

The Sumter Watchman.

VOL. XXII

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DEVOTED TO LITERATURE, MORALITY AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

Times: Danes St. Douc. Forwards, -Viz.

PLOUGHING BY STEAM.

HORACE GREELEY LEARNS A

THING OR TWO IN LOUISIANA.

What is the Son of the Practical Opera-

tion of the Steam plough on a Sugar

Plantation—An Energetic Planter—

The Force required to run the Plough—

Cultivating the Cane by Steam—Mr.

Greeley's Conclusions.

Mr. Greeley writes to the New York

Tribune from New Orleans, under date

of May 17th:

On our way down through Mississippi,

we made the acquaintance of Mr. H. E.

Lawrence, a life-long and successful

sugar planter, who, on learning my

anxiety to witness ploughing by steam,

(not for show, but as a business,) invited

us to visit the plantation of his brother,

where that style of breaking up the

earth is in fashion. Accordingly, a tug-

boat was chartered, and some forty or

fifty gentlemen devoted yesterday to

sugar-planting by steam.

Magnolia plantation lies some fifty

miles below this city, with a front of

two miles on the west bank of the river,

with the Gulf of Mexico but five miles

distant on either hand. Most of the

ten-mile strip which here constitutes

the county (late parish) of Plaquemine

is a ready-made, the haunt of alligators,

mosquitoes, &c., which a tempest in the

Gulf may submerge at any time; but a

fine forest of live oak on the rear of this

plantation indicates that the surface,

usually dry, is wider at this point than

the average. The famous levees are

eight feet high, and the Gulf, where

the rise and fall of the mighty stream

(here a mile and a half wide) rarely

exceeds three feet, and at the utmost is

seven. The river surface is now but

two to three feet below that of the

levees, and has recently been two feet

higher. Water leaking through the

levee is caught in the substantial ditches

that everywhere traverse the plantations,

and runs swiftly away till lost under

the rank vegetation of the swamps or

absorbed by some bayou of the adjacent

gulf. This whole region has of course

been formed of the muddy sediment de-

posited by the Father of Waters, where-

ever the witness of its current is arrest-

ed. Thus, in ten thousand annual over-

flows, mainly in April or May, Louisiana

has been projected far into the Gulf;

and the process of making new land at

the expense of salt water is still in

progress. Though the tide rises 18

inches at New Orleans, and is felt at

Daltonville, 70 miles further up,

the force of the current keeps the river

here wholly fresh at this season, though

it is somewhat brackish at times when

less water is passing out. That the

soil is rich, black and of unfathomable

depth need not be added. Ditching or

deep ploughing is constantly unearthing

immense quantities of bones of years—

some of them still sound and service-

able.

Mr. Effingham Lawrence, the owner

of Magnolia plantation, is a son of a

well-known Long Island family, the son

of a good farmer, and himself invented

a plough when but ten years old. Cul-

tivation is not only his pursuit but his

passion. He came thither while still

young, and has planted since his minority.

The machinery in his sugar house,

PLOUGHING BY STEAM.

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