

THE GREAT OBSTRUCTIONIST

A Chapter in the History of the St. Louis Bridge.

How Eads Cut the River in Two HIS TRICKS EXPOSED BY ARMY OFFICERS

His Big Victory Over the Little Steamboats.

If it be true that we are to have Eads and his obstructions at the mouth of the Mississippi, the people of New Orleans will not be interested in learning that they are to be at the mercy of a first class obstruction artist—one whose reputation is established. Of this our people should be assured. It must be so gratifying to them to know it that we are anxious they should not doubt it; we therefore lay before them some account of a successful achievement of our artist in the obstruction way as a sample of what he is capable of doing.

When the great east and west railroads began to reach earnestly for the commerce of the Mississippi and its northern tributaries, it was found desirable to have railroad bridges across the river, and, as the river interest, represented by some steamboatmen, it was thought, might be injured by the construction of low bridges, or of bridges with piers very close together, the Congress of the United States, in granting authority to bridge the Mississippi and its tributaries at certain points, tried to preserve the river interest by stipulating that the bridges should be of a certain height and the piers a certain distance apart.

By an act approved July 25, 1866, the St. Louis and Illinois Bridge Company was given authority to bridge the Mississippi at St. Louis. Section twelve of this act reads as follows:

Sec. 12. And be it further enacted, That the bridge authorized by the preceding section to be built shall not be a suspension bridge or drawbridge, with pivot or other form of draw, but shall be constructed with continuous or broken spans, and be subject to these conditions: First, that the lowest part of the bridge or bottom chord shall not be less than fifty feet above the city dike at its greatest span; second, that it shall have at least one span 500 feet in the clear, or two spans of 350 feet in the clear; and third, that the height of the bridge at the center of the span; third, no span over the water at low water mark shall be less than 200 feet in the clear of abutments.

The stipulation as to height made the steamboatmen happy, they being in blissful ignorance of "Eads' arches," by which "the centre of the span" could be made of the required height, while the height of the rest of the span could be decreased along a graceful curve line to the water's surface. Imagine the "sickness" of these steamboatmen when, in 1873, the first arch of the bridge started them in the face, and they discovered that, while its builder had conformed with every requirement of law, he had practically cut their great and free highway in two. What joy it must have infused into the hearts of cheerful railroad directors! The unhappy, ragged, swindled little steamboat interest at once ran off to the Great Father in Washington with its pitiful tale, and a "board of engineers" was of course appointed to find out all about its troubles and devise some way to dry its weeping eyes.

This board was instructed "to examine the construction of the St. Louis and Illinois bridge across the Mississippi river at St. Louis, and report whether the bridge will prove a serious obstruction to the navigation of said river, and, if so, in what manner its construction can be modified."

The board reported: That the objections made to the bridge are as follows: The height under the lower arch is so small that a large proportion of the boats which will have occasion to pass under it must lower their smokestacks, or, all, or nearly all stages of the river, while many of the larger boats will not be able to pass under it during the higher stages, even with their smokestacks down.

The small height afforded is only available for a portion of the whole span, owing to the arch form of the lower part of the superstructure. Moreover, the difficulty of passing under the exact centre of the arch is very great, and, in windy weather, or with any considerable deviation to either side may bring the boat's upper works in contact with the bridge. The great difficulty is, not the height of the bridge, but the position of the piers, thereby preventing the ready transfer of freight from one boat to another, or its delivery and shipment at different parts of the river, without resorting to costly transfers by drays or barges. This, it is claimed, would practically cut the Mississippi river in two at this place.

The examination of appendices K and L will show that the first point is well sustained. The list of boats enumerated therein comprises only those which happened to be in port at the time the board was in session, or whose dimensions were ascertainable. It might have been increased considerably had time been available.

The apparently unreasonable height and size of the chimneys in general use on these steamboats are really essential to secure a good draft to the furnaces and economical combustion of fuel. Artificial means to produce the same end, are generally very expensive, and often ineffective.

