New York and came to New Orleans with Banks in 1862. He served for a time with the Sequestration Commission.

8 New Orleans Picayune, September 2, 1863.
Asked to submit a detailed accounting of all funds which had passed through his hands, Atocha evidently was not able to do so. In May he found it conveniently imperative to return to the North for a while and departed in a cloud of scandal.9

Banks next offered the judgeship to young Colonel Henry C. Warmoth, a 21-year-old Missourian who was personal aide to Illinois' General John A. McClernand. For a young man of his tender years, Warmoth's rise in the military service had been sufficiently spectacular as it was; the reasons which moved Banks to insist upon his accepting the Provost Court appointment are, however, still not very clear. Warmoth noted in his diary that the position had been offered to him by Banks's secretary, Captain James Tucker, during a reception at the Banks home on May 25. He had declined it because he thought the court illegal and unconstitutional and because "it was currently believed it was for the purpose of making some persons rich & ... it had been so conducted as to bring those persons connected with it into disrepute."10

9 Ibid., October 20, 1863; Report of the Special Commission ..., September 23, 1865 ..., Vol. 737, Record Group 94, Records of the War Department, Adjutant General's Office, National Archives. Murder, for example, drew variously terms of eight months, one year, and five years; larceny, life imprisonment; and treason, three months. See also Bowen to Atocha, March 31, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 298, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, ibid.; Henry L. Pierson to id., April 19, 1864, Vol. 298, ibid.; and Bowen to Clerk of the Provost Court, New Orleans, May 26, 1864, Vol. 299, ibid. Atocha was subsequently brought to trial on charges of corruption but was freed. See Atocha to J. Schuyler Crosby, New Orleans, May 13, 1865, in Letters Received (Civil), 1865, Box 10, ibid.; and J. B. Nott to Bowen, (October) 21, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, ibid.

10 Warmoth Diary, VI, entry for May 25, 1864.
Banks refused to be put off, however, and a few days later, overriding Warmoth's objection that acceptance would doom him "to perpetual infamy," he persuaded him to accept the post. Warmoth entered upon his duties next day and soon was enthusiastically meting out sentences on a stern and wholesale basis. He tried thirty cases on his second day on the bench—"Some quite important ones"—and though he reported that "everybody said I did well," he described the work as a "very great strain upon the mind."

Apparently it was a strain on other things as well, among them loyalty and honesty. When a ship captain who was one of his best friends was brought before him charged with allowing two demijohns of whisky to be unloaded illegally from his steamer, Warmoth fined him heavily, remarking "I know no friends in the discharge of my duty." He sentenced the keeper of a bawdy house and four of her girls to one to two months each in the workhouse, but privately offered to release them for $50.00 each. They were able to raise only $175, but he accepted that and let them go.

A soldier accused of stealing a watch chain was sentenced to ten years.
in prison, and an officer who was charged with having ridden a horse to death was fined $400. 12

He had little sympathy for the defendants brought before him. When Mrs. Victoria Anderson was charged with sending her 14-year old daughter to the military prison with a message for some prisoners who subsequently escaped, he sentenced both Mrs. Anderson and her daughter to prison for a year, though it was established that the mother was illiterate and had six small children at home dependent upon her care. And a German coffeehouse-keeper, accused by two Negroes of receiving a couple of sacks of stolen government oats, received a similar sentence, though the oats in question were not found on his property. 13

Warmoth was relieved from duty on October 25, 1864, and ordered to return to his regiment. Arrived in Louisville, Kentucky, he hastily resigned his commission and hurried back to New Orleans. On January 10, 1865, he was licensed to practice law in the state of Louisiana and was soon doing so well that his name was mentioned as

12 Warmoth Diary, VI, entry for June 8, 1864; Statement of Charles H. James, September 15, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 8, National Archives; R. K. Diossy to Bowen, July 2, 1864, ibid.; manuscript record of case of U.S. vs D. N. Ensworth, August 3, 1864, ibid., Box 6. Banks termed this judgment "inequitable" and ordered it reduced.

13 See John W. Corrigan, John Bulkley et al., to Hurlbut September 28, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, National Archives; Compendium of Charges Against Burghuber and Lutz, October 21, 1864, ibid. The judgement was ordered set aside by Judge G. Norman Lieber, who succeeded Warmoth.

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a candidate for appointment to the State Supreme Court. He was at the time not yet twenty-two years old.14

Though it was established as a military court, the Provost Court heard a large number of purely civil cases. It was not, however, the only court hearing cases of this kind. As has been pointed out, Butler found it necessary to reconstitute the District courts of three of the city's six districts in October, 1862. The jurisdiction of these courts was limited to probate matters and to "any civil cases between party and party, not involving any question of political or military character." The restriction concerning cases of a political or military character meant that these courts had a relatively limited jurisdiction, for—other than successions—very few cases came to trial in Civil War New Orleans that did not have a political or military character. Moreover, the stiff oath required of prospective jurors made jury trials— or even the organization of a grand jury—next to impossible.

In November, Butler forbade the transfer or alienation of property by any person who had not taken the oath of allegiance, and this cut down still further the number of cases.

14 Special Orders 289, 291, New Orleans, October 25, 1864, and Special Order 256, Louisville, Kentucky, November 16, 1864, in Warmoth Papers, Correspondence, 1865; Internal Revenue Tax Receipt, ibid.; T. A. Post to Warmoth, St. Louis, March 9, 1865, ibid.
eligible for trial in the District courts.15

President Lincoln himself sought to remedy the lack of a system of higher courts for Federal Louisiana by creating a "Provisional Court" in October, 1862, authorized to "hear, try, and determine all causes, civil and criminal, including causes in law, equity, revenue and admiralty. . . ." This court, which was to act in lieu of the Federal courts dissolved by the act of secession, was to be headed by Judge Charles A. Peabody of New York. He was empowered to appoint a prosecuting attorney, marshal, and clerk for the court who, like himself, were to hold their appointments during the Presidential pleasure throughout the military occupation of Louisiana.16

Though Lincoln had declared it to be a court of record, the Provisional Court proved a source of embarrassment to the legal minds of Louisiana, most of whom regarded it as clearly unconstitutional and illegal. Undeterred by this opinion, Judge Peabody opened the doors of the court on December 31, 1862, and he acted continuously under the Presidential order until the end of the war. Judge Peabody

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15 New Orleans Bee, October 15, 1862. Loyal Unionists Rufus K. Howell, W. Handlin, and E. Hiestaud were named to the Sixth, Third, and First District Courts respectively. They also handled cases of the other three districts. Ibid., May 22, 1863. The oath for jurors excluded from jury service all who had "aided the rebellion" by so much as a dollar contribution. See also General Orders No. 73, New Orleans, September 18, 1862, in Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIV, 572-73.

claimed less authority than his commission vested in him, but even with this self-limitation on his jurisdiction he managed to conflict with the military authority. In March, 1863, Banks sent his Chief Quartermaster, S. B. Holabird, to Washington in the hope of getting a ruling that would clearly establish the subordinate role to be played by the Provisional Court, which, he felt, "ought only to adjudicate upon subjects turned over or transferred to it by the military branch of the Government." General in Chief Henry W. Halleck assured him that "neither this court nor its officers should be permitted to interfere with or embarrass your movements," and told him that if he found it necessary, he could completely disregard the court and its officers. 17

The Banks-dominated legislature sought to do away with the Provisional Court in 1864, arguing that the civil government had been restored and that the President had recognized the regular constitutional courts; as a result the administration did impose further limits on its jurisdiction. "But it continued to exist," as one student has pointed out, "doubtless for the purpose for which Lincoln created it ... rendering decisions in disputes or litigations in which foreign residents were involved or concerned." The Provisional Court was ultimately abolished by Congress in July, 1866. 18


18 Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 155-56.
In addition to this creation of President Lincoln's, regular Federal courts were reconstituted as the occupation went on. In June, 1863, the United States District Court was reopened with elaborate ceremonies, many speeches, and a wild popping of champagne corks. United States Attorney Rufus Waples warned that the old court records were in such chaos that it would be some time before the court could go into the claims that had accumulated since 1861, but the reopening of the court was widely regarded as a significant step in the restoration of Louisiana to the Union.¹⁹

By November, 1863, there were so many courts in operation in New Orleans that the old Cabildo on Jackson Square could not house them all and a number of them were forced to move over into the Presbytery on the other side of St. Louis Cathedral. There is evidence that many of the same complaints made about the Provost Court could be repeated concerning these newer Federal creations, however, and the judicial situation in the city as a whole was the object of much criticism throughout the war period.²⁰

¹⁹ New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 25, 1863. E. H. Durell was named presiding judge. The celebration produced one minor casualty—a champagne cork hit one of the guests in the leg.

²⁰ Ibid., November 10, 1863. The existing courts were the U.S. Provisional Court; U. S. District Court; Provost Court; First, Second, Third, and Sixth District Courts; Sheriff's Court; Second and Third District Recorder's Courts, Fourth District Justice's Court; and Coroner's Court. See also J. R. Franklin to Banks, New Orleans, February 10, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 6, National Archives; J. Madison Wells to Hurlbut, New Orleans, March 14, 1865, ibid., 1865, Box 11; and New Orleans Times, April 11, 1865.
Chapter XIII
ABRIDGING THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

When Butler decreed in his proclamation of May 1, 1862, that all war news printed in New Orleans newspapers would thenceforth first have to pass the scrutiny of a press censor in his office, he showed himself well aware of Napoleon's epigrammatic assertion that "four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets." Of the eleven daily newspapers published in the city on his arrival, he could count on the open hostility of at least four and a markedly unfriendly attitude on the part of most of the others.

Even before the proclamation was published, the press of New Orleans had come in conflict with the Federal commander. When his officers had appeared in the rooms of the True Delta to ask that copies of the proclamation be printed there for distribution throughout the city, the proprietors were appalled and resentful that they should be thus stigmatized. They refused. Undeterred by the refusal, Butler issued an order suspending publication of the True Delta and sent in his own printer to run off the required number of broadsides. The other journals took the hint and carried the proclamation in their columns.¹

¹ General Orders No. 17, New Orleans May 2, 1862, in Butler Papers. The order was revoked the next day (General Orders No. 18, New Orleans, May 3, 1862, ibid) because Butler felt he had "demonstrated the ability of his officers and soldiers to do everything necessary for the success of his plans without aid from any citizen. . . ."
Back in business the next day, the True Delta found itself in hot water again by May 10 when it published an editorial in which cotton- and sugar-burning prior to Butler's arrival was defended as a patriotic act. "The remarks of your morning article today are inadmissible," Butler crisply informed publisher John Maginnis. "Wanton, useless, and original acts of destruction of property generally, by the mob who do not own it, are not acts of patriotism but vandal incendiaryism. . . ."

