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SATURDAY MORNING, MARCH 19.

THE BARS AT THE MOUTH OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

We have read with considerable interest the report made by the State Engineer of an examination conducted by him in person of the bars at the mouth of the river Mississippi, in conformity to a resolution of the General Assembly. The report is singularly clear in style and compact in statement. Mr. Hennet proceeded to his destination on the 24th February, and began to examine the bars on the 24 and 25 March. His explorations were chiefly confined to the Passe à la Loutre and the Southwest Pass, the only two which are used by vessels of large draft, and which have been subjected to the operations of the General Government. Very careful and repeated soundings proved that on the bar of the former there was at mid-tide fifteen and a half feet water in the channel. On the bar of the Southwest Pass similar careful and numerous soundings demonstrated exactly the same depth of water at mid-tide. On both these bars the work done by order of the Federal Government consists of lines of piling, which have been entirely abandoned as ineffectual.

On the 24 March there were thirty-five ships at anchor inside the bar, waiting for a passage out. There were three on the bar, and seventeen at anchor outside, waiting to be towed in. In all there were fifty-five vessels detained, the periods of detention varying from one to thirty-nine days. Between the 28th February and the 24 March, a few of these ships were taken to sea; but others had been brought from the city. Two of the ships on the bar were aground. The tow-boat association, says the report, are busy bringing in and passing out vessels, but they have more than they can do on account of the immense power they are compelled to use, and the long time they have to give to each ship.

Col. Hunter then proceeds to inquire into the most effective means of remedying the evil, by deepening the passes. He is utterly opposed to the wing-dam work of piling undertaken by the General Government. It cannot be permanently successful, because the worms will destroy the woodwork in a few years; and its effect is merely to remove a bar from one point to another. However for the dam may be carried, the bar cannot be washed away or the channel deepened. What then is to be done? The Illinois engineer declares that the mouths of the Mississippi are constantly changing; that passes are filling up and new ones forming, and that the Mississippi delta is extending farther and farther South; that as the causes for the formation of the bars are constantly occurring, the effects must likewise be equally regular and constant. In other words, so long as the sediments of the Mississippi reach the sea, so long will bars be formed. Hence to keep any artificial depth of water across the bars, unremitting labor must be resorted to. If we want twenty feet of water, we must remove the deposit to that depth, and then by continued labor keep removing it. To do this, dredging or harrowing are the only means known. The objections to dredging are its heavy cost, the large amount of labor requisite, and the blocking up of the channel by the number of boats which must be employed. Harrowing is not liable to these drawbacks. Says the report:

By this plan, I mean the process of loosening, stirring up, and keeping suspended in the water, the deposit, so that it be carried out by the current. I would have heavy harrows, with scrapers attached, which would be dragged on the bottom by strong steamboats. This dragging should be done each the ebb tide. I do not make here a detailed estimate of the cost of boats or the means necessary to work them during the year; but I think that two good steamers (one for each bar) can be obtained, with all required apparatus, for *fifty thousand dollars* each; and that *fifty thousand dollars* more will be ample for the bars open. But I would advise that this work be not done by contract. I would have the Government provide the boats, and that they be placed under the charge of its own officers. This will insure success.

The report concludes by regretting that the conclusions derived from the soundings are so different from those reached by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, or the party of Lieutenant-General Scott, but accounts for the difference by the improvement in the bar which had taken place subsequently to these reports. Pass à la Loutre is warmly recommended as possessing marked advantages over other channels.

A. C. Bullitt.—We had the pleasure yesterday of meeting our old friend and some time associate, A. C. Bullitt, Esq., of the *N. O. Picayune*. We were glad to perceive that while prolonged travel had slightly diminished his generous and rotund proportions, it had imparted to him every appearance of health and vigor. May his shadow never be less!

Auction Sales by the Sr. Louis Exchange. N. Vignié will sell this day at 12 o'clock—

A desirable two-story brick store on Chartres street.

A large and deep lot of ground on St. Claude street, near Esplanade, with the buildings thereon.

A square of high land, fenced in, near Esplanade street.

A lot and building fronting on the Carondelet Walk and Toulouse street, near Broad street.

Two choice servants, belonging to the estate of the late Mrs. G. Schmidt.

And a few cooks, washers, ironers, &c.

And at 5 o'clock, a drug store on Conde street, between Dumaine and St. Philip streets.

Valuable Slaves.—We call attention to an advertisement of Mr. N. Vignié, in our auction notices. It will be seen that that auctioneer will sell on Tuesday, the 29th, many valuable slaves, all from a plantation in Christian, and whom are first-rate carpenters, engineers, blacksmiths, &c.

Bi-Sulphite of Lime.—We invite attention to the communication in our columns of Mr. Richard H. Chinn in reference to the virtues of bi-sulphite of lime, and Col. Sewrrs's process of making sugar with sulphurous gas. We cannot, of course, be expected to take sides in the controversy. This the reader must do for himself, after properly weighing the testimony presented by both parties.

The New Postmaster General.—The Washington correspondent of the Baltimore *Sun* speaks of Mr. Holt as follows:

Hon. Joseph Holt, the new Postmaster General, is a native of Kentucky, but acquired fame and fortune by the practice of the legal profession at Vicksburg, Miss., where he often antagonized at the bar with the renowned Prentiss. By reason of impaired health he soon retired from practice, and went to the Head of his adoption of the Commissionership of Patents, two years since, resided first at Louisville and then in Washington. While Mr. Holt has ever been a Democrat of principle, he has taken but little part in bitter partisan contests. His most conspicuous political service was at the Baltimore Democratic Convention in the year 1856, where, as members of the *Sun's* readers will remember, his impassioned appeal in favor of Colonel Richard M. Johnson so turned the tide of feeling as to procure his nomination as Vice-President. From the position and sentiments of the most important duties of the Commissionership of Patents, he has been transferred (unasked by him or his friends, but about his fitness for the cabinet's volition) to the responsible position of Postmaster-General, upon the duties of which he will enter on Monday.

The Lone Tragedy.—The Louisville *Democrat* of the 8th instant says:

Much as the news of the mob at Hawesville startled this community, the report of the grand jury surpasses in monstrosity the tragedy itself. The opal justification of mob law by a grand jury is something novel in the history of this country; but when they excuse the conduct of the assassins in going into a jail and shooting a wounded and unarmed prisoner in cold blood, every manly instinct recoils from the contemplation of the deed. The effort to excuse the atrocities of the mob and a cold blooded assassination by imputations upon the victim of the mob is unnatural, and of a piece with the whole story. His preparations for a bloody encounter are given in detail; but the imposing fact that a mob was prepared ready to kill him stands out in bold relief upon the face of the whole story. It needs no proof.

A Runaway Tableau.—The European notices just now present a curious *tableau*. The *Courier and Enquirer* thus pictures it.

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Sardinia, resolve to dash in upon her old enemy, Austria, eight times her size—France ostensibly backing her, and squaring off in regular ring fashion—Austria, for all the talking about it in such ambiguous style as to completely puzzle every one about her real intentions, her self, England, afraid that France is in earnest, but yet more afraid to interfere—Austria planting herself in the best possible attitude to receive the shock, and visibly backing the knocks, and begging to talk about yielding a point or two—Prussia standing by her cousin german, but afraid to stir—And the giant Russia, himself lately thrashed so soundly, looking on very good naturedly and quite disposed to think it "a very pretty quarrel as it stands." This tableau of course cannot last long. It is very awkward posture for the parties themselves