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BY TELEGRAPH.

TILDEN'S NOBLE STAND.

He Denies Knowing Anything of the Oregon Manœuvres.

Effect of Donn Piatt's Arrest.

Kellogg and Pitkin Deny the Soft Impeachment.

[Special to N. O. Democrat.]

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22.—Mr. Tilden has sent a salty telegram to Senator Kernan, totally repudiating the agreement said to have been made by his friends with the Republican managers not to examine into their respective bank accounts during the campaign.

He challenges examination of his own, and says that he shall not be made a party to any agreement by which others may escape, under cover of implied suspicion cast upon him. His action has a good effect. In the course of his telegram Mr. Tilden states that he knows nothing about

The Oregon Maneuvers,

which information I had from private sources and telegraphed you two days ago.

The arrest of Donn Piatt is looked upon as a huge farce and subjects Grandmother Taft to great ridicule; the friends of Hayes are indignant that such action should have been taken against the press, and say that as soon as he is inducted into office he will speedily put an end to this foolish business.

Burke and Cavanac are proceeding with the examination of the returns from the twenty-two parishes; the returns themselves bear sufficient evidence of fraud to vitiate the action of the board so far as

The State Government

is concerned, though, of course, the national result cannot be affected unless proceedings are entertained by the Supreme Court in *quo warranto*.

Its expected decision will be reached in the Oregon case to-day or to-morrow. Nobody expects that it will be anything else than partisan, as all the preceding decisions have been.

Pitkin, in a card to the Cincinnati *Commercial*, denies that he and Kellogg arranged the Packard assassination programme. Nobody to my knowledge directly charged any such thing. I drew such an inference from the fact that they waited for telegrams on the day of the assassination, and as soon as the news came they rushed to the *Star* office to get it published, and then to the White House to get Packard recognized on the strength of it, and the well known character of Pitkin and Kellogg for trickery gave strong circumstantial corroboration to that theory. BUELL.

THE COMMISSION.

The Oregon Case Under Discussion—Evidence to be Admitted.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22.—Stanley Matthews opened in the Tribunal on the Oregon case; Evarts followed, and Merrick will close at half-past 2 o'clock, when the Commission will close the case.

The public take little interest in the case, as it is generally considered prejudged, but the hall is crowded with lawyers hearing the argument, which is purely legal.

On motion of Justice Strong, certain evidence is received subject to the decision of the Commission, after argument upon its original reception and legal weight. There was no objection. The object of this motion, Justice Strong stated, was to consolidate the argument.

The evidence offered so far is documentary, relating to Watts' resignation and its acceptance. The bearing of the evidence has not yet developed. Two objections by Democratic counsel have been overruled, one unanimously, the other with one dissent.

CONGRESS.

The Senate.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22.—The Senate, during the morning hour, briefly discussed the bill amending the act granting the right of way through the public lands to the Jacksonville and St. Augustine Railroad Company, and it was then laid over until to-morrow.

The Committees.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22.—The Committee on Election of the House has allowed contestants their expenses as shown by affidavits and vouchers.

The committees are doing nothing.

The House is in Committee of the Whole on the sundry civil appropriation bill.

BUBBLE COMPANIES.

The Officers of the New Jersey Mutual Life Insurance Company to be Prosecuted.

NEW YORK, Feb. 22.—The New Jersey Secretary of State has instituted criminal proceedings against J. H. Steedwell, President of the defunct New Jersey Mutual Life Insurance Company of Newark, and Benj. Noyes, President of the National Capital Life Insurance Company, to whom Steedwell transferred all the assets of the Newark company.

The ground of the proceding is for conspiracy to defraud the policy holders, and Steedwell is to be held also for perjury in having sworn falsely in his annual statement of the condition of his company, filed in the Secretary of State's office.

Fire at Pass Christian.

PASS CHRISTIAN, Feb. 22.—Pass Christian was visited by a fire last night, which destroyed the Catholic Church, office and residence of W. A. Champlin, the *Sea Coast Mirror* office, two stores belonging to Geo. Brandt, property belonging to Mrs. Taylor, known as Malone's Saloon, Pleantet's store, and an unoccupied residence belonging to Mrs. E. C. Tracy. No insurance.

Dead.

NEW HAVEN, Feb. 22.—Major Gen. A. E. Eaton is dead.

Failed.

