

ALL ABOUT A FLAG.

Boston Politics Badly Torn Up Over a Proposition to Return a Confederate Flag to New Orleans.

For months Boston politics has been madly perturbed over a proposition to return to the city of New Orleans a flag which has been hanging in the City Hall as a trophy of the war. When Gen. Butler returned to Massachusetts after his vigorous administration of the city of New Orleans, he received a triumphal reception as the second hero of New Orleans. A reception was given to him and his staff in Boston, Jan. 13, 1863, and at the conclusion of his speech in response Gen. Butler said:

"Mr. Mayor—In behalf of the Army of the Gulf, allow me to present to you, sir, as the representative of the city of Boston, this Confederate flag, taken from the City Hall of New Orleans. I have not brought it here as a trophy—far from it. I have brought it here that it may be in one of your halls as a memento against the evils of Secession forever, and that we and our children may see to what extremity Secession would reduce any portion of our country, when they see the flag under whose folds the fair ladies of New Orleans, having embroidered it with their own hands, sent forth their brothers and lovers to fight. Keep it, sir, that it may be a warning forever against any attempt upon the integrity of the Union—not for a new incentive to patriotism to the citizens of Boston, but as a warning to those who shall come here, of the fate that such a banner ought to meet—to be raised not over brave men, but to be given as a warning to the traitors to the country forever."

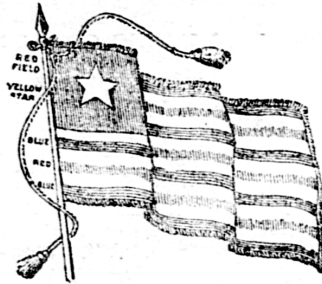
It will be perceived that Gen. Butler did not present the flag as a trophy, nor did he refer to it as the flag which had been floating over the City Hall and hauled down by our troops when he took possession of the city. The flag was, however, hung upon the walls of the City Hall, and has since been looked upon by visitors as the emblem of the Confederate authority in New Orleans which was lowered when the city passed into our possession.

Everyone familiar with the history of the capture of New Orleans knows that this could not have been true, since the flag that had the significance of the capture was the one hauled down from the Custom House and Post Office by the men whom Farragut sent ashore for that purpose. Commodore Farragut at first sent Capt. Theodor Bailey ashore to demand the unconditional surrender of New Orleans and the hoisting of the United States flag. Mayor Monroe replied with a great deal ofrodomontade and a decided refusal to haul down the flags anywhere. Mayor Monroe wrote a number of fierce letters to Commodore Farragut, and the latter at last sent Commodore H. H. Bell ashore with a force of marines and two pieces of artillery to perform the duty. With Capt. Bell were Lieutenant, after Admiral, Kautz, and George Russell, Boatswain's Mate. Capt. Bell gave Mayor Monroe the privilege of hauling down the flag, which was indignantly declined, and then he ordered Kautz and Russell to do it. They had much trouble in getting to the roof of the building and Mayor Monroe assured them that any man who laid hands on the halliards would be shot by the indignant people in the mob gathered around the building. This did not stop Kautz and Russell an instant, however, and after gaining the roof they found the halliards so knotted as to be unworkable, when Kautz cut them with his sword. Lieut. Kautz wanted the honor of hauling down the flag, but Capt. Bell replied that he had already promised that to Russell, but if Kautz insisted upon his rights as an officer they would have to be conceded to him. Kautz generously waived his privilege in favor of Russell, who hauled the flag down and hoisted the United States flag in its place. The flag hauled down, which was the Pelican banner adopted by the sovereign and independent State of Louisiana, was taken

aboard ship and delivered to Commodore Farragut. It had 13 stripes, four blue, six white and three red, with a red union and a single pale yellow star in the center. What became of this flag is not known. Gen. Butler arrived at New Orleans at 3 p. m. on May 1, and on the morning of May 2 Farragut delivered the possession of the city to him.

An Embryonic Alderman.

At that time there was a bare-legged little boy named Willie Berwin playing about the muddy streets of New Orleans. As he grew up he drifted back to Boston and in course of time became a real-estate dealer, entered poli-



THE FLAG TAKEN FROM THE NEW ORLEANS CITY HALL.

tics, and is now, at the age of 48, one of the leading members of the Boston City Council. He conceived the idea of closing the bloody chasm by a formal return of the flag by the city of Boston to the city of New Orleans, and in this plan he was actively aided and abetted by Councilman Thomas F. Doherty. He opened negotiations with the Council of New Orleans for the return of the flag, and the matter progressed so far that resolutions were passed to return the flag with messages of fraternal greeting from the city of Boston. They also provided for a special committee, the expenses of which were to be paid from the municipal funds. Then trouble began. Grand Army veterans, led by John G. Bostwick, Vice President of the Vermont Veteran Association, protested vehemently against the act, especially at this time, when the Daughters of the Confederacy are so active in trying to secure funds to erect a monument to Wirz. The tax-payers were also stirred up about taking the city's money to send a delegation on a junketing trip to New Orleans.