Maginnis would be excused with a warning this time, said the commanding general, but a similar offense would receive summary punishment. "Publish this conspicuously," he concluded. Maginnis hastily complied.2

Three days later, Butler suspended the publication of three other New Orleans papers, and for two of them it meant the end of their wartime publishing careers. The Bee, like the True Delta, had defended the cotton- and sugar-burning, and so had the Delta. The Crescent, the Federal commander had learned, was the property of a Confederate officer, T.O. Nixon. He ordered its plant sold as confiscated rebel property. The Delta, once an ardently secessionist organ, he took over as his personal journal and installed two of his officers in the editorial chairs.3

On May 29 the Federal commander allowed the Bee to resume publication with the printing of an abject apology on the part of its editor and publisher. The voice of the Creole population, the Bee, remained

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3 Special Orders Nos. 37 and 39, New Orleans, May 13, 1862, Butler Papers; Parton, Butler in New Orleans, 312; New Orleans Delta, May 16, 21, 1862. The officers were Captain John Clark, former Boston Courier staff member, and Lt.-Colonel E.M. Brown, a Vermonter. On May 25 they advertised for a reporter but warned that only Unionists need apply.
highly critical of Federal policies throughout the occupation, but its editors were careful never to step over the line that meant suspension again.¹

When the property and plant of the Crescent was sold at auction in June, 1862, crafty banker Jacob Barker was on hand to purchase it for $3,200. A short while later a new paper, the Advocate, began to appear under Barker's editorial direction. The new journalist, who was used to changing sides when the situation called for it, managed to stay out of trouble for a few months, but in November, 1862, he too ran afoul of Butler's censor and was suspended.⁵

Not even the foreign language papers could hope to escape the censor's sharp eye, and when La Renaissance, a French-language weekly which usually devoted itself to literary topics, published a rumor that France had recognized the Confederacy, its proprietors were ordered to supply the office of the provost marshal with an English translation of everything it intended to publish. The editors were aghast. How could they hope to meet publication deadlines in two languages when they were accustomed to working in only one? The provost marshal indicated that it was up to them to find the ways and means, and, though their fellow journalists predicted they would have to suspend publication because of the order, the publisher announced next day that "some arrangements" had been made to comply with it.⁶

⁴ New Orleans Bee, May 16, 29, 1862.


At the end of July the Commercial Bulletin, which was the Wall Street Journal of its day and place, published a eulogistic editorial on its owner, Colonel Isaac Seymour, a Confederate who had been killed in battle. Butler responded by sequestering its "office, properties, fixtures, books and papers" and ordered its editor imprisoned at Fort Jackson "until further orders." The next day the Picayune published an editorial which struck the press censor as critical, and as a result its "office, properties, fixtures, books, and papers" were likewise sequestered and its publication suspended until its editors and publishers took the oath of allegiance. They hurried to do so, and the Picayune was back on the streets by August 2.7

The journalistic style of the Civil War period was everywhere more florid than newsy, but the situation in New Orleans must have proved particularly galling to subscribers. Butler's official paper, the Delta, was so patently a propaganda organ that it could be trusted for little more than the official notices which it carried every day. The other newspapers—with the exception of the True Delta, which took Butler's warning so to heart that it was soon difficult to distinguish its editorial policy from that of the Delta—found themselves forced to rely on news from the courts to fill up their columns. For a time advertising was limited to a few makers of patent medicines, but with the arrival of Banks at the end of 1862 and the bringing in of more

supplies from the North and from Europe, the provisions and dry goods merchants began to fill available advertising space with descriptions of their wares. Soon the leading dailies had increased in size from two to four pages.

The arrival of General Banks's expedition in mid-December proved to be an important event for the press in other ways. Three correspondents accompanied him to cover his activities for the readers of Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly, the Boston Traveller, and the New York Herald. Editor John Clark of the Delta, uneasy lest General Banks should be unaware of the change in the editorial policy of that once-rebel journal, hastily compiled a history of the press in New Orleans and got it in to the new commander. He hoped that Banks would want to continue the policy of his predecessor in supporting the Delta, if only for the sake of its fifty printers who, deemed "Butler Yankees" by their fellows in the trade, had been blacklisted by every other print shop in New Orleans.⁹

Banks, occupied with other and more distracting duties for the first two months he was in the city, allowed the Delta to continue functioning. In mid-February, 1863, however, he decreed a change. Apparently finding it too confusing to have to differentiate between a simple Delta and a True Delta, he changed the paper's name to the Era.

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⁸ New Orleans Delta, December 16, 1862; John Clark to Banks, December 23, 1862, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 1, National Archives.

Editor Clark was shifted to other duties, and correspondents A.C. and A.G. Hills, the representatives of the New York Herald and the Boston Traveller, took over his vacant editorial chair.\(^\text{10}\)

In the meantime, Jacob Barker, whose Daily Advocate had been suspended by Butler in November, petitioned the new commander for permission to resume publication because the "public good did not require its suspension." In addition, he asserted, the ladies of New Orleans were clamoring for its reappearance and the general was surely aware that "public opinion is everywhere regulated by the ladies. . . ." Banks, who was free with advice to the ladies of his household, seems to have doubted this, for on January 15 Barker submitted a new petition—to liquidate his holdings and get out of the newspaper business.\(^\text{11}\)

Though the Picayune tactfully complained of the "necessarily . . . peculiar" position of the press in New Orleans, and the French L'Estafette du Sud and the Catholic weekly Southern Pilot were both suspended in April for publishing the same "obnoxious article," these affairs were as nothing compared to the brouhaha stirred up when General Thomas W. Sherman, commander of the defenses of New Orleans, caused the arrest of John E. Hayes, correspondent of the Boston Traveller, in May, 1863.\(^\text{12}\) Hayes had sent in a story to his editor in

\(^\text{10}\) New Orleans Delta-Era, February 14, 15, 1863.

\(^\text{11}\) Barker to Banks, January 13, 15, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 1, National Archives.

\(^\text{12}\) New Orleans Picayune, March 17, 1863; New Orleans Era, April 21, 1863.

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which he asserted that New Orleans was poorly defended (which it probably was, since Banks had drained off all available troops for his Port Hudson campaign), and the story had come to the attention of General Sherman. Furious, he had Hayes locked up in the military prison in the Customhouse overnight. Next day the correspondent wrote a letter to the editor of the Era, which the latter published, in which he complained of Sherman's high-handed treatment.\[13\]

This was simply waving the red flag in front of the enraged commander. He order Hayes rearrested and along with him Era editors A.C. Hills and Thomas G. Tracey. As a Lieutenant Colonel in the Louisiana Native Guards, Hills was liable to military censure, but Sherman contented himself with ordering him and Hayes to leave the Department.\[14\]

In June, the True Delta, whose publisher John Maginnis had died early in the Spring, was sold to Dr. Hugh Kennedy, New Orleans druggist and prominent conservative, for a total of $15,200. The sale occasioned displeasure in at least one quarter, for Treasury agent George Denison (who felt that the interests of his superior, Secretary Chase, were not always the same as those of General Banks) sent in a rather damming character sketch of the new owner. "Editor Kennedy is always in opposition to those in authority," he charged, "unless he can make personal gain by being otherwise, and is fond of abusive language which he uses on all occasions. The character of the paper

\[13\]
New Orleans Era, May 6, 9, 1863.

\[14\]
Ibid. Banks apparently rescued Hills, for he was still editing the Era in June.
is so well known here that people estimate it at its true value. What else can be expected of an Irishman (as Kennedy is) with red hair?"

To counter the effect of anything a red-haired Irishman might attempt, Denison now branched into the newspaper business himself. Banks was already contributing up to $800 per month to the Era, to the recently established Times, and to the True Delta, but Denison moved to gain a controlling interest in the first two publications himself. As confiscated Rebel property, the Era was technically in the hands of Treasury representatives, and Denison noted that he had hoped to make a "bold free state paper out of it." He had also purchased a one-sixth interest in the Times, and, as a "warm friend" controlled another third interest, he felt little concern about its editorial policies. Nevertheless, he still did not consider his press holdings sufficient to accomplish his--and apparently Chase's--real object and told his superior that he hoped to gain control of at least three New Orleans newspapers so that "they may be induced to advocate the reestablishment of a State authority" dedicated to the freeing of the slaves.  

As Denison maneuvered to gain control of one more New Orleans daily, the less radical Banks forces seem to have been moved by the

15 New Orleans Bee, June 1, 1863; Denison to Chase, New Orleans, September 12, 1863, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 406.

same idea. On January 1, 1864, Dr. Kennedy announced that his "health" required that he relinquish the editorship of the True Delta. He sold it, accordingly, to the Honorable Michael Hahn, shortly to become the Banks candidate for governor. Hahn edited the paper in a manner something less than impartial until his election and inauguration at which time he turned over the editing of it to W.R. Fish. Control, it was later charged, remained in the hands of the governor. 17

New ammunition for Denison's guns came with the appearance of the Negro Tribune in April, 1864. The first successful Negro daily in the United States, the Tribune was ably edited by Dr. Louis Roudanèze, Paris-educated Negro physician; it replaced an earlier Negro venture, L'Union, and, as it might have been expected to do, closely followed the radical line. At the same time, the two co-editors of the Era fell to quarreling so bitterly that they turned to Banks for a settlement of their argument. He decided that the simplest solution was to turn the paper over to two subordinate Era employees, Thomas Tracey and John W. Fairfax. 18

As Banks set out on his Red River expedition in 1864, the press of New Orleans was subjected to a new and tighter censorship. Not

17 Charles F. Youngman (comp.), "Newspaper Biographies" (typescript in New Orleans Public Library, Newspaper Archives).

18 Charles Barthélemy Rousseve, The Negro in Louisiana (New Orleans, 1937), 118-21; New Orleans Tribune, April 21, 1864. Roudanèze poured $35,000 into this publication, which Rousseve describes as a "journalistic success" but a "financial failure." See A.C. Hills to Banks, March 12 (2 letters), 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 7, National Archives.
only were they forbidden to allude to the movements of the Federal forces in the new campaign, but they were warned that neither could they print any news obtained from papers published "within the lines of the enemy." To make doubly sure that no news of this type should even reach the city, the Provost Marshal General on June 1 forbade the importation of the Rebel-edited London Index.19

When the Picayune published a spurious Lincoln proclamation setting a day of national fasting and humiliation, Banks interpreted the "indecent haste with which it was given to the public" as a slur on Yankee military efforts and ordered the paper suppressed. On June 1, its editor was ordered beyond the lines. The Era rejoiced in the ill fortune of its competitor because, it said, the Picayune had "done more than all other influences combined to keep alive the secession feeling, and to fan secession hopes in New Orleans." Its exultation was a little premature, however, for the Picayune was soon back in business with an editorial policy only slightly chastened.20

In August, the war correspondents again ran afoul of the military authorities, and the representatives of the New York Herald and Tribune were ordered to leave New Orleans by General R.R.S. Canby. At the same time, the high cost of living hit all the city's newspapers,

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19 See James Bowen to Editors of Era, Daily True Delta, et al., New Orleans, April 25, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 298, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, National Archives; id. to id., New Orleans, May 21, 1864, Vol. 299, ibid.; id. to H.M. Porter, June 1, 1864, ibid.

20 Order signed by James Bowen, May 25, 1864, in Letter Press, Vol. 299, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, National Archives; id. to H.M. Porter, June 1, 1864, ibid.; New Orleans Era May 26, 1864.
and the publishers of the Picayune, Era, Courrier Francais, True Delta, Bee, and Times announced a 100 per cent increase in the single copy price of their papers and corresponding increases in annual subscription and advertising rates. 21

By the end of 1864 it became apparent that the days of the Era were numbered, however, price increase or no price increase. Its protector, Banks, had gone North, and, as Rebel property, it was transferred into the hands of Supervising Special Agent B.F. Flanders, whom its editors had never bothered to win to their side. On January 1, 1865, publishers Tracey and Fairfax told their readers that unexpired subscriptions to the Era would be transferred to the True Delta, of which former Era editor A.C. Hills was now a part owner. In a recapitulation of the journal's accomplishments, the publishers claimed for it the highest daily circulation rate of any of the city's newspapers—seventeen to eighteen thousand copies. 22

When the war ended, despite censorship, suppressions, and the high cost of production, New Orleans still had a full complement of daily newspapers, including the unsympathetic Picayune and Bee. But despite the number of journals, its citizens had had very little news during the war years. Even the story of Lee's surrender was so slow in reaching New Orleans that President Lincoln was dead before most Orleanians knew that the great struggle was over.


