

**OUR COUNTRY AND OUR DUTY**

**The South-Western**

BY L. DILLARD & CO.

Office: Corner of Texas and Edwards streets, OPPOSITE HITCHCOCK'S LIVERY STABLE.

**SHREVEPORT:**

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 1855.

AGENTS FOR THE SOUTH-WESTERN:

Messrs. J. M. & J. C. McRury, Jefferson, La., Texas.

Mr. W. B. Moore, Bonham, Fort Worth County, Texas.

Mr. J. A. B. Jones, Henderson, Rank Co., Texas.

Mr. A. S. Flower, Mansfield, and DeSoto Parish, La.

Mr. C. L. Adams, Plaquemine, and Iberia Parish, La.

W. H. McDonald, 102 N. Main street, New York.

Those of our own subscribers who do not receive their papers regularly, will please send word to the office.

**OUR JOB OFFICE.**—We have added to our establishment one of the PATENT ROTARY PRESSES, (capable of printing from 1000 to 1500 cards, circulars, etc., per hour), and an additional hand-press suitable for pamphlets and large jobs, together with a fine assortment of ornamental type, paper, and blank cards, which enables us to fill orders for every description of printing to any extent in superior style, with great despatch and at unusually low prices.

The river continued to rise up to yesterday morning, when it came to a stand, and is now falling slowly. The compromise and the Union have arrived direct from N. Orleans, without being detained at the falls, and several boats have departed for the city. The Alida left Thursday for Jefferson, which she reached the following day. The Grenada arrived from Jefferson last night.

We experienced a severe change of weather during Saturday. In the morning it was pleasant and genial as spring, but before 12 o'clock at night was freezing. During all Sunday it blew a heavy gale from the north, which prostrated the telegraphic wire between this place and Marshall. Yesterday it moderated, and was again pleasant.

The Mississippi has risen four feet opposite the mouth of Red River, and continues to rise slowly.

**LOSS OF THE ALIDA.**—The steamboat Alida, bound from Jefferson for this port, sunk yesterday morning at Mooring's landing. Ferry lake. The steamer Sodo has gone to her relief.

Captain Graham's new steamer White Cliffs arrived here on Wednesday. She will be fitted out with all possible despatch, and take her place as a regular packet between Shreveport and upper Red River.

By TELEGRAPH.—ALEXANDRIA, JANUARY 23, 4 o'clock, P. M. Four feet water on the falls—two-inch last night and now rising slowly. B. E. Clarke left for Shreveport this morning. The St. Charles at foot of upper falls, fighting, so as to get above. The Pilot and C. Hays from New Orleans, and the compromise from Shreveport, arrived this morning. Weather cloudy and cold.

We had a call on Saturday from friend, Wm. McMaster, jr., of the house of David Taylor & Co., New Orleans. He is on a tour through north-western Louisiana, eastern Texas, and Arkansas, and will call upon the patrons of the firm, and be happy to receive their orders.

A successful attempt was made last week to run off a negro woman belonging to the estate of the late W. W. Brown. The parties took the route to Arkansas, and two of our citizens have gone in pursuit of them.

Thanks to the hon. Roland Jones for public documents.

Thanks to Mr. Ferroncel, of the Fanny Fern, for late papers.

We are indebted to the attention of captain C. A. Crook, of the steamer Union, for files of New Orleans papers.

We are indebted to Mr. Beckley, of the Compromise, and Mr. Atkinson, of the Alida, for files of city papers.

We have received the first number of the "Minden Gazette," a neatly printed and well filled sheet, conducted by Mr. N. C. Blackburn. Its principles "will be thoroughly American," and as the editor is a writer of ability, will prove an able champion and exponent of doctrines that are dear to every lover of his country. We wish it a long and prosperous career. The Gazette touches the Minden Herald, the ex-editor of which, W. Jasper Blackburn, esq., gracefully takes leave of his patrons in an exceedingly well written valedictory.

We hourly hear rumors of failures and suspensions among the cotton factors of N. Orleans. It appears that the disease has assumed an epidemic form, and bids fair to go through the whole alphabet, from A to Z, in regular rotation. Commercial affairs are undoubtedly in an embarrassed position, and it will require a few months to bring them in order; but they are not half so bad as common rumor would lead the public to believe.

Up to the 10th inst., the receipts of cotton at all the sea-ports in the United States, show a decrease of 52,551 bales compared with the receipts of last season up to the same date; but the receipts at N. Orleans exceed those of the same time last season 15,500 bales. In the exports, compared with same period last season, there has been an increase of 164,195 bales to Great Britain, and of 29,692 to France; but a decrease of 4300 to other foreign ports.

