The New Orleans Bee.

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TERMS OF THE BEE.

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NEW ORLEANS:
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Our neighbor, the *Picayune*, in publishing with comments in yesterday's afternoon edition, the *project* of a law presented to the French Assembly by M. Thiers, falls into an error when it says that "the law was placed by Thiers in the hands of the Minister of Justice and the Keeper of the Seals."

The Minister of Justice and the Keeper of the Seals are one and the same person. At the time of the old monarchy, the minister called at the present time *Minister of Justice*, had the title of *Keeper of the Seals*. But now the official appellation is simply *Minister of Justice*.

THE MISSISSIPPI LEVEE SYSTEM.

Has the Bed of the Mississippi Risen?

AN ANSWER TO THE LETTER OF GEN. A. A. HUMPHREYS.

To the Editor of the Mobile Register

I find in the columns of the *Register* of the 7th of July a letter taken from the New York *World*, dated Washington, June 17th, and signed by Brigadier General A. A. Humphreys, Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army.

The letter seems to be intended as a reply to an article published by me in the New Orleans *Picayune*, in April last, and republished in the New York *World* of May 20th. The subject of the article is the levee system, so recommended in the report of Humphreys and Abbott. The letter undertaken to deny what I had thought everybody acquainted with the Mississippi river knew to be a fact. It says:

"Now there is not a single fact going to show that the bed of the Mississippi river has risen at all from detritus brought down by the river and its tributaries. The evidence as to that matter is conclusive: that *it has not risen, is not rising, and will not rise.*"

The Chief of Engineers had such evidence he should have given it, but in truth there is none such, for all the evidence connected with that matter tends the other way.

There is no river flowing through an alluvial valley, that does not gradually raise its bed by the deposit of material washed down from the higher regions; for the floods, which carry along the detritus, transport only the finer particles held in suspension to the sea. The remainder is successively deposited in the bed, according to the diminution of the velocity of the water, or scourings. As illustrative of this is given by Humphreys and Abbott, who say, (page 30): "The banks of the rivers inhabited to overflow between Cairo, Illinois, and the Gulf are alluvial, being composed of the sediment deposited by the river water when it has overflowed its banks in time of flood. The portions of this land nearest the river is the highest, since there the deposit is greater in amount and coarser in material. For an average distance of about a mile, the slope from the river is greatest."

Page 44, the report states: The level of low water of the Mississippi river below the mouth of the Ohio was:

At Cairo in 1858	46 feet
At same place in 1858	41 "
Difference	5 "
At Memphis in 1858	27 feet
At same place in 1858	23 "
Difference	4 "
At Helena in 1867	6.0 feet.
At same place in 1858	60.4 "
Difference	4.4 "
At Natchez, datum not given	44.5 feet.
At same place in 1858	40.8 "
Difference	4.7 "
At Vicksburg in 1858	46.2 feet.
At same place in 1858	40.6 "
Difference	4.7 "
At Natchez in 1858	31.1 feet.
At the same place in 1858	26.6 "
Difference	4.5 "

From the above it appears that the low water surface, and consequently the bottom of the bed of the river, has risen, is rising, and continues to rise.

Sir Charles Lyell says: "The bed of the Nile always keep pace with the general elevation of the soil, and the banks of this river like those of the Mississippi, are considerably higher than the flat lands of the delta." In consequence of the gradual rise of the river's bed, the annual flood is constantly spreading over a wider area, and the annual encroaches on the desert, covering it with six or seven feet of the slime of the statues and temples, which the waters never reached before.

The Mississippi gradually becomes permanent impulse—so that, while in the upper part it has force enough to push along pieces of rock, pebbles, and coarse gravel, in the mouth it hardly suffices to lead to transport the mud into the Gulf. The report of Humphreys and Abbott indicates this (see page 9) it is stated: "At Red River landing the material was chiefly small gravel and coarse sand; at Morganza, fine sand and small balls of tenacious clay; at Fausse Riviere, (Waterloo) coarse sand; At Carrollton, muddy sand and earthy matter fully collected." At page 91: "The material of which these bars are composed grows finer, the nearer the gulf is approached." We are told, however, that what becomes of the gravel and coarse sand, "rolling along the bottom" at the Red River landing, or the coarse sand at Waterloo, which is the finest at Carrollton, nor below. As we know it has not disappeared by evaporation, it must have been deposited somewhere, and must produce some kind of effect.

Since (De Ferek, in the Caucasus; the locks in Holland; the Po and Asmo, in Italy; and many others, have been obstructed by levees), the elevation of the bed has become apparent from the stationary state of the adjoining lands.

In the report of Humphreys and Abbott, page 182, we find the following strange statement: "General assumptions as respecting the effect of levees upon the Po. The first is based upon an error of fact, which has been generally propagated upon the Po disingenuously by Baron Prony and M. de Prony. This error is, that the levees of the Po have caused the bed of the river to be raised above the country to an alarming extent. Parker expressed himself in the following manner: Every one who has seen the Rhone and in Italy, the velocity rapidity the Rhine, the Po, and the Arno, now that they are enclosed between elevated banks. Caligari does not say that levees elevate the bed, but that, by their means, the elevation of the bed becomes more apparent, and as stated M. de Prony, therefore we must reasonably infer that the Mississippi has elevated its bed, is doing so, and will continue to do so, until the embankments of the river and those of its tributaries are near, and free from all detrital matter.