22 S.B. Holabird to C.S. Sargent, December 22, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 7, National Archives. New Orleans Era, January 1, 1865.
Some doubt existed in the minds of Orleanians when Butler arrived as to whether or not he would recognize the current municipal government and allow it to continue to function. But three days after he arrived the True Delta reassured its readers. The "municipal authority" was to be suspended "only so far as 'disorders and disturbances of the peace done by combinations and numbers' are concerned, or 'crimes of an aggravated nature interfering with the forces of the United States.'" In other matters the existing city government was to continue to act.¹

But Butler soon had other reasons to interfere with the city government. On May 15 the City Council had extended the hospitality of the city to the French fleet then paying a well-timed visit to New Orleans. Butler exploded. The action of the council was, he said, "an insult as well to the United States, as to the friendly, powerful, and progressive nation towards whose officers it is directed"; the idea that the captive citizens of a captive city could tender its freedom to visitors he regarded as novel indeed. The Federal authorities, he snapped, would extend any hospitality that was to be offered.

"The action of the City Council . . . must be reversed."

This directive had hardly left his hands when several other actions on the part of the city authorities came to his attention. After Butler's issuance of the notorious General Order No. 28 on May 15, Mayor Monroe had filed a strong protest, had next apologized on Butler's orders for making it, and had then withdrawn, re-entered, and again withdrawn the apology. In addition, a group of paroled prisoners from Forts Jackson and St. Philip had organized themselves into the "Monroe Guards" and had been caught trying to pass the lines. Finally, Butler charged that the mayor and several of the members of his administration had sent money for the expenses of Confederate soldiers at Fort Jackson. All this was sufficient, Butler felt, to justify their removal and imprisonment, and after polling the officers of the city government on their political sympathies he sent Mayor Monroe, his secretary, the chief of police, and several others to Fort Jackson.3

Monroe, a self-made man who had drifted to New Orleans before he was twenty-one, worked on the riverfront as a laborer, and acquired money and a strong labor backing prior to his election, surprised everyone in his dogged adherence to principle. He remained in prison for over a year—first at Fort Jackson and later at Fort Pickens—and

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2 Butler to Mayor and City Council, May 16, 1862, in Butler Papers.

3 Dabney, "Butler's Regime," loc. cit., 512; Minutes of the Interview Between General Butler and the Mayor of New Orleans, May 19, 1862, in Butler Papers.
not even the offer of release to visit the bedside of his desperately sick son could induce him to take the oath of allegiance. 4

In Monroe’s place Butler appointed General George F. Shepley, who on May 8 had been named military commandant, to serve as “acting mayor.” Shepley assured Orleanians who might still be upset by the “Woman Order,” that while no United States officer or soldier would “insult or annoy any peaceable citizen,” neither would any citizen be “permitted to insult or interfere with any officer or soldier,” or to “denounce and threaten any Unionist.” He also indicated his intention to establish a thoroughly loyal city government and sent letters to all municipal employees and officers advising them that they must take the oath of allegiance in order to hold their jobs. He received a flood of refusals from all ranks of the municipal administration. Probably inspired by the mayor’s sudden love of principle, these minor city officials seemed particularly anxious to don martyrs’ crowns. “... not for a mercenary office like mine would I forfeit my honest convictions,” wrote Edgar Blanchard, sergeant-at-arms and self-described “true principle and conscious opinion man.” And alderman E. Cox informed Shepley that he considered the general’s order “incompatible with a proper sense of the position he [held] and of the

4 Dabney, “Butler’s Regime,” loc. cit., 498; see Monroe to Banks, January 1, 23, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 3, National Archives, and Robert Ould to William H. Ludlow, Richmond, July 22, 1863, with endorsement by James Bowen, in Endorsement Book, Volume 302, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General, ibid.
time and circumstances of his Election."

The widespread defection of city officials did not seem to worry the new acting mayor greatly, however. He called off the forthcoming municipal elections because the register of voters was unacceptable, and simply reorganized the city government himself. In place of the old council and board of aldermen he appointed a city treasurer, a controller, a chairman of the bureau of finance, and a chairman of the bureau of streets and landings, and constituted them the new city council. All were unconditional Union men and perfectly willing to co-operate with the military chief of the city government.

The municipal government, like the city police, remained under military control almost throughout the war. When Shepley was named military governor of Federal Louisians, first Godfrey Weitzel and later Colonel Henry C. Deming served as mayor under Butler. Captains James Miller and Stephen C. Hoyt assumed the office under Banks and the latter retained it until the Spring of 1865 when, at the instigation of Governor G. Madison Wells, Dr. Hugh Kennedy, druggist and newspaperman, was appointed mayor by Hurlbut. However, no municipal

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elections took place during the occupation period.7

The affairs of the municipal government offered rather a restricted field for Federal action compared with the numerous questions presented in the areas of state and national politics and in the light of the specific Federal mission of restoring Louisiana to the Union. Butler and his successor, Banks, both seem to have interpreted the direction to reconcile the hostile population as meaning principally to encourage the open expression of such Union sentiment as remained in New Orleans. Accordingly, when Butler let it be known that restoration would come "when Louisianians 'could be judiciously trusted with their own safety,'" the "Union Association of New Orleans" called a meeting in Lyceum Hall the next day and promulgated their constitution. The membership was not overwhelmingly large, and the constitution provided that twenty-five members could form a quorum. But those men who were brave enough to turn out for the meeting were urged to remember that as they could "expect no aid and comfort from secessionists it shall be the duty . . . of the members to cultivate a brotherly feeling and aid and assist each other as far as lies in their Power also . . . to use the utmost vigilance to guard against our enemies being put in power over us—and to exert every legitimate influence with the Authorities to that end."8

7 See Stanton to Seward, Washington, June 3, 1862, in Butler Papers; Bush, "Federal Occupation," 106; New Orleans Picayune, March 19, April 9, 1865. Kennedy's appointment was not generally popular in New Orleans.

8 Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 55; New Orleans Daily True Delta, June 1, 1862; Constitution of the Union Association of New Orleans . . ., in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 14, National Archives. The best discussions of reconstruction in Louisiana may be found in Caskey, Secession and Restoration and Ficklen, Reconstruction.
The Association continued to schedule weekly meetings, but the turn-out did not seem to get much bigger. "Union men, why do you not come out," begged the Delta, "and give the lie in round numbers to the assertion 'that there was not a Union man to be found, that there was but one sentiment here?' Why do not one in fifty of your number attend the Union meetings at Lyceum Hall?" If the Unionists of New Orleans were not ready to show themselves, however, some of those who had been forced to leave the city by the secessionists hurried back to swell the chorus of Union sentiment. Back came Benjamin Flanders, Cuthbert Bullitt, M.F. Bonzano, and others—all armed with recommendations from Northern friends that they receive appointments under the military administration.9

As one crowd of Orleanians watched Federal troops hang William B. Mumford in front of the United States Mint on Saturday, June 7, another group—composed of the "loyal citizens" of the city were arrayed in front of City Hall for the first official flag-raising by the Union association over the building since 1861. A 24-gun salute marked the event, and Governor Shepley and others made speeches; but La Renaissance regarded the timing of the affair as in very poor taste, and even the Delta deplored the "absence of many prominent Union men."10

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9 New Orleans Delta, June 7, 1862; see N.S. Berry to B.F. Butler, Concord, N.H., March 25, 1862, in Flanders Papers; C.C. Chaffee to Butler, Springfield, Mass., May 19, 1862, in Butler Papers; and Stanton to _id_, Washington, June 23, 1862, ibid.

10 New Orleans Bee, June 9, 1862; New Orleans La Renaissance, June 12, 1862; New Orleans Delta, June 11, 1862.
Though they continued to complain of sparsely attended meetings throughout the summer of 1862 the members of the Union associations proved themselves vocal if not numerous. A serenade of General Butler proved to be a regular postadjournment feature of association meetings, and on September 30 they presented the object of their serenades with more tangible evidence of their admiration—a hand-painted china tea service, decorated with a "portrait of Maj. Gen. Butler, and ... other embellishments of a national character."

Such activities were considered a fitting prelude to Shepley's announcement on November 14, that an election would be held on December 2 to select two Congressmen to represent Louisiana in the House of Representatives when it met in 1863. Efforts to arouse Union feeling were intensified, and Butler used almost his entire staff to help the Union association whip up as much enthusiasm as possible. Mass meetings, speeches, and torchlight parades were employed to popularize the canvass. Would-be voters were told it was not necessary to register—just show proof of having taken the oath of allegiance.

B.F. Flanders, one of the Butler-endorsed candidates, and Michael Hahn, a Bavarian born dark horse who had been a long-time resident of New Orleans, won handily and went to Washington, where both were allowed to take their seats. Their stay in the capital was short, however,

11 See New Orleans Commercial Bulletin, June 16, 1862; New Orleans Picayune, August 22, October 1, 1862.

12 See New Orleans Bee, November 14, 17, 1862; New Orleans Daily True Delta, November 15, 30, 1862; Ficklen, Reconstruction, 41-42; Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 64.
for the Thirty-seventh Congress expired on March 4, 1863. Voting in the election had been fairly light, considering the simplicity of the electoral qualifications. In the Presidential election of 1860, 10,858 votes had been cast in Orleans Parish alone. In the Congressional election of 1862, a total of 7,417 were cast in the two "Congressional districts," which included the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Lafourche, Terrebonne, St. Mary, St. Martin, St. Bernard, and Plaquemines. Many 1860 voters were absent in the Confederacy in 1862, of course, and voting in off-year elections is traditionally light; but even taking these factors into account, the Congressional election did not show that Unionism had made much progress among the people of New Orleans.13

It did however demonstrate one interesting point: the Union sentiment in the city was badly split. There were conservatives, like Christian Roselius, J.B. Riddell, and Dr. Thomas Cottman, who voiced Union sentiments without taking an active part in the associations; there was the Butler-sponsored "City Hall machine of T.B. Thorpe," which included such "Simon-pure" Union men as Thomas J. Durant, J. Ad. Rozier, and E. H. Durell; and finally there was a large and more or less independent bloc composed of workingmen and headed by Michael Hahn.14

13 Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 114, 64; Ficklen, Reconstruction, 42.
14 Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 64; Harrington, Fighting Politician, 100.
Hahn's constituents made their strength felt in the Congressional election staged by Butler; but he did not really begin to gather support until his return from Washington in the Spring of 1863. He looked, at this time, like the instrument of redemption to Butler's successor, Banks, and the latter soon threw his support to him. In fact the new commanding general began to take a very lively interest in Louisiana politics and the effort of the Unionist groups to restore the state to its former place in the Union. As a former politician, Banks did not find it at all hard to see himself as the political redeemer of Louisiana. Before leaving on his Spring campaign against Port Hudson in 1863, he encouraged the members of the Union associations to feel that a movement to reorganize the state government would receive "aid, not opposition from the Federal bayonets." With this inspiration, Thomas J. Durant and James Graham addressed Governor Shepley on May 23 and advised him that the various Union associations had elected delegates to a central committee which proposed to call a convention to write a new state constitution (arguing from the premise that the secession constitution of 1861, now void itself, had nullified the old constitution of 1852), which would extend the Emancipation Proclamation to Federal Louisiana. Delegates to this convention were to be elected by loyal voters who would have taken a loyalty oath on a basis of one delegate to every 2,500 white inhabitants. A new registry of loyal voters was suggested to ensure against fraud.15

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Shepley gave the project his blessing two days later, though he hinted that it would look better if the idea seemed to "emanate from the people themselves," and also that the basis of representation should be decided by them. He smoothed the way for such a spontaneous expression of the popular will, however, by setting up the machinery for a registration of voters and asking the central Unionist committee of which Durant and Graham were representatives to suggest candidates for registrar in each parish. At the same time he forwarded to Stanton the proposition of the committee respecting the constitutional convention and asked for the approval of President Lincoln.16

Stanton did not transmit Presidential approval of the central committee's proposal until August 21, but in the meantime, Banks himself had been in touch with the President and had apparently urged him to take executive action to restore civil government in Louisiana. Lincoln made it clear that he would welcome a popular movement to draft an antislavery constitution for Louisiana, but he was reluctant to initiate any action himself. "While I well know what I would be glad for Louisiana to do," he told Banks, "it is quite a different thing for me to assume direction of the matter." He similarly turned down the request of the conservative Union group that he instruct