NEW YORK, Feb. 22.—S. Jacoby & Co., cigar manufacturers, have failed. Liabilities $150,000.

FOREIGN.

THE EAST.

War Considered Certain.

LONDON, Feb. 22.—The correspondent of the *Daily News* telegraphs from Pesth: If the accounts which I hear are true, that the majority of the officers of the army on the Pruth have engaged quarters at Jassy, war cannot longer be averted.

War Prospects.

LONDON, Feb. 22.—Russian war preparations continue.

Montenegrin envoys have embarked for Constantinople.

THE PAPACY.

Questions to be Submitted to the Vatican Council.

ROME, Feb. 22.—In consequence of the decision of the Cardinals that a reassembling of the Vatican Council would be inopportune, the Pope has distributed to them the questions left unsolved by the previous meeting of the Council, with the view of determining whether he cannot solve by his own authority.

The Finances of Austria and Hungary.

VIENNA, Feb. 22.—Austria and Hungary have finally arranged the bank question.

A. N. V.

Annual Reunion of the Boys in Gray.

Last night the second annual reunion of the Association of the Army of Northern Virginia took place at Grunewald Hall. The attendance was a very large one and comprised the representatives of nearly every regiment from Louisiana which participated in the late struggle between the banks of the Potomac and the Chickahominy.

Several distinguished visitors were expected, among them Gov. Nicholls and Gen. Jubal Early, but, we regret to say, did not come.

After the usual greetings among the boys, many of whom are scattered over the State, and who had not met for several years in some cases, the company sat down to a choice banquet in the supper room of the hall, which had been elegantly decorated for the occasion. A splendid band of music was in attendance and discoursed sweet music, whilst the company discussed the excellent feast and sipped the choice wines laid before them.

A gayer and jollier set than the two hundred veterans of an hundred battles who had congregated simply to revive old and dear memories, it never has been our pleasure to contemplate.

The inner man having been sufficiently comforted, First Vice President J. B. Richards called the assemblage to order, and proposed the first toast—"The Association of the Army of Northern Virginia"—which was greeted with a thunder of applause. In succession, "Geo. Washington and the day we celebrate," "Robert E. Lee," "Stonewall Jackson," "And the Boys we left behind us," were drunk standing and in silence.

Next came the "Army and Navy of the United States," and "Gen. Augur," each being prefaced by some happy remarks. "The Press" came next in turn and was responded to by Mr. John Weichardt, of the *German Gazette*, who offered "The Army of Northern Virginia."

The health of Major Ed. Willett, ex-president of the association, now a resident of New York, was proposed and received with the wildest shouts of enthusiasm. Col. Richards, at this juncture, read a letter from Major Willett to one of the members of the association, in which he thanked the association for the title of honorary president conferred upon him, and urging the boys not to forget the great object they had in view—of erecting a mausoleum and a monument in memory of their fallen comrades in the army.

The following dispatch was also received from Major Willett during the progress of the banquet:

"NEW YORK, Feb. 22, 1877.

"Officers and members of the Louisiana Division A. N. V.:

"Heartfelt thanks for the honor conferred. I am with you all to-night.

"E. D. WILLETT."

Several of the gentlemen present now being called upon, indulged in short and pointed speeches. Among them Col. Wm. Miller Owen and Col. J. B. Walton, of the Washington Artillery, and Capt. Landry, of the Donaldsonville Artillery, all of which were highly appreciated and enthusiastically cheered.

The pleasant reunion now broke up, and the members of the association, preceded by their band, paid their usual visits to their friends, treating them to delightful serenades.

Theory and Practice.

[Punch.]

Aunt Mary—"Why don't you read, Tom, instead of lolling about?"

Tom—"Got nothing to read."

Aunt Mary—"There's your first prize in Monsieur Jolivet's French class—a most delightful book!"

Tom—How can I read that? It's in French."

OREGON.

A Strong Impression Produced by Mr. Merrick's Argument.

The Tribunal Has to Adjourn, in Order to Let Bradley Brace Up for an 8 to 7 Decision.

[Special to N. O. Democrat.]

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22.—It was the intention of the Tribunal to have pushed the Oregon case to a decision to-night, but, at the close of the argument, they concluded to adjourn to enable Bradley to brace up. Hoadley and Merrick had made the case so hot that Bradley's knees got weak, and it was deemed best, by the other Radicals on the Tribunal, to give Mrs. Bradley an opportunity to "whoop" the old man up to the usual eight to seven, as she has done all the way through.