Although it is a comparatively easy task to lower small chimneys, dealing with those of large size is a very serious matter indeed. Their weight is so utterly disproportionate to their strength, even when new, that no machinery yet devised will enable large chimneys to be lowered either wholly or in part, without very great labor and danger. The elevated position of the pilot house is necessary to enable the pilot to have an unobstructed view of the river ahead and astern of his boat. Experience has decided that the most desirable position is that which is now occupied. Even if such could be safely carried on a locomotive, it would be a source of great loss of power from the resistance of the air, and, therefore, the men who first made the locomotive engine were already located above. These could not safely be reached during high stages by the large boats navigating the lower river; and much inconvenience and expense would be entailed; but the board consider these interests in a measure local, and of

infinitely less importance than the national interests involved in the question. The government has expended, and is still expending, large sums of money in improving the navigation of the upper Mississippi, Missouri, Illinois, and other rivers, for the express purpose of allowing the largest steamers to navigate them. It would, therefore, seem entirely out of keeping with this general policy to allow, at the very threshold of these improvements, a structure which would practically debar a large proportion of existing steamboats from using them.

The board are, therefore, unanimously of opinion that the bridge, as at present designed, will prove a very serious obstruction to the free navigation of the Mississippi river.

Under these circumstances the board do not feel justified in recommending any change which would involve a complete remodeling of this magnificent structure, now so nearly completed. At the same time, they are of opinion that it is absolutely necessary that some provision should be made for allowing large boats to pass the bridge with safety whenever they find it necessary to do so.

They would, therefore, recommend, as the most feasible modification, a plan which has been already tried and found efficient at the railroad bridge over the Ohio river at Louisville, Kentucky.

Let a canal, or rather an open cut, be formed behind the east abutment of the bridge, giving at the abutment a clear width of fifty feet.

Let this opening be spanned by a drawbridge giving a clear span of 120 feet in width.

Let this plan boats as large as any now built would be able to get through this bridge in any weather and at any stage of water, and only at the cost of some little delay.

Of course our artist did not like the recommendation of the board any better than he likes jetties at South Pass. Of course he criticized the report of the board in his usual effective manner, and all the St. Louis newspapers cried "Bravo!" as they are in the habit of doing so at every exploit of this wonderful engineering genius. Such an outcry was made about the matter that our Great Father called on the board for an explanation, and got it in the shape of an able and thorough report, from which we extract as follows:

As the review of Mr. James B. Eads, chief engineer of the bridge company, one of the documents which have been referred to the board, they make the following reply to such portions of it as seem to require an answer.

Mr. Eads quotes from the report of the board: "The apparently unreasonable height and size of the chimneys in general use on these (Western river) steamboats are really essential to secure a good draft to the furnaces and economical combustion of fuel. Artificial means to produce the same end are generally very expensive and often ineffective."

He then goes on to state: "Nowhere has the economy of fuel been so successfully secured as in the construction of ocean steamers."

In this statement Mr. Eads is entirely in error. Economy in fuel has been chiefly secured by the use of large engines, especially those used for pumping. Here there is no limit to the size that can be given to the boilers, and by using very large evaporating surfaces and slow combustion great economy in fuel has been attained.

The mechanical effect due to the combustion of a pound of coal, generally expressed by the term "horse power," is the same, whether high in a minute, or alone considered in this case, the time required for combustion being immaterial.

It is from the cause the size of boiler is restricted, while the same amount of mechanical effect is required, it is manifest that the element of time must be considered.

To drive large ships at high rates of speed requires powerful engines and boilers, while the room allowed for the machinery is kept as small as possible. Marine boilers are steamers, and are generally of the compound type, and maintain a high rate of combustion.

In their construction efficiency in supplying heat with sufficient rapidity is the ruling consideration. Economy of fuel, while still of course important, must and does give way to it.

"Artificial means are seldom used on these boats to produce a draft, and the largest ones consume much more fuel per day than any Mississippi steamer, none of their chimneys approach the height of some of those of the West."

The statement that "the largest ones consume much more fuel per day than any Mississippi steamer," is certainly undeniable. As the engines of the larger ocean steamers work up to 600 or 700 horse power, while the largest ones on the Mississippi probably never run higher than 3000, it is not surprising that the fuel consumption per day is greater in the former case.