Shepley to hold the regular biennial election on November 3, 1863. 17

Registration of voters for the election on January 25, 1864, of delegates to a constitutional convention was going forward during the Fall of 1863 when two things occurred to upset the plan of the Unionists central committee. On December 8 Lincoln published the details of his "Ten Per Cent Plan," which provided for the re-establishment of civil government in any of the seceded states in which loyal voters in numbers equal to 10 per cent of the vote cast in the 1860 election should form a new state government which would recognize the validity of the Emancipation Proclamation. Voter loyalty was to be ascertained by the taking of a new oath which, because it demanded unconditional allegiance to the Union and acceptance of emancipation and excluded many former Confederates, soon became known as the "iron-clad" oath. A month after this, Banks cut loose entirely from both the conservatives and the Unionist central committee, and, using the "Ten Per Cent Plan" as his text, announced his own plan of redemption for Louisiana. Louisiana Unionists were aghast. The more radical central committee hastily drafted a protest in which they pointed out that his proclamation was inconsistent with Lincoln's desire that such movements emanate from the people. But their protest was unavailing, and to preserve their interests they were forced to look to the fate

17 Stanton to Shepley, Washington, August 24, 1863, ibid., 711-12; Lincoln to Banks, Washington, August 5, 1863 (copy endorsed by Lincoln), in Flanders Papers; Ficklen, Reconstruction, 48. The conservatives persisted in holding the election in the country parishes, but the representatives thus elected--A.P. Field and Dr. Cottman--were never seated by Congress.
of their own candidates in the election which Banks had called—appropriately—for Washington's Birthday. 18

The radical Times soon suggested that no really "good reason exists for having several tickets in the field" in the approaching election; the true spirit of Union could best be demonstrated by uniting on "one ticket, selecting carefully from [the] best men to make it up." The result of such a policy, declared Times editor Thomas P. May, would be "such a dawn of ... prosperity, political and social, as will gladden every honest heart among us." And he concluded, "Remember--Union for the sake of Union! Faction is Treason!" 19

This stirring appeal reckoned without the interest of Major General N.P. Banks, however, and when the nominating convention met at Lyceum Hall on February 1, part of the convention refused to agree to the nomination of radical Unionist B.F. Flanders for governor and in his place nominated Michael Hahn, who had looked ahead to this possibility when he purchased the True Delta in January. Simon-pure Unionists in the Flanders faction were especially bitter at this turn of events—and the more so when it became apparent that Hahn was the

18 New Orleans Times, December 6, 1863; Ficklen, Reconstruction, 52-54. A later oath of the postwar Reconstruction period also bore this name. See also Proclamation of General N.P. Banks, New Orleans, January 11, 1864, in Official Records, Ser. III, Vol. IV, 22-23; Flanders to Lincoln, New Orleans, December 11, 1863, in Flanders Papers, and New Orleans Times, December 19, 1863. Banks later told a Congressional investigating committee that Lincoln had authorized him to take such action as he thought necessary to organize a loyal government in Louisiana. Ficklen, Reconstruction, 55.

19 New Orleans Times, January 17, 1864.
hand-picked candidate of Banks. Both groups felt called upon to insert planks concerning the Negro in their platforms. The Hahn faction, conforming to the requirements of the iron-clad oath, declared itself against the further existence of slavery in Louisiana; the Flanders group let it be known that it was in favor of Negro suffrage, though Flanders himself denied so extreme a view in a speech three days before the election. To make the lack of harmony complete, the conservatives too put forward a slate headed by lawyer J.Q.A. Fellows.

The campaign that followed the stormy nominating convention was proportionately turbulent. On Ash Wednesday the Hahn faction, which called itself the Free State party, staged in Lafayette Square a noisy night rally, which purported to be the popular ratification of his nomination. The Banks machine was out in full force; bands played, flambeaux flared, and administration speakers told the crowd that "any man who opposed Michael Hahn—standing on the principles that he does—is a traitor in his heart and opposed to the welfare of the people."

Banks soon made it clear too that he expected a 100 per cent turn-out of voters, and to be sure that no one failed to vote because he was unable to register or because he had not yet become a citizen, he lengthened the hours of the registrars' offices and established provisions for quick naturalization. "All people not exempt by the law —

20 Ficklen, Reconstruction, 57-58. The free men of color had asked Shepley for suffrage in November, 1863 (ibid., 58-59), and the rumor was current in New Orleans that they would be allowed to vote in the 1864 election. See Polyxene Reynes to Emile Reynes, New Orleans, January 1, 1864, in Reynes Papers.
of nations . . . are called upon to take the oath of allegiance," he declared on February 3. "Indifference will be treated as a crime and faction as treason." To make the pill easier to swallow, coffeehouses were told they might remain open an extra two hours each night; election day was declared a holiday; and the city was divided into twenty-three precincts in which there were fifty-seven polling places—some within a stone's throw of each other. 21

The day before the election, Military Governor Shepley announced that the registrar's offices would stay open up to the time the polls closed on election day. A gigantic torchlight parade, in which such mottoes as "Let the Old Flag Wave O'er Slavery's Grave," "Major General Banks, the Warrior, Statesman, and Unionizer," and "The Butchers of the Crescent City are for Freedom" were carried, gave the Hahn campaign a rousing finish. 22

Banks found the results of the election very gratifying, for not only was the Free State ticket elected by an overwhelming majority, but the total votes cast—11,355—represented nearly 20 per cent of the votes cast in 1860. To celebrate this signal victory, he and Mrs. Banks staged a huge ball in the French Opera House on election night. 23

It was to develop later, however, that both this election and the


22 New Orleans Daily True Delta, February 21, 1864; New Orleans Era, February 19, 1864.

23 Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 107.
entire fabric of the Banks-sponsored state government was based on activities that did not bear close public scrutiny. When General William F. Smith was sent to New Orleans in 1865 to investigate affairs in the Department of the Gulf he learned that "if the Proclamation of the President of the 8th of December 1863 had been adhered to with all the restrictions it prescribed as to the qualifications of voters, the number of votes polled at the elections... would have been much less than one tenth of the number defined in the proclamation." It also appeared, continued the Commission report, "that new and extraordinary polling places were established in the city and in the country parishes. Three precincts were added to the city without the knowledge and against the prompt protest of the Commissioners of election. . . ."24

The subsequent election of a constitutional convention on March 28 and of a state legislature on September 5 were based, the Commission further charged, on the same fraudulent register of voters. In the Fall election, "a gang of rowdies from New Orleans, not more than twenty or thirty in number" were sent to an uninhabited island near Brashear City, where they "elected senators and representatives to the State Legislature." Orleanians were sent too to Madison, Carroll, and Concordia parishes to vote. "All this was done," reported the

Commission acously, "under the auspices and direction of the Commanding General of Louisiana." 25

Lincoln was dead when this report was made, however, and he apparently was unaware of the dark doings that had produced the new loyal government of Louisiana. On March 15 he officially invested Hahn "with the powers exercised hitherto by the Military Governor of Louisiana." On the fourth of that month the new governor had been inaugurated in spectacular ceremonies in Lafayette Square. The whole affair was so exciting for the editors of the administration newspapers that one of them, in listing the distinguished guests present on the platform, included the names of two dead Orleanians, one who had been out of the city for a year, and five who had specifically declined to attend. 26

A week later Banks announced that an election would be held on March 28 for the selection of delegates to a constitutional convention, which would meet in New Orleans beginning April 8. Apparently remembering his new role as king-maker rather than king, he tardily allowed Hahn to confirm it a few days later. Representation in this convention was to be on the basis of one delegate for each two thousand white inhabitants as given in the 1860 census, and no provision

25
Ibid.

26
was made for even free Negroes to take part in it. 27

The vote was extremely light (Banks was absent from the city as a result of his western campaign), but the delegates duly convened in Liberty Hall—the old Lyceum Hall—on the top floor of the City Hall. The convention sat for seventy-eight days, and it soon became evident from the tenor of its deliberations that the refreshments served to delegates were having a deleterious effect upon them. The question of suffrage for the Negroes became a burning issue, but in the document finally produced it was denied to them (though the legislature was authorized to extend the suffrage if good reasons for doing so presented themselves). In other respects, the new constitution did not differ much from the old constitution of 1852, though it did license lotteries, move the capital back to New Orleans, and establish a universal system of public education for both whites and Negroes.

The delegates also voted $125,000 for the expenses of the convention, including an item of $9,421.55 for "liquor and cigars." 28

Public condemnation of the convention was general, even among such Union men as George Denison, who charged that the exhaustion of state funds was the principal reason for adjournment. "Probably never before," he wrote Chase in disgust, "has there been held a State Constitutional Convention which has been regarded with contempt by nine tenths of the people for whom they framed the Constitution." The few


28 Ficklen, Reconstruction, 74-76; New Orleans Times, June 26, 1864; New Orleans Bee, November 5, 1864.
capable men among the delegates were "entirely lost sight of in the mass of inexperience and vulgar ignorance." 29

The Special Commission, which also checked into convention expenses in 1865, found that the True Delta had realized a profit of $80,000 to $150,000 as a result of being named official printer to the convention and hinted that Hahn had not completely dissociated himself from it when he became governor. In addition to the shocking extravagance of the convention, the Commission charged the entire Banks-supported state administration with profligate expenditures during the year it had been in power. The result of the activities of "this spurious and fraudulent organization of a simulated state government" was to prevent "the people of Louisiana and especially of New Orleans, from lending their efforts to re-establish the authority of the United States over that portion of our territory." 30

By the time Banks was recalled to the North in September, 1861, his state administration was thoroughly discredited, but no means presented themselves to the people of Louisiana to undo the evil he had done. Hahn resigned the governor's office in 1865 to accept a nomination to the United States Senate and was succeeded by J. Madison Wells, who had been the candidate for lieutenant governor on both the

29 Denison to Chase, New Orleans, April 17, 1864, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 439; see also Gordon, War Diary, 307.

Free State and the Flanders ticket in 1864. Wells proved a shocking
disappointment to both groups of his supporters, for he acted as a
conservative, former slaveholder-planter (which he was) might have
been expected to act. He attacked both moderates and radicals and
gave his entire support to conservatives. At his behest, Banks-
appointee Stephen Hoyt was ousted as mayor and replaced by Dr. Hugh
Kennedy, and a Confederate sympathizer went in as superintendent of
education. Banks was outraged when work of these events reached him
in the North, and he bitterly berated Hahn for "vacating the power
which had been put in his hands at the cost of such outlays of treas-
ure and blood." By the time he returned to New Orleans at the close
of the war, his political empire lay in ruins—where, indeed, it justly
belonged.31

31 Harrington, Fighting Politician, 166-67.
Chapter XV

DRAINING THE CUP OF FREEDOM AND LIBERTY

To the nearly eighteen thousand free and enslaved Negroes of New Orleans, the arrival of the Federal troops in May, 1862, meant something quite different than it did to the white population. These urban Negroes were almost all well aware that the great civil disturbance now rocking the nation was of importance to them and their way of life. Though local newspaper columns still carried notices of slave sales, many Negroes soon showed their awareness of the change in masters by coming to the Federal commander with damaging information on the activities of white Orleanians. Butler encouraged this informal system of espionage. It was cheap, universal, and enthusiastic.¹

It is doubtful that Butler was even a mildly sincere abolitionist, but he had already demonstrated his willingness to use the cause of abolition when it suited him. He had barely been in New Orleans a week when he reaffirmed this credo. A slave-owner had petitioned for the return of one of his Negro boys. "The course adopted in such a

case is this," Butler instructed General John W. Phelps, who was in command at Carrollton north of the city; "if I have any use for the service of such a boy I employ him without any scruple. If I have not, I do not harbor him, as my subsistence would be no means serve for so many extra men that I do not need." But as more and more Negroes began to pour into the city from plantations in the adjoining parishes, he began to doubt the effectiveness of his simple solution to the problem. 2

Treating the Negroes who fled to him at Fortress Monroe as contraband of war was one thing, he wrote General-in-Chief Henry W. Halleck; handling those who were coming through his lines at New Orleans was another entirely. Here they represented in large part substantial property holdings of persons who had been passive rather than active in the rebellion. To hold their slaves as contraband was "manifestly unjust" under the present confiscation law. Nor did he consider the runaways especially desirable, for "with them as with the whites it is the worst class that rebel against and evade the laws that govern them." Furthermore, they presented a serious economic problem. Food was so short in New Orleans that the Federal commander reported, "I cannot feed the white men within my lines. Women and children are actually starving in spite of all that I can do." 3

2 While in command at Fortress Monroe he had refused to return fugitive slaves to Rebel owners on the ground that they were "contraband of war." See Butler to Phelps, New Orleans, May 9, 1863, in Butler Papers.