Merrick traced the logic of the Florida and Louisiana decisions down to the fine legal point that the Tribunal had established the rule that its jurisdiction ended at the first contact with the great seal of the State, subject to inquiry as to whether the executive action, which the great seal indicates, certified the choice of eligible electors *prima facie*; but it was further shown that the *prima facie* evidence admissable stopped also with the papers covered by the great seal—that is to say, the Tribunal could declare an elector ineligible who had been commissioned by the Governor, and thus throw out his vote, but could not declare one elected who had not been so commissioned. Thus, no matter what may have been the popular vote, the Tribunal's power ended with throwing out the vote of an ineligible elector. From this point, Merrick reasoned that the utmost the Tribunal could do, under its own rules, would be to throw out the vote of Cronin; and, that it could not count the vote of Watts. He said that the Tribunal must respect its own rules; it had already ruled itself out of all power to count electoral votes not covered by the great seal of the State, and had retained only the power to amend votes which were so covered. To throw out the vote of Cronin would be in the line of previous decisions of the Tribunal, but to count that of Watts, who had not been commissioned at all, would be nothing less than a reversal by the Tribunal of its own rulings; and thus that body would incur the contempt of every legal mind in the civilized world.

This reasoning struck Bradley amidships, and hence the adjournment. But there is a small hole left to crawl out of. The decisions in the cases of Florida and Louisiana were based upon State laws, but there is a United States statute which John Adams availed himself of in 1793, under which it is competent to inquire whether or not the great seal of the State properly certified the expressed will of the people of the State; that is to say, the eight Radicals having counted Louisiana and Florida for Hayes, under State law, and in defiance of the United States law alluded to above, now propose to count Oregon for Hayes under the United States statute and in defiance of the State laws. BUELL.

SUICIDE.

Attempted Self-Destruction of an Alleged Murderer in Cincinnati.

[Special to N. Y. Herald.]

CINCINNATI, Feb. 18.—The attempted suicide of the young man named Abe Rothschild, which occurred in this city yesterday, has developed one of the most curious cases on record of unexplained crime and the effects of remorse and a guilty conscience following a man and driving him to self-destruction.

DETAILS OF THE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE.

Rothschild, whose business is that of a wholesale dealer in men's furnishing goods, and who spends a good part of his time in traveling for the purpose of soliciting orders, was found on the steps of a club house adjoining the *Enquirer* office with a pistol shot in his head. When the discharge of the firearms was first heard some persons hurried to the spot, but found no one except the wounded man lying their and the street nearly deserted. At that hour, two in the morning, the street echoed no flying footsteps of an assassin. More than this, a revolver, with one empty chamber, by his side, suggested the fact that he had attempted to take his own life. He was taken to the Burnet House, where he boards when in the city, and afterward to his father's home on West Fifth street, where he now remains in a critical condition, with a policeman watching him to prevent his removal.

A STORY OF CRIME.

Some time last summer Rothschild came from New Orleans, bringing with him a handsome black-eyed young woman, glittering with diamonds, whom he called Narcissa Moore, and who, he said, was his mistress. After remaining several months they started back to the South together, and nothing more was thought or heard of her until his return a few days since, when he said he had left her at New Orleans. About the 20th of January a story was telegraphed from Jefferson, Texas, giving account of the finding of the body of the young woman near the town, who had been killed and her body hidden away in brushwood. Further particulars of that story, copied from a Texas paper, were published here two or three days ago, coupled with a hint that it was supposed she at one time resided in Cincinnati. To-day the Chief of Police in this city received from Jefferson, Texas, a photograph of the deceased woman, together with a printed description of her clothing, and the appearance of the man who had come with her, which corresponds closely with Rothschild's. Besides this was a letter signed by J. M. Thomas, Chief of Police of Jefferson, Texas, saying that the couple had visited Marshall, Texas, a few weeks before, where he registered as "A. Rothschild and wife, Cincinnati," though his signature on the hotel register at Jefferson was "A. Monroe and wife, St. Louis." A comparison of the writing of the two names, both being photographed, shows them to be in the same hand. Rothschild was known in Marshall, where he had been frequently before, and the theory is that he registered under his true name there, though he changed it when he went to Jefferson.

