The New-Orleans Daily Bee.

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TERMS OF THE BEE.

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The New-Orleans Daily Bee.

Wednesday Morning, Feb. 20, 1850.

☞ The MAIL due on Monday, came through yesterday, but that of yesterday failed beyond Charleston.

The New Orleans Mint.

The inadequacy of the Mint, under its present organization and with a limited command of labor, to supply the wants of the community, is a source of grievance and loss, that calls for a prompt and effectual remedy. When the Mint was established, California had not revealed to the people of the United States its exhaustless treasures; and as it was impossible to have anticipated the immensely increased business which the transmission here of product of her mines would entail upon the Mint, the labor of that institution was graduated to a scale of coinage of some three or four millions per annum. The operations of the Mint were mostly confined to the re-coinage of foreign coin, and the standard of weights being known, the assay became easy and simple, and the process of re-coinage a comparatively brief labor. The depositor was not compelled to wait many weeks for his money; neither was the Mint burthened by an amount of business wholly disproportioned to the means under its control.

The working of the California gold deposits and the immense sums that are brought hither, either in the virgin ore or the rude and primitive coinage of the country, have imposed a largely augmented sphere of duties upon the officers of the Mint, have rendered their task to the last degree toilsome and thankless, and occasion vast inconvenience and much positive loss to depositors. It must be remembered that the number of persons with gold who reach our city by every arrival from California, is prodigious, and that the sum belonging to each individual varies from $100 to $50,000. Whether the gold be in the state in which it is excavated from the rock or washed from the stream, or whether it be coined by the companies now in California, every separate parcel must, when sent to the Mint to be converted into American coin, be carefully assayed; and this is the more indispensable, as experience has shown that in a seemingly homogeneous in appearance and character, are often very different when submitted to rigid chemical analysis. It is clear from these facts, that the labor of assaying every lot of gold that is sent to the Mint, must, in the course of the year, be almost incalculable. The inference must strike every intelligent mind, that where the means are disproportioned to the end, the latter cannot be obtained with all practicable delay.—Such is really the case. The gold goes to the Mint, and there remains for several months, until an opportunity presents itself for its assay and coinage. This is not the fault of the officers of the Mint. So far from being to blame they are entitled to the gratitude of the public, for trenching upon the hours allotted to refreshment and repose, and for toiling day and night, with a view to the partial accommodation of the depositors. The case is an urgent one in the organization of the Mint. That organization was never intended for the extensive operations in which it is now engaged. Its means must be greatly increased, ere it can become a real accommodation to the public.

When gold is sent to the Mint in large quantities, the owners receive certificates of assay from the Superintendent. If they can afford to wait from three to six months, they will at the expiration of that time, obtain their gold in the coinage of the United States. But as three-fifths of the depositors find it impossible to be compelled to part with their certificates at a discount. It is true that these certificates represent a fixed and absolute value, but as the broker is well aware that the period of their payment is indefinite, and that he may not get his money for several months, he charges a rate of interest quite sufficient to cover all the uncertainties and contingencies of his calculation. The majority of those who come from California bring with them small parcels of gold dust—the fruits of their labor. They are usually persons whose wealth is limited to the amount of the precious metal they possess, and who cannot possibly remain in the city until the slow process of converting their gold-dust into coin can be completed. They consequently apply to some broker, who purchases their hard earned gains, allowing them very liberally about seventy-five per cent. of the real value.

The fund of the New Orleans Mint, out of which depositors are paid a certain proportion, as soon as the assay is known, does not exceed $100,000—an amount certainly insufficient for the purpose. This sum being exhausted, certificates of assay are forced upon the discount market, and depositors suffer a loss corresponding with the probable delay in their redemption. Everybody is aware that money is an element of commerce in constant demand in New Orleans. Hence it is that the rate of interest is always high, when the period of payment is uncertain. It is this fact that subjects the holders of certificates of assay to a grievous discount, though no species of security could be intrinsically more valuable.

We have said that the labor of the Mint is insufficient to meet the demands upon it. The force employed is entirely too small. The operations of smelting and coining, which in a well provided establishment, go together, are here perforce divided. The persons employed in coining are required to assist the meagre force of the smelting department, and *vice versa*. It is absurd to expect beneficial results from our institution thus cramped and fettered in the most important operations that devolve on it. Vainly too, have the officers of the Mint sought by unremitting exertion, by toiling night and day, to meet the pressing wants of the community. No amount of labor endurable by man, can possibly supply the place of inadequate means. Congress must provide the remedy, or the Mint will be shorn of half its usefulness.