3 Butler to Stanton, New Orleans, May 25, 1862, ibid.
Butler, who described himself as a lifelong opponent of slavery, was sure that his actions would not be misunderstood in New England—
and to be doubly sure that Massachusetts abolitionists had something
to make them feel that the cause was being advanced in New Orleans,
the general let a few encouraging items get into the press. Thus,
when one Henri Dominique, a free man of color, was brought before Pro-
vost Judge Joseph M. Bell on a charge of being abroad without his free-
dom papers, the judge turned him loose, saying it was his presumption
that all men were free until proved otherwise. This was directly
counter to Southern legal tradition concerning the Negro, and it drew
a sharp protest from La Renaissance: "Slavery is and remains an
institution which has a reason for existence and [is] not a simple
accident. Besides, the real dangers in promulgation of a principle
contrary to the safety of our social order are too evident..."

At first Butler continued the local practice of locking up unruly
slaves in the Parish Prison on the request of their masters, but when
Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation he began to use it as an
excuse to differentiate between loyal and disloyal masters and forbade
policemen to arrest runaway slaves unless it could be proved "that
such a person is owned by a loyal citizen of the United States." And
when Provost Marshal S.W. Stafford complained during the summer that
Orleanians were telling their Negroes to "go to the Yankees" in the
hope of embarrassing the Federal commander, he directed that such an

La Renaissance, June 5, 1862.
order be regarded as an act of emancipation and that the slave be set free. 5

Though he had written to Stanton at the end of May that he did not think it would be wise to arm Negroes, he had so far changed his opinion by August that he accepted the offer of the Native Guards, a military organization of free Negroes, to join the Federal forces, and enrolled them in the "volunteer service of the United States." In a fashion characteristic of his entire career, Butler issued the order first and asked for War Department approval afterwards. 6

In later years he was very enthusiastic about this addition to the Federal troops: "Better soldiers never shouldered a musket. They were intelligent, obedient, highly appreciative of their position, and fully maintained its dignity." His opinion was not generally shared among his officers, however, and when young General Godfrey Weitzel, who was his protegé, heard that he was to command Negro regiments in the campaign in the LaFourche district, he declined the command on the grounds that the presence of Negro troops would lead to servile insurrection in the area. "I could not . . . put a force in every part

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6
of the district to keep down such an insurrection," he protested. 7

Weitzel's fears had a solid foundation. Word of the Federal landing had passed quickly to the great plantations of the LaFourche district and bands of armed Negroes began to roam the countryside. On the night of August 3, 1862, twenty of them arrived in New Orleans and were hailed by a city policeman near the Lower Cotton Press. Asked their destination they replied that "it was no white man's business," and attacked the policeman and three other watchman who had come up at his call. Four passing soldiers joined in the scuffle on the side of the police, and as a result of the melee one Negro was killed and four Negroes and four policemen were wounded. Ten days later, six more slaves, armed collectively with a shotgun, seven knives, and a razor, also resisted arrest when challenged to state their business. 8

Soon the Native Guards, quartered in the old Touro Almshouse, also became a source of complaint and international incident. A French citizen, Pierre Abadie, complained to the French consul on September 15 that he had been attacked by a group of armed Negroes as he was returning to his home just after dusk on September 11. Further, he stated, his attackers had carried him and an Irishman named Lee into


8 New Orleans Picayune, August 5, 1862; New Orleans Daily True Delta, August 11, 1862.
the courtyard of the Almshouse and had there condemned them to be hung during the course of a drunken court-martial.9

Other incidents piled up during the Fall of 1862. Late in September, a group of Negroes attempted to enter a car reserved for white passengers on one of the city trolley lines. Asked to leave by the conductor, they attacked him and tried to seize his fare box. In November, another French citizen was attacked and seriously hurt by a band of armed Negroes near Gentilly, and L'Absille asked how long the white population must remain disarmed "in the presence of threats offered every day in the streets by these blacks, threats that each person receives with alarm which are beginning to be translated into deeds like the sad affair at Gentilly."10

The resentment voiced by the Creole L'Absille was not restricted to Orleanians of French descent or nationality, however. As early as May 17, the Commercial Bulletin, in discussing a book on the customs of native Africans, commented that it doubted that "it exaggerates the horrors of the unlimited freedom of the negroes at home. It is only what may be fairly expected from such a race emancipated from the social restraints of . . . negro slavery in the Southern Confederacy." And when the proposal to incorporate Negro units in the Federal militia was first voiced in Congress in July, even the pro-Union True Delta reacted with deep alarm: ". . . the scheme . . . is

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9 New Orleans Daily True Delta, September 16, 1862.

10 See ibid., September 17, 18, 1862; L'Absille, November 8, 1862.
practically abolition in its most hideous form..."\(^{11}\)

In August, one of the feminine readers of the Federal-backed Delta was shocked to discover that its editor not only had printed a letter from a Negro in its columns but had referred to him, in an editorial comment, as a gentleman. Obviously, she told the editor, he had allowed himself to be imposed on by a class which, despite its many worthy qualities, was "by no means the equals or peers of the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman Secessionists in the city."\(^{12}\)

The Emancipation Proclamation, issued after the battle of Antietam, seemed to many white Orleanians to be particularly diabolical, for while it might "ostensibly...free the colored man from slavery, \([^\text{it}]\) really would... degrade, ruin, and destroy him..." All this was the responsibility of Northern abolitionism, "Dorcas" scolded the editor of the Delta, and she warned that "ere long the impudence and insolence of these degraded people...will prove as offensive to you as they are not revolting to us."\(^{13}\)

Many another citizen who managed to escape personal contact with armed Negroes felt unpleasantly betrayed when trusted house-servants deserted their houses and stole from them in leaving. Diarist Clara Solomon was confident that her family's servant Lucy


\(^{12}\) New Orleans Delta, August 10, 1862.

\(^{13}\) New Orleans Daily True Delta, September 9, 1862; New Orleans Delta, September 28, 1862. Emphasis hers.
could not be persuaded to run off, "yet—the most faithful have betrayed." And Julia LeGrand, whose maid Julie Ann had been raised to be an "honourable and even a high-toned woman," was so disappointed in Julie Ann after she ran away with several hundred dollars of her mistress' money that she noted, "I have learned that negroes only respect those they fear." 14

In addition to voicing their resentment of all attempts to destroy forcibly the Southern code concerning negroes, white Orleanians regarded them as a source of concern for other reasons. By the Fall of 1862, the great influx of escaped slaves from plantations, as well as of those who had deserted urban masters, had created a health and housing problem. Many of the negroes, without means or employment, began to occupy deserted buildings in the dock area along Levee Street. One of these buildings, No. 226, became a notorious charnel house as dysentery swept through its occupants with the coming of winter. Almost daily the coroner was summoned to the address to hold an inquest on the bodies of one or more victims, and at one time the death rate was so high that three of them remained unaburied for several days. 15

In general, during this first year of the occupation, the fear of insurrection that always existed beneath the smooth exterior of

14 "Diary of Clara Solomon," entry for May 26, 1862; Journal of Julia LeGrand, 56-57. See also Joseph Reynes to Emile Reynes, New Orleans, June 1, 1863, in Reynes Papers.

15 New Orleans Daily True Delta, November 5, 1862, December, 1862, passim; New Orleans Picayune, November 11, 1862.
the master-slave relationship deepened, and an atmosphere of tension and open friction began to characterize relations between the races. Only when Sargy, an old and well-known slave woman, died in September at the age of 104 did this mounting tension abate for even a little while. Sargy's funeral was one of the largest the city had ever seen, "and among the numerous occupants of carriages," reported the True Delta, "we observed many highly respectable white citizens."16

The fear of insurrection mounted steadily as January 1, 1863—the effective date for the Emancipation Proclamation—nearthed. When it was rumored that Banks had evacuated Baton Rouge and withdrawn all his troops to New Orleans, fear swept the city that it was being done in order to cope with the projected New Year's Day revolt; and his return of some of the arms seized by Butler during the summer confirmed the direst suspicions. Orleanians prepared to sell their lives dearly; Julia LeGrand reported that her landlady had armed herself with a hatchet, a tomahawk, and a "vial of some kind of spirits with which she intends to blind all invaders."17

January 1, 1863, passed quietly enough, but the fear of servile insurrection never completely disappeared. The continued arming of Negroes led inevitably to more incidents and more friction, and, while the presence of large numbers of Federal troops prevented mass

16 New Orleans Daily True Delta, September 17, 1862.

17 Journal of Julia LeGrand, 58-59. According to George Denison, the Negroes feared the Lincoln would change his mind and revoke the Proclamation; they threatened an insurrection on January 1, 1863, if he did. Denison to Chase, New Orleans, December 23, 1862, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 341.
violence during the war years, this friction undoubtedly was one of
the underlying causes of the serious race riots that occurred in New
Orleans after the war.

General Nathaniel P. Banks arrived in Louisiana at the end of
1862 without a previous record on the question of freeing the slaves
other than that he had served as Republican governor of Massachusetts.
One Union observer felt that the new commander had a responsibility
to "make the [Emancipation] proclamation effective" in New Orleans,
but added that he was "afraid Gen. Banks will never do it. He decides
and moves too slowly and is too much afraid of responsibilities."
Banks did move, however, and just three days later. But it was not
in the direction his critic would have chosen. Distressed by the
number of indigent Negroes he saw in New Orleans, he issued General
Order No. 12. In it he forbade Federal officers to force runaway
slaves to return to their masters but declared that the "public interest
peremptorily demands that all persons without other means of sup-
port be required to maintain themselves by labor." Negroes, he
continued, were not exempt from this law. For that reason, those who
left their masters would be "compelled to support themselves and
families by labor upon the public works." Under no circumstances
would runaways be permitted "to wander through the parishes and cities
of the State without employment." "Vagrancy and crime" would be elimi-
nated by a program of "enforced and constant occupation and employment."

18 Denison to Chase, New Orleans, January 26, 1863, in "Chase
Correspondence," loc. cit., 351; General Order No. 12, New Orleans,
also James Bowen to parish provost marshals, Circular No. 2, New
Orleans, February 2, 1863, in Letter Press, Vol. 296, Correspondence
of the Provost Marshal General, National Archives.
Lieutenant George Hanks was named Superintendent of Free Labor and went energetically about his task. Soon great crowds of vagrant Negroes were being rounded up and put to work in gangs on the levees and other public works. As his operation expanded, Hanks began to supply labor to the plantations of parishes now in Federal hands, after an agreement had been worked out among the leading planters on the amount of pay such labor deserved. Many gratefully returned to their plantations under this arrangement, but there was much resentment among those who stayed in the city and were put to work there.  