We learn by the Minden Gazette, that Judge Drew, in compliance with the written request of the bar and officers of the court in those parishes, has declined holding the present current terms of court in Bossier and Bienville.

Mr. Walsh, the well informed Paris correspondent of the National Intelligencer, doubts whether even 200,000 allied troops will be adequate to the work to be done, in order to effect the triumph of the Crimean expedition, to-wit: the complete investment, north, south and east, of the city and Bay of Sebastopol, the rout of the Russian army outside, the occupation and holding of Perekop, in order to isolate the peninsula of Crimea from the interior of the Russian empire, and prevent the arrival of succor. The same writer is confident in the opinion that Germany will remain neutral in this war for some time at least.

"Hard times" is the theme that greets us on every quarter. From the tenor of our exchanges one would suppose that every body talks, dreams and thinks about the hard times, and that almost every body feels them, and knows, by bitter experience, what they mean. But very few stop to ruminate over what is the chief cause of all the anxiety, embarrassment and suffering they share or witness, or what sovereign remedy there may be for either.—Some attribute our troubles to the low prices received for cotton; some to the difficulties of navigation, and the low stage of water in Red River; some to the exorbitant rates demanded for flour and other indispensable provisions; some to the unaccountable scarcity of money; and some to the great frauds of northern financiers and bankers, who have mismanaged the affairs of great corporations, and thus created a wide distrust—as if a few unprincipled men could, by mere speculations, blight a whole land worth billions times more than they have created it out of. And others give similar reasons equally as plausible. Each of these may have some slight bearing; but no one of them is of such significance, nor could all put together produce such effects as we witness, or account for them. It is the people—the mass of the people—that make the trouble. No less power can bring about such results. The universe, and hourly increasing extravagance of our people has caused the universal depression, and brought about the "hard times." If an individual spends more than his income, every body knows that he must retrench, or become bankrupt and ruined. If a whole nation runs into similar extravagance—a nation being only a mass of individuals—the whole nation must retrench, or become bankrupt and ruined. In the United States, for years back, we have been spending extravagantly, living beyond our income, and the consequence is, that there is now a general embarrassment, a scarcity of money, and trouble ahead; and we begin to hear a cry to know the cause, and demand for a remedy. The cause is as plain as the way to the river—the remedy is equally plain, but by no means so agreeable. We have bought more than we can pay for with our present incomes. We must therefore retrench, live more within the bounds of our means, or go on suffering more and more. That this is the true state of the case may be made clear by two examples, taken from opposite extremes of American folly.—Secretary Guthrie, in his annual report to congress, tells us that in the financial year ending on the 30th June, 1854, we imported from Europe thirty-three millions of dollars worth of silk goods. Silk we produce at home only in small quantities, and it is the most expensive luxury. We should be as good looking, as respectable, as warm and as well off, physically, in all respects, without spending a dollar on it. Now, if you want to know what is done with this silk, look at the dresses (generally we are sorry to say, ill fitting and badly made,) of our wives and daughters, whose husbands and fathers cannot afford to pay for them; or at the sumptuous drapery of their parlors, which are daily becoming mere monuments of vanity and bad taste, by cumbersome, inelegant extravagance. A lady friend, when we were last in N. Orleans, specially informed us that the drapery of her parlor and drawing room, "cost me only 25,000 francs in Paris, last summer, they were quite a bargain." Then look at our large hotels, and the people who frequent them. One of them, in New York, was opened a few months since, the curtains in the ladies' parlor of which cost fifteen thousand dollars. It is needless to say that a large majority of the lady travelers who may put up at the hotel have never been accustomed to any other than muslin, cambie or worsted curtains. It puts one in mind of Fanny Kemble's description of the steamer on the Chesapeake bay, "superb French mirrors hung around the cabin, satin damask curtains, with gold fringe, adorned the berths, while there was but a solitary wash-basin and a single towel for the use of thirty or forty ladies." At last accounts the sheriff had possession of the hotel. Private parlors of the same fashion are coming fast to the same end; but let us go to the other point of our folly. We are compelled to import silks if we must have them, but if there is any thing in the Union of which we have enough, and to spare, it is stones—marble, granite, lime and sandstone, and all kinds of stones. The eastern, northern, middle and western States are full of them; but quantities, the papers inform us are now imported from France! Churches and houses, in no small number, are built of foreign stone in New York, Brooklyn, Boston and Philadelphia. The New York Courier contains thirty or forty different advertisements offering imported building stones for sale.—Next, we ought to bear of importing dirt to cover up our own native rocks, lest the sight of them should reproach us with our senseless extravagance. Sancho, in Don Quixote, characterizes a man's folly, by saying, he wants better than can be made of wheat. Do we want better churches, warehouses, or dwellings than can be built of American granite, American marble, or American sandstone? The suggestion is ridiculous; but there is no need of such separate illustrations. Our importations for the last two years show our extravagance and folly in the gross, just as plainly as our French silks and European building stones show it in detail. Take the years 1844 and 1845 and compare them with the years 1853 and 1854, and see what the secretary of the treasury says about them—we mean, what he says about merchandise and goods of other kinds imported and consumed in the United States in those years, taken the amount as estimated by sworn invoices at the places whence they were shipped. His table runs thus:

The postmaster-general in his report recommends the passage of a law authorizing the establishment of a system of registration of all valuable letters, at the option of correspondents, five cents additional postage being charged for registration, and all registered letters to be made up under a special post bill and sent under a special envelope to the postmasters. A system of checks and accounts is also suggested, in order the more readily to ascertain when valuable letters are missing, and to give an easier clue to mail robberies. The recommendations deserve consideration; but will never answer with the present employes in a majority of the postoffices, for it appears, that in most of the cities in the Union, a valuable letter being placed in the postoffice is certain to be stolen or mislaid. The postmaster-general compliments the Collins' steamships highly, and admits that the sum originally allowed to them by the government was too little; but thinks the present pay too high, and neglects to recommend any decided course with reference thereto. He says truly that the California mail steamships' service costs too much, and suggests that unless the contractors will give weekly service for the present contract price, the U. States had better exercise its right and abrogate the contract, by a purchase of the company's (Geo. Law's) steamers. We should regret to see the latter done, as it would seriously injure N. Orleans. The report states that the department is aware of the irregularities in the reception of letters and papers throughout the country, and we can but hope one of these days he will find time to glance at the state of affairs in the Red River parishes and Texas. He ought to do so before he is ousted out of office, if for no other reason, that he may be made to confess to himself his own imbecility. He says that he is now occupied with the task of revising and correcting the "schemes of distribution" at the various distributing offices, which he has caused to be forwarded to him, and most of which he finds so very defective that he "no longer wonders at the delays which have occurred." We trust that he will continue his investigations and make an effort to cure the irregularities and abuses of his department. The manner in which the postal affairs of the south-west have been managed during the past two years would disgrace the youngest "devil" of any printing office in the land; and would not have been tolerated by the people of any government on the globe except our own. The postmaster-general sapiently informs congress that, "mail depredations are becoming of such frequent occurrence as to constitute a great drawback upon our postal system." It also appears that nearly all of these depredations take place in the postoffices. The only way then to prevent them, is for the postmaster-general to appoint none but honest men to office. If the present state of affairs exist much longer, the people will be forced to resort to some means by the aid of which they can compel the president and the postmaster-general to appoint postmasters not as a reward for officious partisan services, or on the strength of a recommendation from a half-dozen obscure demagogues, but for their fitness, soundness of judgment and integrity of character—men who can pass the Jeffersonian ordeal—to appoint postmasters who will have the discretion and independence to select subordinates whose honesty, capacity and integrity they know can be relied on.

Such results, which in other possible cases might be positively disastrous, suffice to expose the spurious commercial alchemy which attempts to extract wealth from poverty and indigence, in which one portion of the consumers of our products are expending their lives, labor and their wealth in the unprofitable task of ruining another portion. Indeed, the general effect of this abnormal condition of our best customers has already been felt in no slight degree, and will produce still more extensive embarrassments, notwithstanding the temporary and delusive impulse imparted, by exceptional and special cause, to some branches of our industry. The less, it is to be feared, will fall most heavily upon the producers of our great staples.

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"Humanity in the City," is the title of a handsome volume just published by DeWitt & Davenport, New York, and to whose attention we are indebted for a copy. The volume comprises a series of discourses recently delivered in New York, by the reverend Edwin H. Chapin, who chose for his theme, "Lessons of the street," "Man and machinery," "Sins for precedence," "The Symbols of the Republic," "The Springs of Social Life," "Allies of the Temper," "Children of the Poor," and "The Help of Religion." The reverend gentleman aims at applying the highest standard of morality and ethics to the scenes of our daily life, and he speaks not only to the hearts and consciences of men, with a vigor and power not to be misunderstood, but clothed in such chaste and elegant language as to be most valuable contributions to our highest order of literature. The book is handsomely printed, well bound, and illustrated with a steel engraving. Price, \$1.

