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ROAD BRIDGES.—The question whether *iron* bridges can be used for Railroad purposes is a very important one, and yet has never been thoroughly discussed. It has been gratuitously *assumed*, in sundry quarters, that they *can* be; but no experiment has ever demonstrated the fact, nor has any argument been produced to warrant a conclusion in their favor.

A writer in the American *Railroad Journal*, who signs himself "E. W. Serrell, Civil Engineer," furnishes some very interesting facts in this connection. He says:

"There never yet has been a suspension bridge constructed, intended by the designer for railway travel; and consequently, correct conclusions respecting the practicability of a structure which has not yet been built, can only be come to by properly understanding the *principles* which govern it, and its use.

The only bridge known to the public, built upon the suspension principle, that has had locomotive trains upon it, was on the line of the Stockton and Darlington railway, in England.

This bridge had been built for common road travel, but being in a position to be used by the railway company, the track was laid on it, and a trial made. Mr. Stephenson, when giving evidence before a parliamentary committee, sitting on a matter which related to the Britannia tubular bridge, stated that *the platform of the suspension bridge referred to rose up three feet before the locomotive at ordinary speed; and that the entire work was nearly destroyed by the passage of the train.* [See E. Clark's Britannia Tubular Bridge, vol. 1, p. 60.] Piles were driven into the bed of the river, and the roadway of the bridge secured to them. Still the structure was deemed useless, as the piles were alternately drawn out and driven in again, by the action of the chains and the loads on the track. [See E. Clark's Britannia Tubular Bridge, vol. 1, p. 41."]

Mr. Serrell then goes on to show that by increasing the weight and strength of suspension bridges to conform to the strength and weight of a locomotive and train of cars, they may be made as useful as other bridges for railroad purposes. He frankly admits, however, that there is no suspension bridge *now* standing of sufficient strength to admit the passage of a train of cars. As our present purpose is not with what *may* be, but with what *is*, we avail ourselves of the opportunity to press the importance of the "Circumbendibus" route, in connection with this fact.

We have the authority of competent civil engineers for saying that the Wheeling bridge cannot be used for railroads. The facts adduced by Mr. Serrell, as given above, are conclusive on that point; and every man's judgment will help him to the same conclusion. The trade and travel concentrating at Bridgeport, by the Marietta and Central roads, must, therefore, if it wishes to cross the Ohio at that point, be subjected to the serious delay and expense of crossing two bridges by drays and carriages. Such delay and expense is never endured when an alternative is offered, and hence the importance of constructing the "Circumbendibus," so as to afford, at Bridgeport, an opportunity to make connections with eastern roads without crossing the Ohio river at all. We can have this road built down the Ohio by the time either of the above-named roads are constructed to Bridgeport; and as the road will be straight and of exceedingly easy grade, and the connection at Bridgeport can be made without causing more than a few moments' delay, it will offer inducements to travelers which cannot be resisted. Instead of having to undergo the cost and tediousness of changing baggage, hiring carriages, and crossing the bridges, passengers can step out of the cars at Bridgeport into the cars of the "Circumbendibus" road, and be half-way to Pittsburgh before they could, had they chosen the other route, have been across the river and made the other connection. The advantages offered by the route we have indicated will be too apparent to need much prezsing upon public attention. The traveler from the west and southwest, who takes either of the roads terminating at Bridgeport, finding there a road which saves him the trouble and expense of crossing the Ohio, and puts him in direct connection at Pittsburgh, with roads to Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York and Boston, will not stop to inquire whether it is or is not a few miles longer than some "air-line" road. It is afford him the easiest and most expeditious means of reaching his destination, that is the main.

We know it will be urged that the Allegheny will have to be crossed by those who take the "Circumbendibus" route, before they can make a connection with the eastern roads here. True; but by the time the "Circumbendibus" is built, the Ohio and Pennsylvania road will be extended into Pittsburgh by a bridge over the Allegheny, built upon solid stone piers, and able to bear the passage of any railroad train. Arrangements are now in progress to that effect; so that by the time the gaps between Rochester and Bridgeport are filled up, we shall be enabled to offer, at the latter point, an unbroken line of connection to all the eastern cities.

The Cleveland and Pittsburgh Company will put the road from Wellsville to Bridgeport under contract this Spring, we understand—leaving only the small space between Rochester and Wellsville to be filled up. Pittsburgh aid is needed to fill that up; and the sooner it is tendered, the better.

STOCK OF FLOUR AND GRAIN AT THE WEST.—A correspondent of the Albany Evening Journal publishes the following estimate of the present stock of grain and flour at different lake ports. The Journal says it is reliable:—

"There is of wheat in store at Milwaukie 180,000 bushels; oats 30,000; barley 20,000, and rye 10,000, and about 20,000 barrels flour. They have 100,000 bushels wheat, 31,000 do. oats, 20,000 do. barley; Kenosha, wheat 25,000, oats 10,000, barley 2,000; Waukegan, wheat 30,000, oats 15,000, barley 5,000; Chicago, wheat 38,000, oats 30,000; Michigan city, wheat 25,000, corn 4,000, oats 6,000. The above is small compared with former years. Nothing of any amount is accumulated on the Southern Michigan and Indiana Railroad. Nothing at Toledo. Not a cargo of grain there. May be considerable in Ohio to come out this spring, but it is yet in farmers' hands. Unless there is considerable from Ohio, receipts of wheat and flour must be light forepart of the season."