ARREST OF THE CRIMINAL.

Rothschild, though still unconscious, was arrested yesterday, charged with the murder of the woman, and the evidence, although all circumstantial, points very strongly to his guilt. He has lived here all his life, and, although he led a fast life, has never before been charged with crime. The theory given for his attempt at suicide is that he was driven to it by pangs of remorse.

A GREAT PUBLIC DUTY.

Editor Democrat—A decision in favor of Hayes by the Joint Commission in Washington being a foregone conclusion, it is to our State government alone that we must now look for any alleviation of our sorrows and sufferings. The peculiar and unprecedented circumstances under which Hayes will assume his honors, if honors they be, render it not at all unlikely that he will consider the wishes of the people of Louisiana in respect to his recognition of the State Executive.

He cannot afford to repeat the blunders of his predecessor in the application of the reconstruction laws, and still less can he carry the load of disreputable carpet-baggers that now afflict the South.

Laboring under the imputation of being *particeps criminis* in the presidential fraud, with only a small party majority in the Senate and with an opposition majority in the lower House, President Hayes as a matter of necessity must adopt a policy of pacification, *if possible*.

That this policy will be vigorously and bitterly opposed by Morton, Blaine and other extremists of the Radical party, there is no question. It is for us to assist the President in resisting this pressure. It is for us to furnish the justification for his rupture with these pernicious advisers and enable him, by the recognition of Nicholls, to pacify Louisiana. How, then, is this to be accomplished?

If it be made manifest that Packard is utterly without the support of the people, and relies alone upon the Federal government for official existence; if it be made manifest that Nicholls has the confidence, sympathy and support of all good Louisianians, then can President Hayes, without danger to himself, by an act of simple justice, repair in great measure the many wrongs inflicted upon us by the party to which he belongs.

This support of Nicholls must be made manifest. That it is general and sincere must be made apparent. Acts, not professions, must be the proofs.

While it is the paramount duty of each citizen in his individual capacity to accord an active, energetic and substantial support to the Nicholls' government, still more important is it that our city government, representing, as it does, the great commercial heart and centre of our State, should by every means at its command conduce to that end.

Having recognized the Nicholls government by resolution, let all its official acts be strictly in accordance with that manly declaration. Ignoring completely the pretensions of Packard, let it acknowledge in all their force and application the rights and claims of the Nicholls officials. Our people ask no more and will be satisfied with no less.

The effect of the non-payment of court officials and the scarcely appreciable value of the Nicholls police scrip are significant of the great weight of the city government in our present complications.

By vigorous, decided and harmonious action we can secure Nicholls; without it, four years of anarchy and misrule will result. Can we then hesitate as to our course?

Whatever fate may have in store for us, it is to be hoped that in all time to come no citizen can be reproached with having failed in duty or patriotism in this our great hour of need.

CITIZEN.

A CORRECTION.

NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 22, 1877.

Editor Democrat—I was almost paralyzed this morning in finding my name associated with such pusillanimous scoundrels as make up the force in "Steal Big Packard's" pest-house. I thought I was sufficiently known in this community that a live journal like the DEMOCRAT would not be guilty of placing my name so conspicuously in the midst of a nest of unprincipled villains. I trust you will recognize my feelings in this matter and make proper correction. Yours, very truly,

H. T. LAWLER.

Commissioned by Gov. Nicholls.

Commissions are being issued every day by Gov. Nicholls, principally to Republicans, who, up to this time, have declined to accept them.

Henry O. Maher, Parish Judge; L. E. Bentley, Clerk of the District Court; W. W. Buford, Recorder; and Peter A. Jones, Sheriff, all of Ascension parish.

A. B. Broughton, Parish Judge; Geo. Campbell and R. S. Jones, Justices of the Peace, of Red River parish; all elected on the Republican ticket on the 7th day of November, 1876, have accepted commissions from Gov. Francis T. Nicholls, and have filed their oaths of office with the Hon. W. A. Strong, Secretary of State.

To-day, Friday, special sale of remnants of all kinds of goods at less than half price. M. L. Byrne & Co., 163 Canal street.

Secure your seats for Miss Emmie Wilmot's concert to-night.

THE OTHER SIDE.

THE LEGISLATURE AND THE LEVEE COMPANY.

The Poor Eels to be Skinned Again.