Next was raised a question as to the real history of the flag, and it develops that it was one which had been made at great expense and labor by the women of New Orleans for presentation to Beauregard's army July 4, 1862. It seems that Butler found the flag concealed under the pillow of a professionally sick woman in a private house.

The people of New Orleans as a rule

have taken comparatively little interest in the matter, as they knew it was not the flag which had been hauled down from the public building, and it had no historical interest to them. Thomas P. Thompson, who is an authority on New Orleans history, denies that the flag had any official connection with the Southern Confederacy, and says:

"The people of New Orleans have taken little interest so far in this matter, and 'it is only to smile' when the posthumous authority of Butler is cited to controvert a case that the noble Farragut had already fixed and settled in his correspondence, as recently published by his son. By the way, to the credit of Butler, he does not say in his own book that this flag floated over our City Hall.

"There is quite a difference between the return of a flag captured in honorable battle and the opening of an old wound in this doubtful fashion. History should be truthful. Our people are good patriotic American citizens, and no Boston man loves the flag of our common country more than we, but to revive unpleasant recollections on such flimsy grounds is 'hardly worth the candle.'

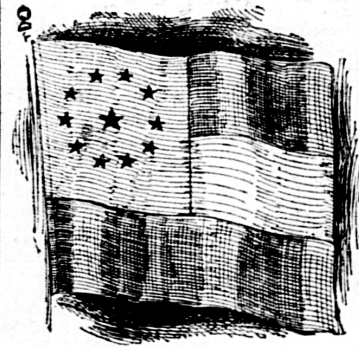
"I would advise that the old flag in question be furled, 'for 'his weary,' and let us all in Massachusetts and in Louisiana stand together for all America and Old Glory as she waves to-day."

The Daughters of the Confederacy Speak Up.

The Daughters of the Confederacy, however, did not propose to lose this opportunity to get in the lime light, and their Secretary wrote to Councilman Doherty as follows:

"Dear Mr. Councilman—The Daughters of the Confederacy hereby invite you and your associates on the special committee to come to New Orleans and return us the dear old flag which Gen. Butler ruthlessly removed from the house of one of our members while here during the late unpleasantness between the North and the South.

"We want the flag, and we want you to give it back. As the author of



THE CONFEDERATE FLAG EXHIBITED AT BOSTON.

the order for its return, we feel that you are the man entitled to come to us with the precious relic of our Confederacy. We promise you a hearty welcome.

"It makes no difference to us whether the flag floated from the flagstaff of City Hall or was taken from beneath the pillow of a defenceless daughter of the Confederacy. It is our wish that it be returned to the representatives of those who wove its fabric and loyally defended the cause which it represented.

"I see by the papers that your Mayor says that there is no interest in the return of the flag, and that he quotes Mayor Behrman of this city as his authority for this statement. Permit me to say to you that if Mayor Behrman ever said anything of the kind he spoke without authority, and we will show you gentlemen from Boston that there is a sentiment here for that glorious old flag, so replete with tender memories of our lost cause, and that we earnestly desire its return.

"A true Southern welcome awaits your coming and the return of the old flag. Sincerely yours,

"Clara Cummings Cotesworthy."

Would Not Pay for a Junket.

Next the tax-payers began to move. An amendment was introduced to prevent the appropriation of money for a junket, and was at first defeated by a

vote of 23 to 22, but seven days later it was passed by a vote of 37 to 22. Then an order was introduced to pay the expenses from the Aldermen's Contingent Fund, which is under the control of the Aldermen alone, and was passed without a roll-call. Then the matter went into the municipal election and the men who had voted for the junket were arraigned, and this made one of the reasons why they should not be re-elected. The Citizen's Committee took up the matter and made a vigorous overhauling of the advocates of the junket in little leaflets setting forth not only their vote on that matter, but upon other unworthy measures. The matter assumed such a shape finally that the Mayor decided to veto the resolution if it should come before him, and so it stands at present, and probably the flag will continue to grace the walls of the City Hall, altho its historical interest has been pretty badly damaged.