On the question of enlisting Negroes into the armed forces Banks elected to follow the policy of his predecessor. The Butler experiment had not proved too successful, and white units among the Federal forces had expressed open hostility toward the Native Guards. But Banks decided nevertheless to expand the size of the Negro units. His decision was not based on "any dogma of equality or other theory," he explained, "but as a practical and sensible matter of business. The Government makes use of mules, horses, educated and uneducated white men, in defense of its institutions. Why should not the negro contribute whatever is in his power for the cause in which he is as deeply interested as other men?"


He proposed, therefore, the organization of a corps d'armée to be known as the Corps d'Afrique, ultimately to number eighteen regiments, with a corps of engineers, hospitals for each division, "appropriate uniforms," and a graduated system of pay. To correct the evils of lax discipline and unmilitary conduct in existing Negro units, he assigned some of his best officers to the job of training the new recruits; and he urged his men to "consider the exigencies of the service . . . and the absolute necessity of appropriating every element of power to the support of the Government."21

Though Banks had made enlistment sound most attractive, there is evidence that there was much more enthusiasm on the part of the recruiting officers than among the prospective recruits. In March, 1863, a Negro waiting in line to get a pass at the provost marshal's office observed to a friend that he had tried "sojerin'" for a while but that he was going back to "niggerin.'" And in August, merchant C.T. Buddecke complained to Banks that his Negro servant had been shanghaied by a group of Corps d'Afrique members, taken to the Southern Cotton Press, and there forced to enlist. He sent word of his plight to his master, but on Buddecke's request for his return the officer in charge had refused to release him. In spite of this reluctance, Banks was able to report to Lincoln later that month that he had almost completed the organization of twenty-one regiments numbering ten to twelve thousand men. He admitted, however, that in effecting this much of an organization he had exhausted "all the material for

21 General Order No. 40, Opelousas, May 1, 1863, ibid., XV, 716-17.
such regiments that is within my command at the present time."²²

Banks told Lincoln that he had not publicized the progress of the recruitment--fearing apparently that it might only aggravate popular fears of armed racial conflict--and in December, 1863, he had good reason to be glad he had not. Negroes stationed at Fort Jackson under the command of General Daniel Ullman mutinied, and a serious revolt threatened. In the city, Provost Marshal General Bowen received an urgent midnight message to have the Provost Guard "quietly put under arms and increase [his] patrols toward daybreak." The mutiny was brought under control, but the rumors of it that reached the city made many an Orleanian still more uneasy.²³

The program of racial equality in military ranks soon led to other alterations of the status quo ante bellum. The indefatigable Lieutenant Hanks in June, 1863, opened a school for Negroes in the Wesleyan Chapel on Liberty Street, and he was shortly aided in his efforts by representatives of the American Missionary Association.

Widely hailed as the first attempts to educate Louisiana Negroes, there were seven of these schools in existence by October, 1863. They had an enrollment of approximately 1,700, but the average daily attendance was closer to 1,500. The pupils ranged in age from six to eighteen, with a few adults, and were described by a Northern officer who visited

²² New Orleans Picayune, March 20, 1863; C.T. Buddeke to Banks, August 5, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 1, National Archives; Banks to Lincoln, New Orleans, August 17, 1863, in Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVI, Pt. 1, 689-90.

²³ Stone to Banks, New Orleans, December 9, 1863, in Endorsement Book, Vol. 509, Correspondence of the Major General Commanding, National Archives; Polyxene Reyes to Emile Reyes, New Orleans, January 1, 1864, in Reyes Papers.
their classrooms as neater than the Northern Irish "whose social status somewhat nearly corresponds with that of the Southern Negro."

In the schools below Canal Street, Negro pupils, like their white counterparts, spoke French, "and a large number of them nothing else so that it is very hard to get them to acquire the correct American pronunciation." Teachers in these schools were paid—apparently from Army funds—salaries ranging from $41.00 per month, for women teachers, to $72.66, for Isaac G. Hubbs, superintendent of the Missionary Association schools.²⁴

In the opinion of Lieutenant Edwin M. Wheelock, who made a visit of inspection to the schools early in March, 1864, some classes would "suffer nothing in comparison with the best white schools of the city." but this promising situation was not universal. "In some of the rooms, the number of pupils exceeds the limit of a Teacher's capacity to properly discipline and educate. In the untaught and unclassified condition of the colored children, an average attendance of forty [sic] will sufficiently task the energies of the most faithful Instructor. I find in some of the rooms nearly double that number . . . ."²⁵

²⁴ Carmelite nuns were offering education to free Negro girls in New Orleans in 1845, however (Norman's New Orleans, 104-105); J.A. Norager et al. to Banks, New Orleans, July 29, 1863, in Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 3, National Archives; New Orleans Era, February 26, 1864; Edwin M. Wheelock to John S. Clark, New Orleans, March 19, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 10, National Archives; Isaac G. Hubbs to Banks, New Orleans, January 21, 1864, ibid., Box 7.

²⁵ Wheelock to Clark, New Orleans, March 5, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 10, National Archives.
"The pupils display great eagerness for knowledge and facility of acquisition," Wheelock told Banks a few weeks later. "Their perceptive powers are particularly active,—too much so, perhaps, as in the reflective faculty, and memory, they seem somewhat deficient."

Though it had been predicted that only Yankees would accept teaching positions in Negro schools, Wheelock reported that fourteen of the twenty teachers then employed were Orleanians.26

Heartened by these reports, Banks moved to extend the system of Negro education and on March 22 instituted the Board of Education for Freedmen, charged with establishing public schools for Negroes in each of the parishes then under Federal control. To make up the Board, he named two officers of the Corps d'AFrique—Colonel H.M. Frisbie and Lieutenant Wheelock—and the superintendent of the Missionary Association schools, Isaac Hubbs.27

The Board was authorized to act in the same manner as "assessors, supervisors, and trustees" in Northern states, and were directed to "assess and levy a school tax upon real and personal property" in the districts under their control. This obviously was not a satisfactory means of financing a school system of any kind, since the real and personal property in any but Orleans Parish would yield little tax money, and the city of New Orleans was itself far behind in unpaid taxes. On April 1, therefore, the Board of Education for Freedmen

26 Id. to id., March 19, 1864, ibid.

asked that a poll tax of one dollar per year be levied on adult males of the state in order to support the new educational system, and the approval of a $10,000 loan from the new First National Bank in anticipation of the tax. They also requested a tax of 2 per cent on plantation products and of five mills on other taxable property. But their request was disapproved by Provost Marshal General Bowen, who grumbled that enough already had been spent on the schools and that those already in existence should be given a chance to prove themselves before their numbers were increased.  

Despite this setback, Major B. Rush Plumley (who had replaced Colonel Frisbie as chairman of the Board) was able to report in October that the number of Negro schools in New Orleans had more than doubled under the sponsorship of the Board, that there were Negro schools in each of the city's school districts, and that of the four thousand Negro educables between the ages of five and twelve, 2,560 were enrolled in the schools. He termed the operation a "decided success," though the fact that only 1,875 pupils attended regularly suggests that there was not as much of a thirst for knowledge as reported.

In October, Governor Michael Hahn told the recently elected state legislature that it would be their "duty to provide for the education

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28 Report of the Board of Education for Freedmen, New Orleans, April 1, 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, National Archives (with endorsement).

of all the children of the State . . . by the establishment and main-
tenance of public schools" and called upon them to assume the support
of schools established by the Board of Education for Freedmen. Pro-
gressive as this proposal was, however, it was not progressive enough
for the editors of the Negro Tribune, who complained bitterly about
segregated schools and what they termed the inefficient system of
assigning books and teachers. 30

The demand for educational equality and the immediate end of
segregation in the schools was not, however, an isolated instance of
the breaking down of racial barriers. It was matched by similar
demands in the social and political fields. As early as September,
1863, Chief of Police J. A. Hopkins had forwarded to the Provost
Marshal General a rambling Negro document found on the streets, in
which the writer had shrewdly commented: "It is not a city rule for
colored [sic] people to ride in white peoples cars but the[y] bed
together. . . ." And it was well-known that he expressed the view
of many of New Orleans' Negroes, who shared with part of the white
population some of the most respected surnames in the city. It was
hardly surprising either that one legislator presented a bill to
legalize miscegenation in the Fall of 1864, though even that rather
radical body indignantly voted down the proposal. 31

30 New Orleans Tribune, December 6, 21, 1864.

31 J. A. Hopkins to Bowen, New Orleans, September 2, 1863, in
Letters Received (Civil), 1863, Box 2, National Archives; New Orleans
Tribune, December 1, 1864.
Negro hopes for political equality had been initiated by Butler, who allowed them to form Union associations of their own in the Fall of 1862, and among the city's free Negroes the conviction grew rapidly that they should have the suffrage soon after the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect. This proved to be too large a dose for even such ardent champions of abolition as George Denison and the Banks-supported Era to swallow. When the editor of that organ learned just before the gubernatorial election of 1864 that a "considerable number of colored persons, who cannot be distinguished from whites, without close scrutiny, have registered their names in the hope of being able to vote," he reacted with alarm. "White Men, Beware!" he warned, and pointed out that the "President's proclamation, the proclamation of the Commanding General, and the laws under which we vote, extend the right of suffrage only to white men."32

In October, 1864, after the question of extending the suffrage to Negroes had been introduced in the new state legislature, Denison wrote Chase that he felt "it will not yet do to extend suffrage to Negroes, for if you do you will lose all white support, or almost all." He argued for the education of public opinion—a process that he admitted "will take some time."33

Banks himself seemed to favor a program of bread and circuses

32 L'Union, quoted in New Orleans Era, February 25, 1864; ibid., February 22, 1864; New Orleans Tribune, September 8, 1864. See also Caskey, Secession and Restoration, 104-105.

33 Denison to Chase, New Orleans, October 8, 1864, in "Chase Correspondence," loc. cit., 450.
for the Negro population and lent his approval to such social events as the "Grand Jubilee and Emancipation Ball" held in the Orleans Ballroom on May 19 and the Emancipation Celebration staged in Congo Square on June 19. For the latter celebration he supplied on request one platform on Congo Square, twenty-two government horses, saddled; three government spring wagons "for Young Ladies representing the different States"; a dozen American flags in "assorted Sizes"; an awning for the platform; two companies of United States soldiers to head and bring up the rear of the parade; and orders making the day an official holiday and prohibiting hack drivers from hiking their prices during the celebration. But universal suffrage never received his support.34

As a result of this Federal attitude, New Orleans Negroes drifted easily into the Radical camp, where they received much encouragement. They at first opposed even the renomination of the Great Emancipator in the summer of 1864, but moved into line with Northern Radical groups by the end of August, signifying their reluctant approval of Lincoln's candidacy with "Grand Ratification Dinners" and other observances.35

Evidence that the articulate free Negroes were losing patience

34 New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 18, 1864; Celebration of Emancipation Committee to Banks, New Orleans (June, 1864), in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, National Archives.

35 New Orleans Tribune, June-September, 1864, passim. For additional Negro Radical activities, see ibid., October 18, November 13, December 3, 1864.
with their white friends began to appear, however, in the pages of the Tribune, which ardently supported the formation of a Louisiana chapter of the National Equal Rights League. White Radicals joined with their Negro brethren in the state convention of this group, which met at New Orleans early in 1865. Fifty-five delegates from the various Negro associations attended this meeting, including ten from the "country" parishes who were, according to the editor of the Tribune, "more radical than the city delegates." Both the editor and the convention were loud in their condemnation of the recent legislature, which had failed to enact the expected suffrage legislation, and their complaints drew sharp criticism from the True Delta. They had accepted all the benefits thus far granted by that group, asserted the True Delta, and it ill became them to challenge its legality because it had not granted their final impossible demand. 36

When white speakers at a "grand mass meeting" held January 10, 1865, apparently made suggestions about correct parliamentary procedure for such an affair, the editor of the Tribune bristled. "At the first step we attempt to make . . . ," he complained, "we find tutors around us who take upon themselves to redress our conduct, and try to prescribe what we have to do. . . . We need friends, it is true; but we do not need tutors." It was time, he reflected, for "white friends" to step down from positions of leadership. 37

36

See New Orleans Tribune, December 27, 1864, and January 7, 15, 1865; New Orleans Daily True Delta, January 15, 1865.