Editor Democrat—The public are greatly surprised at the report of the committee of the Legislature on the matter of the Levee Company, published by you this week.

The legislative committee who report on the matter of the Levee Company recommend:

"1. That the contract with the Levee Company be annulled, and that a board of liquidation be appointed for the settlement of their affairs, and means be provided to pay the indebtedness of the State.

"2. For such protection in future from overflow as we are able to achieve, to provide that the State be divided into districts, each district to be in charge of a competent engineer, etc."

But before this the committee undertake to enlighten the community as to the origin and progress of the Louisiana Levee Company. They tell us that the company was originally organized under the general law of the State, Feb. 11, 1871, and that a contract was entered into with the State for the maintenance of the levees, by act No. 4 of the Legislature of 1871, and that this act was amended by act No. 43, March 6, 1873. Then they give us, "in brief," the terms of this latter contract.

This is, so far, an utterly incorrect statement of the case; I propose to make it a little clearer for your readers.

A parcel of unprincipled and speculative scamps did, in 1871, organize the Louisiana Levee Company, and they did subsequently enter into a so-called contract with Warmoth's Legislature, under act No. 4, of 1871. This act is signed by Geo. W. Carter, Speaker of the House, Oscar J. Dunn, Lieutenant Governor, etc., and H. C. Warmoth, Governor.

What are some of the more prominent objectionable features of this contract?

First—That the company was "vested with the sole and exclusive custody, management and control of the levees of this State for the period of twenty-one years."

Second—That a special tax of two-tenths of one per cent "on the assessed value of the taxable property within the State" was to be collected from the people and handed over to this company.

3. "That said company shall have full right, power and authority to mortgage said funds, etc.," being the property of the people.

4. That the said tax being not immediately collectible, and this set of vampires having no money with which to begin work, "the Governor of the State is hereby authorized and required to issue the bonds of the State to this company to the amount of one million of dollars."

5. "*That no person shall enjoin the collection of said taxes, or any part thereof, or the payment of said funds, or any part thereof, unless he shall present to the judge to whom he shall apply for such injunction, together with the petition, duly verified according to law, his obligation in favor of the Louisiana Levee Company in double the amount of the sum of the tax, or of the payment of said fund which he seeks to enjoin, with the surety of two solvent persons, who shall be freeholders, and who shall reside within the jurisdiction of the court; that on the trial of said injunction the sureties on the bond shall be considered as parties plaintiff; and in case the injunction be dismissed, the court shall, in the same judgment, condemn the plaintiff and sureties, jointly and severally, to pay to said company twice the amount of the tax or funds enjoined as damages; and the sureties in such cases shall not be allowed to avail themselves of the plea of discussion.*"—See Acts of Louisiana for 1871.

Was there a single redeeming feature in this infamous act or (so-called) contract? Yes, as follows:

"That on and after the completion of any and all sections of said levees, said company shall maintain the same up to the standard dimensions required by the report of said commission, and in the event of said corporation failing or neglecting to do so, it shall be liable in damages to any person or persons injured by reason of said neglect or failure."

We call this a redeeming feature. In dealing with any honorable and responsible company it would be so considered. So far as the men who formed the original company are concerned, nobody ever dreamed that it would be operative in case of their failure or neglect.

As these original contractors first put their bill before Warmoth's Legislature it contained even the appalling clause of a specific tax to be levied by them on the sugar, molasses, rice, cotton, etc., grown by the planter. There was, of course, an universal expression of horror and indignation in regard to the whole thing, and the levying of this specific tax was shown to be so flagrantly violative of all fundamental law and right that a modification was made, and act No. 4 stands as the record.

But the expression of public condemnation of this act No. 4 was not confined to the streets; it took form in the calling of a meeting of planters at Parlor P, St. Charles Hotel, to which we were invited. The presiding officer of that meeting was a large sugar planter of this State (we understand he has since been a prominent stockholder in the present company), and one of the most active men in the proceedings has been and is a prominent manager of the existing company. Words were not minced at the meeting; any and all schemes for the conduct of the levees by companies were denounced, and there was not a dissenting voice.

And now we come to the third act in the play of levee companies versus the pockets of the people.