It is, however, Mr. Eads refers to the rate of combustion—that is, to the number of pounds of coal burned in a square foot of grate per hour—that he is again in error. On ocean steamers this rate is from six to ten to twenty-five pounds, while on Western river boats it runs from twenty to fifty pounds.

The next statement, that "none of their chimneys approach the height of some of those on the river," is specious and deceptive in its character.

Ferrous who judge the height of an ocean steamer's smokestacks from that proportion of them which they see projecting above the upper deck, may well infer that this height is the true height, and that the chimneys of some of our river boats.

But it must be borne in mind that on the ocean steamer the boilers and furnaces are located in the lower part of the hull, and a large portion of her chimneys are hidden by the hull, and the actual height, measured from the grates to the top of the chimneys, may be very respectable. Still this height is not the true height, and the chimneys should be authorized as they are built with draw.

A more objectionable form than the one adopted could scarcely have been devised.

Piers 500 feet apart are too wide to serve as guides.

breath of the machine, and without its help the locomotive engine, as we see it today, would be an utter impossibility.

It is a difficult and tedious matter to get up steam on a locomotive, and all round houses are provided with special means for temporarily lengthening out the chimney until the fire is got fairly burning. After steam is once raised the fire is kept up by a jet of live steam in the chimney when standing still, and by the direct blast of the exhaust steam when in motion.

So much for the facts which Mr. Eads asserts "completely disprove this first statement of the board."

Before leaving the subject the board wishes to state that the whole choice between natural and artificial draft is pretty much a matter of dollars and cents. To run on fan blowing machine uses up a portion of the available power; to use a steam blast reduces the power of the engine by back pressure on the pistons; the steam jet used in the chimney is the cheapest and most efficient method would naturally be adopted.

It should, however, be stated that while artificial means of producing draft involve a direct expenditure of power, a draft may be created by heat, which would otherwise go to waste. When this is the case, it is unquestionably the cheapest and best, and the only one which is given it by river men the board judge that the proper conditions for its economical use are obtained by them.

A very important argument in favor of tall chimneys is afforded by the fact that the sparks thrown out of a short chimney by a powerful draft are a very great source of danger to the boats. The chimneys, being bulky and highly combustible material, form a very important item of river freight. With a tall chimney the sparks are either extinguished before they reach the top or else are blown down by the wind.

The next question discussed by Mr. Eads is the practicability of raising or lowering large chimneys with facility and dispatch. He says that he has seen a chimney raised at an expense of from \$1000 to \$1500. This statement may or may not be correct, but there is no proof of it other than the statement that it has been done. It has been experienced steamboat captains, the apparatus recommended is not stated to be in use, and presumably has been invented by Mr. Eads or some friend of his. It must be noted that the board discount the statements of inventors.

The real difficulty is not in raising or lowering a new chimney at a wharf, but in handling the old one, and under the pressure of winds. When chimneys are raised on a steamboat under construction it is done at a favorable time, when there is no wind, and the chimney is raised by chain-gangs, but even this precaution does not prevent the chimney from being blown overboard. These chimneys, when cast off before the chimneys can be lowered, they are thus left unsupported, and would probably go overboard if not much better secured.

It is much better to use a crane on a boat arriving in windy weather, at a bridge which required her chimneys to be lowered, would either have to risk losing them overboard, or to have them blown away, and might thus be detained for days at a time.

The "thirteen experienced steambot captains" have no parallel at considerable length as river men who are in favor of the bridge.

The steambotmen who frequent this port, which is probably second only to New Orleans in the number of them, and whose bridge authorities have only been able to produce one steambotman, Captain Green, who is now in active service. His opinion is, of course, in favor of the bridge, and he knows that before the war the other river men left the river about the time of the war, or are now out of employment.

The value of the opinions of ex-river men is not only to be considered, when it is known that before the war the other river men left the river about the time of the war, or are now out of employment.

Let us thank the good chance that brings him at last to the mouth of the Mississippi, and thus assures us of a positive result in the way of improvement (!) there. Capitalists desirous of investing in the commerce of New Orleans please take notice.

How the Democratic Platform of 1872 Was Attached to the Civil Rights Bill.