In view of the serious inconvenience to the public arising from the state of things, a memorial has been forwarded to Washington, calling the attention of Congress to the position of the New Orleans Mint, and suggesting as remedies of absolute necessity, authority to secure additional labor both in the scientific and mechanical departments of the establishment; additional machinery, and a fund of one million for the reimbursement of coin deposits, when fully assayed. We have recently visited the Mint, and from personal inspection, as well conversation with the practical and intelligent Treasurer, Mr. MCMURDO, and the indefatigable Assayer, Dr. HOLT, we are thoroughly convinced that the demands upon Congress are perfectly just and imperatively necessary. The community at large, are interested in the improvement sought for. It is they who are the sufferers by the imperfection of the present system, and they should unite in urging upon Congress the expediency of adapting the New Orleans Mint to the extended operations to which it is now unavoidably engaged.

We hope that the Secretary of the Treasury will at once confer with the superintendents of the parent mint, at Philadelphia, who is fully advised of the grievances here, and that some measure may be forthwith submitted to Congress for the consideration of the proposed end. It is unnecessary to add more than earnestly invite the co-operation of our own delegation to the furtherance of so worthy a union. We look to Messrs. CHASTAIN and LA SERE to have no other, unchanged endeavors to perform.

BROWN HOUSE BURNED.—The Rapids side Land Bounty, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, New Orleans Bounty to Kentucky, with a variety of other matters of interest to the public.

Congressional.

The proceedings of Congress on the 11th are reported telegraphically in the Louisville *Courier*, as follows:

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11.

The Vice President stated the first thing in order was the petition from Maryland and Delaware, asking a peaceable dissolution of the Union.

Mr. Chase spoke in favor of the right of the petition delivered to the Senate, and that they were bound to receive it. No matter what its character was, Congress should express its disapprobation in the most decided manner. He had no objection to whatever action should be taken on this and similar petitions.

Mr. Dayton acknowledged the right of petition, but said he should vote against the petition, because it was both disgraceful and treasonable.

After further discussion, in which Messrs. Webster, Case, Seward, and others participated, the vote was taken on the reception of the petition, and resulted—yeas 3, nays 50. Messrs. Hale, Chase and Seward voting yea.

The consideration of the special order of the day was then resumed.

Mr. Berrien made a strong speech, contending that the South was right, and the North wrong—that a crisis was at hand, and should be met in a spirit of conciliation. He spoke till 3 P. M., when he gave way for a motion to adjourn.

The Senate then went into executive session.

HOUSE.—A few days ago Mr. Holmes made a motion to lay the petition from the citizens of Ohio, asking the establishment of a peace Congress, on the table. The question was taken and decided in the negative—yeas 65, nays 100 Objections having been made, the question lies over.

To-day the House went into Committee of the Whole and resumed the consideration of the bill limiting the amount for collecting the revenue.

Various amendments were presented, and a discussion ensued which continued till adjournment.

ITALIAN CONCERT TO-NIGHT.—The lovers of fine music will bear in mind that the Astor House Italian Opera Company give a grand vocal concert, this evening, at the Lyceum Hall.—Among the artists of note are Signora Barile Thorn, Signora Valbellina, Signora Arnoldi and Taffanelli, and our acquaintance, Valtellina. The programme embraces a number of choice melodies, duets and concert pieces from the most renowned Italian composers. There will be, no doubt, a brilliant assemblage gathered together to listen to these fine interpreters of the poetry of sound.

POLICE INTELLIGENCE.—There has been quite a dearth of business in the Police Courts. In the First Municipality, yesterday, there was only one case of note, viz: Stephen McLean, charged with purloining the pockets of a drunken man and committed for trial before the First District Court. At the Recorder's Court of the Second Municipality, nothing of importance occurred yesterday. In the present crowded state of our columns we cannot afford to notice trifling matters.

WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS.—The original manuscript of the Father of his country, was disposed of at public auction, at Philadelphia, a few days ago, for the sum of two thousand, three hundred dollars. The Rev. Mr. Boardman was the purchaser.