The original company did nothing, of course, and one day it was announced that they had sold out their franchises to a company of "our best citizens"—men "largely interested in the welfare of Louisiana," or, as our legislative committee handsomely put it, "who are, for the most part, gentlemen largely interested in the maintenance of levees in the State." Naturally, other people interested in the levees began to inquire who these patriotic individuals were, when, lo! it was found that some of the very men who led the meeting of denunciation in Parlor P, St. Charles Hotel (among them the chairman of that meeting), were stockholders. They looked again, and they saw that a famous whisky operator (since convicted of fraud on the revenues) was president of the company.

And now for act four in the play of patriotism versus pockets.

Turning to acts of Louisiana for 1874, we find an act, No. 56, signed by Lowell, Antoine and Kellogg, in their respective official capacities, *wherein this patriotic company of "our best citizens" are relieved from all penalties for damages accruing to the people from the failure of the company to prevent overflow of their lands, in consideration of the magnanimous act on their part of consenting to the reduction of the tax from four to three mills!*

Let us analyze matters as far as we have gone.

Under the infamous regime of Warmoth, when his Legislature notoriously sat with palms open to the purchase of every adventurer and scoundrel in the land, one of the most iniquitous laws—a law even denying the citizens of the State the privilege of contesting its validity under severe penalty—was passed, which openly robbed the people. Not an honest man could be found who had read it or heard its features cited without condemning it. It was condemned as both flagrantly oppressive and utterly violative of the organic law of the State. Shocked by the enormity of the law, and faintly hoping that the protest of those threatened to be robbed might possibly avail somewhat, the meeting in parlor P was called. There honest indignation at least had free expression, and in that room there could have been found not one man who would have dared to brave the loathing and contempt of his fellows by saying one word in favor of the law. There was not one word said other than denunciatory at the meeting.

But the ordinary sense of honesty and justice, on the part of the people has had no time to be even lulled from the shock when there comes the public announcement that the franchises of the original Levee Company have passed by purchase from the hands of the villains who bought them of a Legislature into the hands of some of "our best citizens," among whom are some of the most prominent and active of the men who organized the indignation meeting at Parlor P.

What had these men bought? *Nothing less than that which some of themselves had openly denounced as an infamous swindle; nothing less than the base privilege to tax their fellow men two and three times as much for building their levees as an honest man or honest government could have done it for; nothing less than the privilege of robbing an already impoverished and oppressed people, under the specious garb of corporate powers vested in "gentlemen largely interested in the maintenance of levees in the State."*

Was the appetite of these latter-day saints satisfied here? Was the original contract good enough for them? Did it offer ordinary safety to their patriotic efforts?

No, no, no; there was a dangerous clause in that contract. As long as the courts were infamous, of course they could save themselves in any suit for damages, however justly put against them. But the courts might some day become pure, and then there would stand the penalty section against them. What do they do? Abide by their contract with the State? No; they sneak into the infamous legislative mart of Kellogg & Co.—an usurpatory mart at that—and have the penalty clause of their contract expunged by legislative enactment, granting to the taxpayers in consideration therefor, relief from levee taxation to the enormous amount of *one mill on the dollar!* The levee contract, as originally made with a set of men whom our present legislative committee brand as "persons not identified with the interests of the State," and whose "object seems to have been one of speculation simply," did contain a clause which gave it at least the decent semblance of fairness; the "gentlemen largely interested in the maintenance of levees in the State" bought out the franchises of the *speculators*, and at once sought the abrogation of all liability on their part to those whose money they exacted through the medium of a Legislature in no wise representing the people taxed!

The present Levee company undertook one of the most gigantic works of the age—the rebuilding, repairing and maintenance of the levees from Arkansas to the Gulf. What were their resources? Or, in other words, what guaranty had the property holders of their ability to fulfill the contract? Nothing beyond the paltry sum of $400,000, which they say they have contributed from their own pockets, and the power to extort from an impoverished people three times as much for constructing levees as it could legitimately be done for. What has been the result? Nothing less than absolute failure and the infliction of the loss of untold thousands upon their taxed victims. The waters of the Mississippi lie stagnant around the desolated houses of the honest and thrifty toilers of the land; women and children want even bread and clothing; while the levee company, "who are for the most part gentlemen largely interested in the maintenance of levees of the State," (and whose every interest is protected), and who are, under every principle of ordinary law and justice, responsible for their wretched condition, stand at the doors of the legislative halls asking relief from their contract and indemnity for alleged loss!