Hon. John P. C. Shanks, of Indiana, placed the Democrats in Congress in a very embarrassing position during the discussion of the civil rights bill. He offered as an amendment and as a preamble to that bill a portion of the Democratic platform of 1872, which reads as follows:

Whereas, it is essential to just government we recognize the equality of men before the law, and hold that it is the duty of government in its dealings with the people to recognize and protect the rights of all, of whatever nativity, race, color or persuasion, religious or political; and it being the proper object of legislation to enact just and equal laws, and to see that they are enforced; Therefore, Be it enacted, etc.

This was a bitter pill for the Democrats to swallow. Mr. Nablock, of Indiana, declared that his party had been intimidated by the Cincinnati Convention at the time it adopted that platform. It was deemed almost too far fetched, however, to altogether "go back" on so recent a party enactment, and forty-two Democrats voted for the amendment and twenty-five against it. They finally consoled themselves for this wrench to their feelings by voting solidly against the bill which was to carry out the principles enunciated in that portion of their forgotten creed which had been prefixed to it.

General Butler.

The New York *World* recently contained the following kindly reference to General Butler. It is in marked contrast with the acrimonious tone which some so-called Republican papers indulge when speaking of the "member from Essex."

Though not a distinct or graceful speaker, the moment his voice is heard the House fills. So suddenly do the gentlemen come in that it is almost as if they were taking a note. He is familiar with every branch of light and solid literature, and his wife, who is a beautiful reader, reads to him a great deal. By the charm of his conversation and his perfect courtesy of manner he becomes almost handsome. He has always lived quietly, extending hospitality to a few favored friends, whose recollection of that home before the beautiful daughter left it is one of the most charming pictures in the world.

The Supreme Court Reports.

At the request of Charles Gayarre, Esq., reporter of the Supreme Court, we state that the delay in the publication of the Twenty-sixth Annual is from no fault of his. The State appropriation for the printing was put at a very low sum, and has been exhausted for some months. Hence the delay in issuing numbers from time to time, as has been customary. We learn the copy has all been prepared, and an work will be dispatched as soon as an appropriation is made for that purpose by the Legislature.

Thanks.

The Sisters of the Holy Cross tender their grateful thanks to the Euterpean Musical Society for the source given for the benefit of the orphans of the Asylum of the Immaculate Conception, mentioning particularly Miss L. Grunewald, Mr. Lewis Grunewald, Mr. Dinwiddie, Mr. F. Dudenhefer and Mr. J. Claverie, for services rendered.

THE LEGISLATURE YESTERDAY.

A communication was received from Governor Kollogg informing the Senate that the requirements of sections 1557 and 2611 of the Revised Statutes, which make it necessary for constitutional officers, heads of departments and directors, etc., of State institutions to make annual reports through the Governor, to the Legislature, had not been fully complied with. Reports have been received as follows:

From the Auditor of Public Accounts, State Treasurer, levee commission of engineers, wardens and lessees of the State Penitentiary, Louisiana State University, State Registrar of Voters, Adjutant General of the State militia, board of administrators of the Charity Hospital, Board of Metropolitan Police, Board of Control of the Louisiana Agricultural and Mechanical College. Also reports of the coroners of the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, East and West Feliciana, and a special report of the Board of Health.

A petition signed by J. C. Legare and others, tax-payers of the parish of Ascension, was received, asking that an appropriation of \$5000 be granted for the purpose of cleaning out, reopening and deepening Bayou McCall.

The report on Senate bill No. 57, an act to retrocede to the United States two acres of the swamp and overflowed lands, originally donated to the State of Louisiana, for every dollar appropriated by the United States to build and repair the public levees within the State, was called up by Senator Chabourn and adopted. The bill was then taken up, and, under a suspension of the rules, finally passed the Senate.

The Committee on Agriculture, Commerce and Manufactures, through its chairman, Senator Breaux, reported on the bill entitled an act to establish an insurance inspector department, to the effect that while they are satisfied that proper legislation on the subject should be had to provide safeguards to parties insuring, they are not certain that the method provided in the bill before the Senate would prove too onerous on the insurance companies to justify such advantage as might accrue to the business public by its enactment. Therefore the committee referred the bill back to the Senate without further comment, with the view of letting the body determine what should be done with it.

