A Protest.

General,

On behalf of myself and colleagues, candidates with me at the election of Monday, the 22d of February inst, and of the loyal people of Louisiana, and in the name of Republican institutions and Liberty, I beg leave, to present to you this protest against the result of that days election, as reported to you, on the following grounds,—

1 Michael Hahn had defeated Fellows and Benjamin F. Flanders in the Louisiana gubernatorial election that was held on February 22, 1864.

I. The qualifications as to the oath to be required of the voters, were expressed in such ambiguous terms by the original Proclamation, as to admit of several interpretations, very embarrassing to voters, nor was a lucid explanation given until eight days before the election, nor until many original and continuous Union men had so far committed themselves as to be deprived of their votes, for instance, Messrs Roselius and Rosier, thus lessening the number of real voters to a great extent and depriving many conscientious persons of freedom in their choice.

2 General Nathaniel P. Banks had issued a proclamation on January 11 which called for the election of state officers on February 22. See Banks to Lincoln, January 11, 1864.

3 Christian Roselius and J. A. Rosier were prominent Louisiana unionists.

II. In violation of the express provisions of the Constitution of Louisiana, and of the Amnesty Proclamation of the President of the United States, recognizing that Constitution, and in derogation of common right in the freedom of elections, large classes of people, not legal voters, were allowed to vote at sd election and did vote, thus nullifying the choice of those legally qualified to take part in the election.

4 A draft of Lincoln's December 8, 1863 Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction is in this collection.
III. Threats and intimidation were used from the very commencement of the canvass, coming or purporting to come from those high in authority, by which many were precluded from a freedom of choice.

IV. The resources of the government in transportation and in the usual accessories of a canvass, were freely supplied to the successful candidate and denied to his competitors.

V. All who should vote for any other candidate than the Hon. Michael Hahn for Governor, were denounced as traitors at heart by one holding a high official position, and others were told, and many were induced to believe, that they having taken the amnesty oath, would be considered guilty of perjury, if they voted for the conservative ticket.

VI. Intimidation was used at the polls towards those not voting for the officially favored ticket, and at several of the polls, the votes of Government employees were opened by the Commissioners of election, thus destroying the secrecy of the ballot.

VII. Persons, not citizens of the United States, having been born in a foreign country and never naturalized, on their own confession, were allowed to vote, though this was strongly protested against and their votes duly challenged.

VIII. Men were marched up to the polls and voted in companies, and no one was allowed to expostulate or challenge their right to vote.

IX. Government employees were ordered to vote a certain ticket, designated to them, although they were out of their precinct.

By these means many were designedly deprived of the right of suffrage, because it was supposed they would not vote for the desired candidate, and a large number not qualified were allowed, even coerced to vote for the candidate, returned as having the largest number; and more than enough to have changed the result, if the voting had been confined to those entitled to vote by the Constitution of Louisiana, and the President's Proclamation; and no undue influence had been used, and had the people been left to their own choice.

In consideration of the premises, then, I protest against the manner of and proceedings at sd election for State officers on the 22d February inst, and further protest against the granting of a certificate of election to the Hon. Michael Hahn as Governor, and to the other candidates on the ticket, at the head of which his name was placed.
Copies of this Protest will be forwarded to Maj—Gen. Banks, to the Hon. Michael Hahn and to the President of the United States.

Respectfully

Your obedient Servant

J. Q. A. Fellows

New Orls.

March. 4th 1864