37

New Orleans Tribune, January 20, 1865.
The war years of the occupation comprised a period of great changes for the Negroes of New Orleans. To their educated and articulate leaders, the changes did not follow each other quickly enough, and their unwillingness to recognize the fact that not all the members of their race were as well-prepared for citizenship as they themselves were was to lead to bitter struggles in the years ahead. To most white Orleanians, the changes came much too swiftly, and they clung tenaciously to each relic of the old order. At the end of 1864, Thomas Conway, in reporting of the condition of freedmen in the Department of the Gulf, noted that Negroes could rarely look for justice in the courts of the city and that "much suffering was endured in consequence of the stubborn and persistent refusal of the civil authorities to recognize the Freedmen as 'entitled to any rights that a white man was bound to respect.'" Freedmen's schools were regarded with contempt, even by white school children, and when the rebellious Father Maistre conducted an extravagant state funeral for a Negro officer killed at Port Hudson, a shudder of social horror rocked many of the white population, who looked upon it as an attempt to humiliate them.\(^38\)

Deplorable as these reactions were, it is not surprising that they occurred. The Federal authorities devoted little effort to the attempt to conciliate the population of New Orleans in any sense;

\(^38\) Report on the Condition of Freedmen . . ., 1864, in Letters Received (Civil), 1864, Box 5, National Archives; Moore Journal, entry for April 14, 1863; Polyxene Reynes to Emile Reynes, New Orleans, August 7, 1863, in Reynes Papers.
they do not seem to have made any attempt to prepare either group
for the great social change the war was to bring. Bitterness and
open conflict were the certain fruits of such a policy, and it was
inevitable that the unscrupulous should take over the leadership of
both sides. The seeds of the racial conflict that flowered during
Reconstruction were sown during the years of the war.
Chapter XVI

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON

Upon the rivers of Babylon
there we sat and wept when we remem-
bered thee, O Sion. Ps. 136

To the citizens of New Orleans, plunged into terror and con-
fusion by Farragut's threat to bombard the city if the flag of Loui-
siana were not lowered, the press had words of encouragement and
solace for such trying times. After Farragut had sent ashore a squad
of United States Marines to lower the state flag and run up the Amer-
ican ensign, the Creole L'Abeille consoled its readers with the
thought that the "city was not surrendered, it was captured." Louisi-
siana had done "all that was humanly possible to resist the invasion
and her citizens have no cause to reproach themselves," readers were
assured. All they had to do now was to "maintain their dignity in
all things" and try to refrain from aggravating the military forces.
Readers of the Delta were similarly urged not to feel "humiliated"
as its editor pointed out that "all the great cities of the world"
had been subjected to the same fate at one time or another. "There
is no disgrace or dishonor in this... The physical victory has
been won by the invader; it is for us to see that the moral victory
is ours." La Renaissance echoed the sentiments of the Delta three
weeks after the occupation began when it assured its readers that it
was New Orleans' peculiar destiny to recover from even so humiliating a blow as this.¹

At first there was much resentment against the Confederate military authorities because it was felt that the city had been left to shift for itself. General J.K. Duncan, who had surrendered Forts Jackson and St. Philip to Butler without a struggle when Farragut's fleet successfully passed them, found it necessary to defend his action in the newspapers on his return to New Orleans as a paroled prisoner. But his critics were principally old political enemies, and his men were almost all Creole sons of New Orleans. It was inconceivable that they could have given up unless faced with insuperable odds. So New Orleans forgave them and settled itself to await with as good grace as possible the deliverance which it was sure would shortly come.²

The confident expectation that the Confederates would soon retake the city was widespread at the time of its capture, and it never disappeared completely. It colored the actions of many citizens--particularly women--who in the opening months of the occupation boldly antagonized the occupying forces in a manner they might not have used had they guessed how long military rule would last. Farragut's threat to bombard the city had convinced the ladies that when Butler arrived New Orleans would be turned over to murder, rape, and looting. None of these happened, and the ladies--and many a gentleman

¹ L'Abbeille, April 30, 1862; New Orleans Delta, April 30, 1862; La Renaissance, May 20, 1862.

² New Orleans Delta, April 30, 1862; New Orleans Picayune, April 27, 1862.
friend—concluded that the Federals were prevented from so acting because they recognized the Orleanians as their natural superiors, endowed with certain rights. When a tippling soldier threatened to shoot citizens who would not co-operate with occupying forces, the True Delta was righteously indignant. "Our citizens have surrendered and are willing to submit to the rules and regulations of conquered cities," it huffed, "but beyond this they cannot be forced. They will not tamely submit to insult and outrage."3

To many citizens in the early days of the occupation, just the sight of a Federal uniform and the sound of a New England voice was insult enough. "I cannot describe my feelings when looking upon their tents, hearing the drums and bands of music, and catching the sound of voices of men whose avowed purpose is to conquer and desolate our country," noted Julia LeGrand, though she later admitted sympathy for Federal enlisted men who, she felt, had no control over their destinies. Her landlady was not so charitable. In her view, no one could be a "true Southerner and praise a Yankee"; and it would be no honor "to be treated decently by one of the wretches," she declared, expressing the wish that "the devils were all killed."4

Federal actions during this early period, rather than soothing and conciliating a hostile people, only fed the flames of their resentment. The fact that the looked-for deliverance did not come was lost

3 New Orleans Daily True Delta, May 7, 1862.
sight of in the general indignation over the Butler regime, and the urge to join the ranks of martyrs was sometimes almost too much for ardent Rebels to withstand. Oddly enough, these last were often to be found among the Northern-born secessionists, and these became the particular objects of Butler's wrath. But these naturalized Southerners by no means had a monopoly on the vivid expression of an antipathy for Federals. When 16-year old Josephine Moore came to school on April 21, 1863, she found her classmates wreathed in black crape and realized they were marking the anniversary of the fall of Forts Jackson and St. Philip. "It is quite difficult to realize that our enemies have been here a whole year," she noted, "but when we think of the many atrocious acts for which their presence only can account, we have no trouble in convincing ourselves. . . ." And, after the special police had raided the private school she attended and carried off freehand drawings of the Confederate flag, she observed that she hated the Northerners "with a deeper and more lasting hatred than ever before. Nothing evil could befall any of them at which I could not rejoice. . . ."

But as the months wore on, this sort of indignation became the luxury of the young; adult Orleanians began to chafe under the restrictions of life in an occupied city. "I can't tell you what a life of suppression we lead," Julia LeGrand wrote a friend. "I am like a

5 Ibid., 190, 198.

6 Moore Journal, entries for April 21, May 7, 1863.
pent-up volcano." And the Picayune asked, as the first winter of the occupation began, "How are we going to spend these long winter evenings? Of amusements we are likely to have a dearth. Itinerant lecturers will be few. The clubs are broken up. We shall not have many balls and parties."

The entire city seemed to be putting on mourning as winter arrived. Even the Yankees were depressed by the deserted streets, the closed shops, and the darkened houses which, to one Federal wife, seemed "as solitary as graveyards in which the wives of officers were set up as monuments to their late husbands." "We live like cabbages and turnips," a Creole mother wrote her soldier son. "Everything is calm amongst us... but misery begins to weigh heavily on each one..." On the street one met "tired faces," and a drab lethargy infected everyone. Resignation and hopes for peace began to replace belligerence and expectations of victory. L' Abeille quoted an old French proverb—"It's never necessary to throw the handle after the axe"—in urging its readers to exhibit the "patience, resignation, and calmness which allows one to bear with dignity the rudest tests." But no one really seemed to care about either the handle or the axe.

Shut up in their houses, sometimes hungry and often bored, Orleanians began to get on each other's nerves. "Oh, how tired I am,"

7 Journal of Julia LeGrand, 52; New Orleans Picayune, November 16, 1862.

8 New Orleans Delta, December 7, 1862; Polyeux Leynes to Edouard Reynes, New Orleans, February 19, 1863, in Reynes Papers; Journal of Julia LeGrand, 285; L'Abeille, January 1, 1863.
noted Julia LeGrand in her journal after a day of listening to her landlady read war news from the newspapers. "I never have known before what ennui or loneliness meant..." A week later she admitted that she had deliberately feigned illness so that she could shut herself up in her room and escape the daily readings.

After Banks rounded up a large number of registered enemies and deported them to the Confederacy on May 15, 1863, the dreariness of the city seemed accentuated to those who stayed behind. One Orleanian wrote a deported friend that the city appeared "almost completely deserted" and the "population... made up of Unionists and neutral foreigners who wait impatiently for it to please God to put an end to this desolating civil war."10

The fall of Vicksburg and Port Hudson in the summer of 1863 struck a terrific blow to Confederate hopes everywhere, and particularly in New Orleans, for many Louisiana troops were in the Port Hudson garrison. "Should Port Hudson fall," Julia LeGrand had noted in March, "... thousands of hearts would lose hope to struggle..." The news, announced in New Orleans by a 100-gun salute, "cast down the whole populace." Wild rumors spread through the city that Grant's armies, burning and pillaging as they came, would push on to the


10 Nadau du Treil to L.C.A. Billaud, New Orleans, May 23, 1863, in L.C.A. Billaud and Family Papers, Louisiana State University Archives, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Crescent City. Everywhere the feeling of humiliation was so crushing that it left "no room for fear." 11

To a paroled prisoner who had been present at the capitulation, the fall of these two forts spelled the "total ruin of Louisiana" as well as of Mississippi and Alabama, and the "subjugation of five millions of beings of the white race who dwell in and possess the rich regions of the South." And the reconstruction of the ancient Union, he felt, became "day to day more impossible with the means available in the Lincoln era." 12

Some of the discouragement which affected the citizens must have spread to New Orleans soldiers fighting in the Confederate part of Louisiana too, for Mrs. Polyxene Reynes found it necessary to mask her own feelings in the Fall of 1863 in order to encourage her son. "How can my Edouard fear that his future is lost?" she chided him. "A future lost at the age of 23—and that because he gave up his profession to serve his country? ... On the contrary, the future belongs to those in that happy category." She had hopes, she continued, that their country would raise itself from defeat and reminded him that "after the troubles, the tribulations, the poignant sorrows, will come the sweet days of peace." 13

11 Journal of Julia LeGrand, 246; New Orleans Picayune, July 8, 1863; Polyxene Reynes to Emile Reynes, August 7, 1863, in Reynes Papers.


13 Polyxene Reynes to Edouard Reynes, New Orleans, December 11, 1863, in Reynes Papers.

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The occupying forces and the Unionists who curried their favor might enjoy gay theater parties and stage lavish banquets, but Creole families kept to themselves and lived quietly in deep retirement. To one young Creole wife, this life was "always very monotonous and enervating," and one day was so much like another that she had difficulty in finding topics of interest to put in her letters. "I rarely go out," she wrote; "I devote myself entirely to our two little angels." 

The Creole attitude toward the Federals and those who co-operated with them was definitely antipathetic. "Our enemies are just as amiable as ever toward us," noted Uranie Reynes during the election campaign of 1864. "They will use a mild approach, it is said, in order to win us back the more surely. Do they believe that we can forget in a day all the oppression, all the humiliations to which we've been subjected?" It made no difference to her, she added, whether the invaders pursued a mild or a harsh policy; "they'll find me a damned rebel forever." As time went on and some Southerners who had once declared themselves ready to devour "all the Yankees they ran across" took the oath of allegiance and became Unionists, her mother-in-law was bitter but philosophical: "... we are learning every day the sad truth, love of money is stronger than love of country for the mass of men." 