By unanimous consent the bill was taken up, and, on motion of Senator Stamps, was made the special order of the day for next Wednesday, immediately after the reading of the minutes, and ordered to be printed.

Senator Wharton introduced a bill to amend and re-enact sections two, six and fourteen of an act entitled an act to incorporate the town of Plaquemine, in the parish of Iberville. The bill, under a suspension of the rules, was read twice and referred to the Committee on Corporations and Parochial Affairs.

Senator Sypher introduced a bill to incorporate the town of Franklin, in the parish of St. Mary; to define its limits and provide for the government thereof, and to repeal all laws passed relative to said corporation. Under a suspension of the rules it was read twice and referred to the Committee on Corporations and Parochial Affairs.

Senator Blunt introduced a bill to amend and re-enact section 2024 of Ray's Revised Statutes of the State of Louisiana. It was, under a suspension of the rules, read twice and referred to the Judiciary Committee.

Senator Alexander introduced a bill for providing for the loss of the public records and other papers consumed by the burning of the courthouse in the parish of Grant in April A. D. 1873. Under a suspension of the rules the bill was read twice and referred to the Judiciary Committee.

Senator Anderson introduced a bill for the relief of Mrs. Hannah Chilton, widow of the late Professor R. H. Chilton. Under a suspension of the rules it was read twice and referred to the Finance Committee.

Senator Allain, by unanimous consent, called up House bill No. 37, an act to amend the third section of an act entitled an act to incorporate the town of St. Martinville, approved April 6, 1873. Under a suspension of the rules the bill finally passed the Senate.

Senator Brewster introduced a joint resolution indorsing the act granting aid for the construction of the Texas Pacific railroad and the Louisiana branches thereof, and petitioning the Congress of the United States to pass the said act. The joint resolution, under a suspension of the rules, was read twice and referred to the Committee on Railroads.

Senator Allain called up the bill to repeal act No. 46 of the session of 1874, entitled "an act incorporating the New Orleans Sanitary and Excavating Company in the city of New Orleans, and granting rights and privileges thereto," approved March 11, 1874. Under a suspension of the rules the bill finally passed the Senate.

Senator Burch called up Senate bill No. 34, an act to re-organize and render more efficient the Board of Health of the State of Louisiana, and on motion the bill was made the special order of the day for next Tuesday at one o'clock.

The bill to provide for the taking of the State census then came up as the regular order of the day. The first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth sections were read, amended and adopted. The seventh section was under consideration when the Senate, on motion, went into executive session. After executive session, on motion of Senator Brewster the further consideration of the census bill was postponed until next Tuesday at one o'clock, when it is to be taken up as the special order of the day.

Senator Sypher introduced the following resolution: WHEREAS, Grave charges are made against the Senator from Concordia parish (in relation to the school funds); and Whereas, it is incompatible with the dignity of this Senate to pass such matters, affecting the standing of its members, without notice; therefore be it

Resolved, That the President of the Senate appoint a committee of three to investigate said charges, and report the result of their findings to this Senate, with such recommendations as they may deem proper, and the committee are authorized to send for persons and papers and administer oaths.

The resolution was ordered to lie over under the rule, but on motion of Senator Young (the member from Concordia) unanimous consent was obtained to take up the

BY TELEGRAPH.

DEMOCRATIC UNEASINESS

THEIR POLICY OF DELAY

PINCHBACK TO BE SEATED MONDAY

Determination of the House Republican Caucus.

Speaker Blaine Admits the Necessity of Radical Action.

REPUBLICANS UNITED AND HARMONIOUS

PROBABLE FIZZLE OF THE JETTY SCHEME

(Special to the New Orleans Republican.)

WASHINGTON, February 13, 1875.