FIRST DISTRICT COURT.—*Judge McHenry.*—The business transacted yesterday, comprised merely a petty case of larceny, where the accused was charged of stealing a plank, and a charge of assault and battery against Mr. Lakeman, both of whom were convicted.

HOTEL OF COMMERCE AT HAVANA.—We would advise all persons visiting at Havana, to sojourn at the Hotel of Commerce, under the superintendence of Mad DALLIER. This establishment has been known for years as one of the finest and most spacious in Havana. The accomodation of every kind are of the first order.

ESCAPED.—Three of the prisoners confined in the watch-house of the First Municipality managed to effect their escape yesterday, by cutting a hole through the floor of their cell. One of them was Stephen McLean, committed to the First District Court on a charge of robbery, and the other two had been ticketed to the Work-House for thirty-days.

PLACIDE'S VARIETIES.—The performances this evening consist of the Musical Comedy of "Home, Sweet Home;" a grand divertisement in which the whole of the ballet corps will appear, "Queen."

UNITED STATES VS. DR. KNAPP, CAPT. WILSON AND JONES, MATE OF THE SHIP RUSSIA.—This case, growing out of a charge of conspiracy on the part of the accused to defraud the underwriters, by burning the ship Russia, off the Balize, came up for examination yesterday before U. S. Commissioner Baldwin. Mr. Hunton, U. S. District Attorney and Mr. Winthrop, appeared for the prosecution, and Messrs. Frost and Prentiss appeared for the accused. Several witnesses were examined for the prosecution, but the testimony thus far elicited, merely showed the loss on the part of the underwriters, and touched upon the private character of Dr. Knapp. We must content ourselves with this brief notice, having no space for an extended report. The examination will be continued to day at 12 o'clock.

SHIPWRECKS.—The steamer *Rhode Island*, bound to California, is reported to have been lost. Thirty of her passengers are said to have been drowned, and 12 saved.

The bark *Velocity*, from Savannah, was wrecked on Sunday, the 10th inst., off Long Island. The passengers and crew were saved.

STILL "BROWNER."—The notorious W. J. Brown, of Indiana, (says the *Ala. Daily Journal*,) who was detected and exposed on the floor of Congress in a scheme of falsehood and deception utterly disgraceful to him, was appointed by Mr. Cobb, on the Committee of Private Land Claims." He was placed by the speaker third or fourth on the committee, and the gentlemen below him, of course, refused to serve with one so wholly disgraced and infamous, and determined to resign. Mr. Brown concluded it was the part of wisdom to resign and avoid further exposure.

The correspondent of the Courier and Enquirer says:

"The difficulty between the committee on private Land claims, and Mr. W. J. Brown, who recently acquired such unenviable notoriety, has been adjusted by his retirement. Finding a serious purpose to refuse connection with him made a virtue of necessity, and several gentlemen who were insulted by the association, from the unpleasant duty of signifying their resolutions in public."

MEMOIRS OF W. WIRT, by John P. Kennedy.—Our thanks are due Messrs. LEA & BLANCHARD, publishers, through B. M. NORMAN, No. 16 Camp street, for a copy of the second and revised edition of this excellent work. It is the narrative of a man of genius, who, springing from a lowly origin, attained by force of character, indomitable diligence and stern integrity, a distinction and renown that are reached by few. The pages that delineate his career are fraught with perpetual incitement to the young and ardent to persevere in the pursuit of literary and professional honors, and they teach a lesson of emulation by which ambition may profit when it falters in its inspiration and deems the guerdeon too difficult and distant.

THE CHEROKEES.—The Cherokee Advocate, referring to a paragraph stating that the Cherokees intend to apply for admission into the Union, in a few years, and with that view, are exceedingly anxious to compete with the whites in all kinds of improvements, says:

To emulate the people that boast of the greatest civil, political, and religious institutions in the world, is certainly commendable. But to say that the Cherokees are making such exertions for the purpose of becoming a part of the Union, is saying more than we are prepared to admit. So far as we know the feeling of the Cherokee people, it is right to the reverse of the statement. Although they would neither be more individuals among us in favor of such a project, yet, as to the majority of the Cherokee people, such a thing cannot be. They almost universally are opposed to it, and if it were to be forced upon them, and if it were to be forced upon them, and if it were to be forced upon them