It is not remarkable that, after so positive assertion, that the bed of the Mississippi "does not rise," General Humphreys admits, a few lines lower in his report, that "rises rise, owing to the prolongation of its course into the Gulf."

In the report of Humphreys and Abbott, for 1867, page 208, we find: "How much the progress of the river into the Gulf has raised the surface of the river at points above Plaquemines, and how far up the river this effect has been felt, are in a great degree matters of mere speculation, and, however interesting as speculations, are without practical value." *Rather strange that the raising of the bed, requiring increasing elevation of the levees at an increasing expenditure, is without practical value.*

As to the rise of the river's surface and its extent, I made no question of either, knowing that the irregular condition of the river, which has no uniformity of motion, would render any estimate or calculation of that sort merely idle speculation. For our purposes, it is only necessary to state that the prolongation of the river into the Gulf necessitates the elevation of its bed, and that, consequently, the bed has risen, is rising, and will continue to rise, no matter whether the extent of the prolongation is 200 or 700 feet per annum.

By the way, why does Gen. Humphreys find it necessary, in order to improve the Southwest Pass, to extend the converging works projected from Fort Jackson finally into the Gulf, if the delta makes a mean advance of only 262 feet per annum?

The report of the Engineer Department to the Secretary of War, Washington, D. C., January 15th, 1851, states: "The examples, as above, show conclusively that very nice ascendency of the tide bears corresponding elevation of the body of the low and high water surfaces of the river in their rear, but of the natural levees or river banks through the entire Delta district." The report is signed by Lieut. Colonel C. H. Long and Captain A. A. Humphreys.

The extensive bottom lands, which are overflowed in time of flood, and from which the water returns into the bed of the river after the flood begins to subside, serve as regulators of the range of the river. The volume of water which has been overflow by levees must have a serious effect on the height of the water at such periods.

In the report of Humphreys and Abbott, chapter VI., pp. 183-84, we read:

"From the above data of the slope of the river and the average mean depth of the river, and of the water passing through the level of the sea, it may be within a limit of 10 or 15 per cent of the actual discharge of the Mississippi river."

The Mississippi receiving its rise, the water is poured into the bottom, through the numerous bayous, and finally river and Atchafalaya. This shall as certainly and unquestionably by the alluvial great portion land, that the water in 1850 stood at a height of 46 feet at the mouth of the river, rising to 46.2 feet at Vicksburg, 44.5 at Natchez, 40.8 at Red River landing, 31.1 at Carrollton, and 26.6 at the mouth of the river, 4.5 feet above zero, or the then natural

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BY TELEGRAPH.

To the New Orleans Bee.

FOREIGN NEWS.

Rumored Quarrel between the French and Italian Governments.

Pamphlet of Prince Napoleon.

Two Paris Editors Fined and Imprisoned.

LATE FROM HAVANA.

Blockade of an English Ship by a Spanish Man-of-War.

Damages Claimed by Great Britain.

HOME NEWS.

The Election in California.

The State Gone Republican.

Letter from Prominent Citizens of Spartanburg, S. C.

Miscellaneous Matters.

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

Paris, Sept. 7.—The editors of the *Vérité* and *Avenir* have been sentenced to one month's imprisonment and 1,000 francs fine each for a violation of the press law.

Paris, Sept. 7.—Prince Napoleon has published a pamphlet, entitled "To my Colleagues of the Assembly." In it he says that he can only serve the country in it that he can only serve the country by the declaration of war against Germany. He refers to his duty by order of the Emperor, who brings so many fortunes to France. He states his offer of service to share the captivity of Napoleon at Wilhelmshöhe, but was refused.

Paris, Sept. 7.—Count Rouher has proposed bodies the Conservative organization. He made a speech in defense of his conduct during the war, attributing his failure at Metz mainly to a lack of ammunition.

The Prompte says the efforts of the Italian army are unwearied, and the territory contiguous to Italy is occupied at its strategetic points that they may be prepared in case of a war with France.

Versailles, Sept. 7.—There was an animated debate in the Assembly to-day upon the bill introduced by M. Javinel providing for the return of the Assembly to Paris. The reporter of the committee, M. Creuzance, said the effect of the bill was to destroy confidence, which he claimed existed between Paris and Versailles.

Louis Blanc and Lamy fiery warmly advocated the cause of Paris, and warned the Assembly that Paris in ceasing to be the capital of France will become the capital of riot.

Versailles, Sept. 7.—The report that the negotiations for the evacuation of French territory by the Germans declaring war against Germany was false. Galvanized life among the Conservatives.

Versailles, Sept. 7.—Rouher, Buffet, Audiffret, Pasquier, Casimir Perier, Dufaure, Leon Say, Lambrecht, Goulard, Ernoul, Batbie, Beulay, Chesnelong, Lefevre Pontalis, Wallon, Lavergne, Tirard, Lanjuinais