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The Four Points.—The Paris Monitor has the following in allusion to the terms in which Prince Gortschakoff has signified to Austria the czar's willingness to treat on the four points: "Some journals have lately affixed to propositions of peace alleged to have been made by Russia to France and England. The courts of Paris and London have not received any proposals of the kind from the cabinet of St. Petersburg."

The postmaster-general in his report recommends the passage of a law authorizing the establishment of a system of registration of all valuable letters, at the option of correspondents, five cents additional postage being charged for registration, and all registered letters to be made up under a special post bill and sent under a special envelope to the postmasters. A system of checks and accounts is also suggested, in order the more readily to ascertain when valuable letters are missing, and to give an easier clue to mail robberies. The recommendations deserve consideration; but will never answer with the present employes in a majority of the postoffices, for it appears, that in most of the cities in the Union, a valuable letter being placed in the postoffice is certain to be stolen or mislaid. The postmaster-general compliments the Collins' steamships highly, and admits that the sum originally allowed to them by the government was too little; but thinks the present pay too high, and neglects to recommend any decided course with reference thereto. He says truly that the California mail steamships' service costs too much, and suggests that unless the contractors will give weekly service for the present contract price, the U. States had better exercise its right and abrogate the contract, by a purchase of the company's (Geo. Law's) steamers. We should regret to see the latter done, as it would seriously injure N. Orleans. The report states that the department is aware of the irregularities in the reception of letters and papers throughout the country, and we can but hope one of these days he will find time to glance at the state of affairs in the Red River parishes and Texas. He ought to do so before he is ousted out of office, if for no other reason, that he may be made to confess to himself his own imbecility. He says that he is now occupied with the task of revising and correcting the "schemes of distribution" at the various distributing offices, which he has caused to be forwarded to him, and most of which he finds so very defective that he "no longer wonders at the delays which have occurred." We trust that he will continue his investigations and make an effort to cure the irregularities and abuses of his department. The manner in which the postal affairs of the south-west have been managed during the past two years would disgrace the youngest "devil" of any printing office in the land; and would not have been tolerated by the people of any government on the globe except our own. The postmaster-general sapiently informs congress that, "mail depredations are becoming of such frequent occurrence as to constitute a great drawback upon our postal system." It also appears that nearly all of these depredations take place in the postoffices. The only way then to prevent them, is for the postmaster-general to appoint none but honest men to office. If the present state of affairs exist much longer, the people will be forced to resort to some means by the aid of which they can compel the president and the postmaster-general to appoint postmasters not as a reward for officious partisan services, or on the strength of a recommendation from a half-dozen obscure demagogues, but for their fitness, soundness of judgment and integrity of character—men who can pass the Jeffersonian ordeal—to appoint postmasters who will have the discretion and independence to select subordinates whose honesty, capacity and integrity they know can be relied on.

Such results, which in other possible cases might be positively disastrous, suffice to expose the spurious commercial alchemy which attempts to extract wealth from poverty and indigence, in which one portion of the consumers of our products are expending their lives, labor and their wealth in the unprofitable task of ruining another portion. Indeed, the general effect of this abnormal condition of our best customers has already been felt in no slight degree, and will produce still more extensive embarrassments, notwithstanding the temporary and delusive impulse imparted, by exceptional and special cause, to some branches of our industry. The less, it is to be feared, will fall most heavily upon the producers of our great staples.

Defaulters.—Secretary Guthrie, in his report, mentions no less than four defaulting collectors of customs, to be added to the long list that has disgraced the financial annals of this country. The defaulters are the collectors at Cleveland and Toledo, Ohio, at Oswego, New York, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The collector at Oswego is a defaulter to the tune of merely \$75,000; the collector at Cleveland, \$150,000; the collector at Toledo, \$5000; and the collector at Milwaukee for about \$3000—total defalcation of the four officers, \$198,000! This is pretty fair for one time, but when we recollect that the same thing happens almost every year, it makes it better, and shows the science of "free trade," as carried on by office-holders with the public money. Why is this so? Let us look back on the line of government defaulters, and remember that from Swartout down, through Jesse Hoyt and a thousand minor subjects, until the present time, not a solitary defaulter has been punished, and we think the answer is plain. He who steals from Uncle Sam steals with impunity—the more he steals the safer he is—Uncle Sam gives an immunity from punishment to all his magnificent plunderers. When will this state of things be remedied? Never! at least there appears to be no hope of it at present. When one or two of these defaulters are condemned to the penitentiary and made to work out a term of years at hard labor, there will be some hope that government defaulters will be fewer, and the treasurer's annual report will be more free from such foul stains on our financial accounts.

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