In order not to antagonize the pending bill creating the new government of the District of Columbia, Senator Morton consented to postpone his resolution admitting Pinchback until Monday, when it will be, after discussion, decided in favor of the admission of Pinchback. A majority of the Senate are known to be in favor of his admission. Democratic leaders here are becoming terribly alarmed at the determination of the Republican majority in Congress and the administration to protect life and property in the reconstructed States. They have telegraphed for Governor Hendricks, George H. Pendleton and others to come here and consult as to the propriety of defeating the appropriation bill so as to force an extra session of Congress and thus defeat the Republican plan for settling existing troubles.

The House Republican caucus decided to support the bill reviving the habeas corpus act of 1865. Speaker Blaine, who has been rather conservative, heretofore, now admits the necessity of radical action. Large numbers of prominent Republicans are here from all parts of the Union, and all are unanimous in support of the administration and the Republican majority in Congress. The party was never more harmonious than now.

Although the Committee on Railways and Canals in the House has decided to accept the recommendations of the engineer commission for the improvement of the mouth of the Mississippi, the measure will not receive the support of the members from the Western States, generally.

CONGRESS.

House.

WASHINGTON, February 13.—The bills for the relief of certain loyal creditors, whose money were confiscated by the Confederate Congress, in Louisiana, and making compensation for supplies taken by the Union military forces during Morgan's raid, which bills were favorably reported yesterday from the committee of the whole, were both defeated in the House today.

A bill to equalize bounties, allowing \$8 3/4 for every month's service, was then discussed and passed by a vote of 177 yeas to 39 nays.

Senate.

Mr. Eaton, who succeeds the late Senator Buckleham, from Connecticut, took his seat today. He was greeted with great cordiality, especially by the Democrats. He took a seat between Senators Davis and Gordon on the Democratic side.

Mr. Goldthwaite, of Alabama, presented the petitions of John A. Brown and P. M. Murphy, of Alabama, for the removal of the name of Brown from the committee referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. Dorsey, of Arkansas, introduced a bill authorizing the admission, free of duty, of the diamond necklace presented by the lady of the late Governor to the committee on Appropriations.

Mr. Sargent, of California, presented the memorial of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, requesting against the repeal of the act granting a subsidy to that company. Referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

The bill to provide a government for the District of Columbia was discussed. The balance of the day, but no definite vote was reached. The probabilities are it will not be called up again this session.

Mr. Morton gave notice that he would call up the resolution for the admission of Pinchback on Monday.

WASHINGTON.

The New Bounty Bill.

WASHINGTON, February 13.—The bounty bill which passed the House represents not more than one hundred nor less than thirty millions of dollars.

The Committee Arrived.

The Louisiana committee has arrived. Samuel Hooper is dead.

Tariff and Bounty Bills.

The tariff and bounty bills are not considered entirely safe. The bounty bill, which draws as much or more from the treasury than the tariff bill brings in, took precedence over it in the House today.

Personal.

Colonel Frank Zacharia, Hon. E. A. Burke and Counselor E. C. Billings are here. Packard's party will arrive in the morning.

NEW YORK.

Healthy Competition Forces the Western Union Line to Reduce its Rates.

NEW YORK, February 13.—The director of the Western Union Telegraph Company today resolved upon a material reduction of rates on commercial business.

Bank Statement.

The bank statement shows: Loans increased \$2,000,000; specie increased \$750,000; legal tenders decreased \$625,000; deposits increased a trifle; reserves decreased \$7,000.

Sub-Treasury.

Sub-treasury balances—Gold \$44,573,188 currency \$19,431,323.

The sub-treasury paid out \$78,000 on account of interest and \$185,000 for bonds. Customs receipts \$387,000.

The Ice Blockade in New York Harbor.

The Sandy Hook pilot officer reports the bay worse than ever. Tugs which went down yesterday refuse to return until daylight. There is a little call for out-going vessels, none of which can move without steam assistance. The ice is not sufficiently heavy to interfere with ocean steamers.

FOREIGN.

Bazaine's Rough Reception.

BAZAINNE, February 13.—Ex-Marshal Bazaine arrived at Santander, yesterday. The French residents of the town, having asked for and obtained permission of the authorities to serenade him, used the opportunity to hiss him and indulge in insulting cries. The crowd was dispersed by the police.

In the French Assembly.

PARIS, February 13.—In the Assembly M. Brisson, of the extreme left, declared that the

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