Had these men gone into a contract with the State with four or five millions of dollars at their command—money enough to put the levees at once in perfect condition—waiting on the taxation of twenty-one years for their immense profits, while we could not have sanctioned the still vicious features of the contract, there would still have been for the people something of a *quid pro quo*. As it is, they entered on the levee building business as regular stock gamblers as ever graced or disgraced Wall street. They put up a paltry "margin" against the Mississippi river; regular "bears," they "margined" against his rising high enough to break the levees, and in favor of their having time to do all necessary work with the people's money paid therefor; but, as has happened to "bears" before, they miscalculated and their "margin" has been swept away.

Our legislative committee make a concise report of the financial condition of this company, and they show that "under the most favorable circumstances" there is a balance against the State "of about $450,000, which, at the end of twenty-one years, would amount to $1,890,000." And this financial exhibit is followed by the extraordinary compliment to the effect that "the large amount of work done and the commendable energy shown by the Levee Company should entitle them to the thanks of all their fellow-citizens"! And just after this comes the announcement that "the condition of the levees is rather retrograding than improving."

Thanks for what? For doing a large amount of work with the acknowledged sum of $2,299,250 added to the $400,000 which the company claim to have put in, or nearly $3,000,000 in all? Ought not a large amount of work to be done with so large an amount of money? And would not the amount of work done have been infinitely greater had the money of the people been honestly expended in doing the work at reasonable rates?

The Legislative Committee seem to have given but narrow range to their investigation, viz: the financial condition of the company and the question of its relief from its existing contract. But in considering these points it seems to us that they should inevitably have been led into an exhaustive consideration of the origin and progress, as well as the existing condition, of this company. This faithfully done, and we cannot imagine any other result than the recommendation that, as the company has no foundation in those great underlying principles without which society must retrograde—viz: pure organic law, truth and justice—the infamous law creating it be repealed and itself be required to go to the courts and establish any just claims on the pockets of the people. The committee say that the first company had no other than speculative views, yet they compliment, and ask the people to thank, this present company, who bought up that contract from a set of unprincipled adventurers, and then went into a venal and usurpatory legislature, representing none of the people taxed for levee-building, and had the only binding clause on themselves eliminated from the law which gave them existence. Can self-stultification go farther?

But is it necessary to go farther than to say that this company is founded in damnable wrong and that it has utterly failed in its obligations to the people? To argue that they have failed for want of means is to openly confess themselves a fraud on an oppressed people. They came into possession of their franchises with a grand flourish of trumpets that especially and loudly sounded the notes of respectability and pecuniary responsibility. Granting the first for the sake of argument, the second having utterly and promptly "played out," it, like any other fine word, can butter no parsnips. Honesty and money will beat respectability any day at building levees.

The writer of this has to keep up a long river front; he has had every year to repair the levees there, as well as to largely assist his neighbors for miles up and down the river, neglecting the crops in tilling season, and annually paying the full tax in for the benefit of the Levee Company; but not one cent of assistance has this company ever rendered. And this is the experience of the planter from Arkansas to the Gulf.

We have sat down to the unpleasant task of arraigning this gigantic monopoly and parasite on legitimate and honest toil, simply to direct the public, as well as the legislative eye, to it as it is. We have lived long enough in this world to know that there is little to be hoped for by the people from Legislatures when it comes to a struggle between them and corporate monopolies. In the first place, the Legislature, which is supposed by the people to represent their interests *alone*, hesitates not to fix upon them the parasitic corporation; and then every subsequent Legislature, even though reformation of the wrong may be the shibboleth through which each member takes his seat, will foster the evil under the plea of "vested rights." Rotten and venal corporations can buy vested rights of the so-called representatives of the people, but the people themselves have no vested rights! This is the theory of the average legislator. The Levee Company can break its contract; can utterly fail in its obligations; can forfeit its charter in thus failing, and utter misery ensue to the taxed landholder. The Legislature offers no possible relief to the latter, but enthusiastically wraps its protecting arms around the "vested rights" of the former.

The people of Louisiana are still hoarse with clamoring for reform of the abuses that are upon them. Will they get it? Yes, in the way of cutting down the salary of a constable, but not in the removal of a single parasitic and consuming corporate monopoly. The standard of duty to the State, to the people as a whole, is too low; the influence of the professional monopolist is too great. BRUTUS.