14 Uranie Reynes to Emile Reynes, February 18, 1864, ibid.

15 Id. to id., February 25, 1864, ibid.; Polyxene Reynes to id., January 1, 1864, ibid.
Faith in the righteousness of the Southern cause did not seem to diminish among these people, however, even though some of them were forced to take the oath of allegiance to avoid deportation. Bank's defeat in the Red River campaign and the great struggle then taking place in Virginia did much to raise Confederate hopes that had been dashed a year before by the fall of Vicksburg and Port Hudson; and the campaign of the Peace Democrats to elect McClellan to the presidency of the United States also seemed to augur well for the Confederacy. "The news is marvellous," Mrs. Reynes wrote her son early in July. "May the residents of the North listen to the voice of reason and humanity and condemn the prolongation of the war..."16

To some, however, the daily struggle for the necessities of life blotted out even these faint hopes for peace. "I oftain take a good cry over the wash tub and think how different things would have been if it had not been for this cursed war, sometimes I feel broken down and old...," wrote Mrs. Carrie Hyatt to her husband, and many another New Orleans woman must have shared her attitude. Bachelor Gus Mandeville, working as a clerk in a New Orleans firm, told his sister that he tried "to keep posted up as far as the papers post us"; but he was "tired of reading so many war lies... You see I am getting nervous and tired..." And as for politics, he felt that

16 See Polyxene Reynes to Edouard Reynes, January 2, 1864, ibid.; Zoe Campbell Diary, passim. Though she first registered as an enemy she later took the oath. However, she did not change her sympathies. See also Joseph Reynes to Emile Reynes, New Orleans, April 29, 1864, in Reynes Papers; Polyxene Reynes to "Dear Son," New Orleans, July 8, 1864, ibid.
"a Peace candidate will be of no avail, that the War is bound to go on for years or until like the Kilk[enn]y Cats both are used up. . . ."

The spiritual and mental exhaustion that he felt apparently was common among a large part of the population, for the news of Lee's surrender was received without great surprise. The fall of Mobile early in April had prepared Orleanians for the end, and the sober view of the Picayune probably was an accurate reflection of the feelings of all but the most ardent Unionists. "It is not now the time or the occasion to go into an examination, either in vindication or condemnation, of the causes or the motives with which the terrible civil war . . . was inaugurated," declared its editor. "Granted that the experiment in rebellion was an error; most dearly has it been answered. . . . Our business is now with the future."  


18 New Orleans Picayune, April 15, 1865; diary of Zoe Campbell, entry for April 14, 1865. For other points of view, see Dawson, Diary, 435-36; and New Orleans Tribune, April 13, 1865.
The end of the war did not bring an end to the military occupation of New Orleans, though its Free State administration had looked for the withdrawal of military control long before Lee's surrender. It did change in character, however, so far as the city's civilian population was concerned. Sympathy for the Confederate cause now was not only unlawful but pointless as well. Even the faint hopes for deliverance or compromise were forever dashed, and Orleanians who had persisted in regarding the presence of Federal troops as a temporary cross had to accept it as a permanent fact.

It is doubtful that many of them tried at that point to evaluate the war years of the occupation. The numbing let-down of defeat and the imminent return of soldier husbands, sons, and brothers, filled civilian thoughts during the first postwar months, and later there was the renewed struggle to earn a living and the turbulent days of Reconstruction. Perhaps it was in this later period that Orleanians began to look back to and remember—with a bitterness deepened by events around them—the war years of military rule. Their memories and those they handed on to their descendants were of a three-year period of persecution and privation. Were they right?

Actually, as military occupations go, Butler was justified in reminding Orleanians in his farewell address that other peoples had
suffered far more than they had. Physically, the Federal occupation of New Orleans was not rigorous. Privations there were of course. It is doubtful that any Orleanian of moderate or less means had anything approaching a balanced diet during the period; prices of everything shot far out of reach of such salaries as there were; and many citizens suffered the loss of all their material goods. But prices were high in New York and in Richmond. The poorer classes everywhere felt the pinch of the unbalanced economic situation. And, whether or not they realized it at the time, every Confederate risked the loss of all he owned when the guns of Charleston opened fire on Sumter.

Probably the resentment that Orleanians and many other Southerners felt over the theft of silver spoons or the publication of the "Woman Order" really grew out of a deeper resentment of some less tangible Federal actions. And it is here that the occupation itself should be examined from the point of view of success or failure.

Lincoln sent Butler to New Orleans for two reasons— one military and one civil. Militarily, he was to open the mouth of the Mississippi and, by holding New Orleans, provide Federal forces with a base from which to complete the opening of the river. His civil responsibility, which he announced himself in his first proclamation, was to reconcile and restore the people of Louisiana to the Union. This sort of responsibility was, of course, completely new to the American military, and because it was, the occupation of New Orleans was almost entirely an experiment. Too, the situation was complicated by the fact that it took place as part of a domestic insurrection. How should a military force behave toward an insurgent civilian population? No one really knew.
Butler and his successors probably were sincere in their efforts to carry out their double mission, but the means they chose were so ill-advised that they all but failed militarily and achieved almost opposite results civilly.

Indeed, when one examines the policy of the Federal authorities toward the citizens of New Orleans, it appears that Butler, Banks, and Hurlbut were more anxious to destroy than to restore. The whole function of the numerous Banks commissions, for example, seems to have been the uncovering of evidence sufficiently incriminating to justify the elimination of any of the institutions investigated. And the general policy of all three commanders appears to have been aimed more at the eradication of external evidences of secessionism—Confederate flags in copybooks and singing "Bonnie Blue Flag" in the parlor—than at making citizenship in the Federal Union positively attractive.

Added to this failure to accomplish their basic mission, the Federal forces provided Orleanians with some solid reasons for finding the Union positively unattractive. If General William F. Smith of the Federal Army was forced to report in 1865 that the Department of the Gulf was riddled by "oppression, peculation, and graft," it is not hard to imagine the opinion of the citizens saddled with such an administration. It is true that the Civil War period in general was characterized by a low state of public morals. It is also true that in the years after the war enough former Confederates demonstrated a talent for corruption to give ample proof that it was not an exclusively Yankee weakness. But the important point to keep in mind is that the Federal occupation of New Orleans presented a situation calling for superior qualities. It was
not enough that the Federal administration in New Orleans should be no more dishonest than the civilian one it had replaced. To win back to loyalty the population of the South's largest city called for positive demonstrations of honesty, justice, and patience.

That Lincoln realized this is clearly shown in his instructions to Butler and in his correspondence with Banks. He wanted Louisiana back in the Union, but he was willing to wait until its population was ready. He saw the problem on a wide screen; his subordinates rarely looked beyond the close-up. As a result, the North won the war in the field--and lost a moral victory in New Orleans.
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I have been very fortunate in the number of manuscript collections I found available for this study, some of them having been opened to scholarly research for the first time. The two principal depositories used were the Department of Archives, Louisiana State University, at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and the National Archives, at Washington D.C.; but other important holdings can be found in New Orleans, Louisiana, and in the Southern Historical Collection in the University of North Carolina Library at Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Among the manuscripts consulted in the Louisiana State University Archives, the Reynes Family Papers, 1862-64, and the Diary of Zoe J. Campbell, 1861-66, in four volumes, have been the most valuable for the reflection of Creole sentiments and the day-to-day picture of Creole life presented in them. Other collections which yielded scattered useful items include the L.C.A. Billaud and Family Papers, 1845-66; the Howard and Horace Burnham Papers, 1862-63; the Benjamin F. Flanders Papers, 1864; the Alfred Grima Papers, 1863-64; the Arthur W. Hyatt Collection; the Jean Ursin LaVillebeauvre Papers, 1860-69; the Henry D. Mandeville and Family Papers, 1862-65; the Record Book of Mrs. James D. Shute, 1863; and the Diary of Clara Solomon, 1861-62. A typed copy of the last item is also in the
In the National Archives in Washington, the papers and records of the Department of the Gulf, deposited in Record Group 98, Records of the War Department, United States Army Commands, present an imposing mass of material. These include correspondence emanating from and directed to the Major General Commanding and the Provost Marshal General of the Department, the former being found in bound letter-press Volumes 296-300 and Endorsement Volumes 302, 303, 307, and 309, and the latter in Letters Received, 1862; Letters Received (Civil), 1863-65; and Miscellaneous Papers and Letters Received by the Provost Marshal General, 1864. Volume 317, the Cash Book of the Provost Marshal General's Office; Volume 331, Permits Granted for Importation; Volume 312, Record Book of Orders and Circulars Issued by the Chief of Police; Volume 318, Police Reports of Seizures and Arrests; Volume 319, Lists of Registered Enemies; Volume 325, Register of Foreigners, 1862-63; Volume 226, Correspondence of the Sequestration Commission; Vol. 234, Receipt Book of the Sequestration Commission; and the Pay-roll Book of the United States Military Police, all in Record Group 98, also shed much light on the activities and problems of a military occupation. In the same group, two preliminary reports of the Special Commission, sometimes referred to as the Smith-Brady Commission, may be found in Box 1, Correspondence of the Provost Marshal General. The full report of this Commission, entitled Report of the Special Commission, prepared at New York, September 23, 1865, and submitted to the Secretary of War, may be found in Record Group 94, Volume 737.
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Group 109, Box 66; and the service jacket of Captain John Henry Hull
of the 174th New York Infantry Regiment, which is also in the Records
of the War Department. Most of the items listed never appeared in
the published collection of the Official Records, and they are inval-
uable in the presentation of the complete picture of the military
occupation of New Orleans.

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locations proved to be of value. These include the Archives of the
Archdiocese of New Orleans, in which the scattered papers of Arch-
bishop Jean Marie Odin are preserved; the Tulane University Archives,
in which the Civil War Papers in Folder M 32, and the General George
F. Shepley Letters in Folder B 16 contain a few items of interest;
the New Orleans Public Library, in which a typescript history of New
Orleans newspapers prepared under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration in 1938 by Charles Youngman proved useful in understanding the role of the press in Civil War New Orleans; the library of the Louisiana State Museum in New Orleans, in which a series of typed essays bound under the title "Miscellaneous Articles" by Charles Patton Dimitry, containing much background material on the city, and P.J. Rinderle's brief typed report on "Health in New Orleans," were likewise useful; and the notes of Dr. George Rafflovich of New Orleans, which contain material on Butler's quarrel with Charles Camille Heidsieck, the champagne king. Also, in the home of Mr. Roger Baudier, historian of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, are a collection of manuscripts, typescripts, and published volumes relating to the history of the Catholic Church in Louisiana, to which he refers collectively as the Baudier Collection.

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VITA

Elisabeth Joan Doyle was born at Chicago, Illinois, on April 22, 1922. She attended the public and parochial schools of Bloomington and Gary, Indiana, and Detroit Michigan, and was graduated from St. Cecilia High School in Detroit in 1938.

In the Fall of that year, she began her college work at Marygrove College in Detroit and completed it at Indiana University in Bloomington, from which she was graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in journalism and history in 1942. From 1942 to 1947 she was employed in the publishing and public relations fields in Chicago, and returned to Indiana University in the latter year to begin work on a master of arts degree in history. She held a graduate assistantship in history during 1947-48 and was awarded the master's degree in December, 1948.

During the first nine months of 1949 she was employed by Indiana University and by the United States Air Force, and entered the graduate school of Louisiana State University in the Fall of 1949. From 1949 to 1951 she held an assistantship in the Department of History at the University, and in June, 1951, joined the staff of the Louisiana State University Press as manuscript editor. She continued her graduate studies while holding this position and in July, 1953, was named editor in chief of the Press—a position she held until her resignation in September, 1954. Since that time she has been engaged in research.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Elisabeth Joan Doyle

Major Field: History

Title of Thesis: Civilian Life in Occupied New Orleans, 1862-65

Approved:

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Major Professor and Chairman

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Dean of the Graduate School

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