General American Affairs.—A despatch from Washington to the New York Courier, says:

The Hon. Wm. L. Marcy, Secretary of State, was closely engaged during the whole of yesterday on the affairs of Central America. It is understood that a minister is to be immediately appointed to that quarter, with instructions to carry out high American policy. The report of recent high-handed proceedings of the British Government at Honduras, has produced a deep sensation at Washington.

THE BANK DEFALCATION IN PHILADELPHIA.—The amount ascertained to be overdrawn from the Bank of Pennsylvania, through the negligence of one of its officers, is said to be $294,000, which will be reduced by various securities to about $240,000. The individual alleged to have overdrawn, it is understood, possesses considerable means, so that nearly the whole amount may possibly be recovered.

WHEAT IN OHIO.—According to official returns Ohio has averaged thirty millions of bushels of wheat for the last three years; of which sixteen millions are a surplus, after feeding all its own inhabitants.

FROM WASHINGTON.

Correspondence of the Pittsburgh Daily Gazette.

WASHINGTON, March 17, 1853.

True to its reputation, St. Patrick's day came in with a hail storm, and has sustained itself nobly to the end. The character of the weather accords with that of our politics. Clouds and storms appear to be gathering around Frank Pierce and his administration. They have not yet succeeded in presenting to the Senate any very important nominations than those very respectable Whig or gallinipper appointments, Mr. Clay as Minister to Peru, and Mr. Fay, Charge to Switzerland. The country at large know nothing and care not more for the collectorships, marshalseas, and clerkships that form the morning and evening topic of the congregated masses of office seekers now filling the hotels of the capital. One general appraiser for California, a Mr. Bridges, has been appointed. This is something of a national office. He is a good Whig. A Governor has been appointed for the new territory of Washington, from the Army. This is a *dis*-appointment for our friend Colonel Black. However, I trust they will do the right thing by the Colonel.

Old Father Waldo, a sort of political monk from Connecticut and an ex-member of Congress, has been made Commissioner of Pensions. This surprises me; for I supposed that Virginia would claim the succession.

There was a new accession to the office-seeking throng this morning, and at no time since inauguration day, have I seen a more eager press upon the ante rooms of the Secretaries, or the bar rooms of the Hotels. Mr. Marcy absolutely and imperatively closes his office doors to all comers. The public business, he says, must be transacted, and upon his shoulders rests the most important division of it. It is rumored that he has dispatched a cartel to Mr. Crampton, requesting him to communicate explanations upon late occurrences. The other Secretaries are moving gradually and cautiously, feeling the pocks of the victims, as it were, before throwing their heads into the basket.

Mr. Everett to-day signified his intention of addressing the Senate on Mr. Clayton's resolution concerning our foreign relations, and Monday next was set down for that purpose. His address will be looked for with interest, and will be regarded as an authoritative exposition of the views of the conservatively progressive party of the country. The Senate adjourned from to-day to Monday, thus wasting, so far as the public treasury is concerned, the pay of the members for the two remaining days of this week, with the incidental expenses.

In pursuance of an order adopted yesterday, the Senate to-day held an election for its executive officers. Four years ago, Mr. Benton procured the repeal of the rule requiring the election of these officers to be made at the beginning of each Congress, thus leaving them in for life, or during good behavior. The tendency of this practice towards the establishment of life officers was so apparent, that a constant struggle has been going on for the restoration of the rule, and the custom of biennial elections. A caucus of democratic Senators was held in the morning, at which Mr. Dickens, Secretary, and Mr. Holland, Door-keeper, were nominated for election, and Mr. Robert Beall, Sergeant-at-Arms, was ostracised, and a Mr. McNair, of Kentucky, was nominated to supersede him.—The contest was severe in caucus. The blood-sucking division demanded the head of Mr. Dickens, as a Whig, or a gallinipper who ought to be rotated into private life, after 25 years of service and salary. But the fogies recollecting his fidelity and efficiency, refused the concession, and Major B. B. French his rival, and a New Hampshire friend of the President, was floored, twenty to ten. There were charges of lobbying and selling his influence to outsiders against Beall, sergeant-at-arms, and he was easily extinguished, but there was a close and doubtful contest between Mr. McNair, an old Kentucky nag, and J. G. Berrett, a carpet knight of Democracy in this District, who has never won his spurs. McNair took the purse by a length, coming out one vote in advance—to wit: McNair, 15; Berret, 14. These nominations were confirmed by the Senate, by about 30 to 5. The unfortunate Beall received but five votes, and Major French only four.

The Michigan delegation has greatly diminished. There is not now over five applicants from that State to each office assignable thereto. Indiana has a host of lusty expectants at the door of every department. Mr. Pettit said in the Senate that he had squadrons of esteemed friends who must be attended to, and if he could not procure an audience otherwise, he must to-morrow take them all and break the doors down! Did he mean the doors of the White House?—Let me see; there is Hon. John L. Robinson, a desperate pro-slavery compromise politician, but an honorable gentleman, ex-member; he is to be made Marshall. Bright favors him, and Pettit abuses him, but he will get what he wants. Then there is Judge Lockhart, ex member, also, he expects a great deal and deserves nothing.—He will get his deserts. Col. Gorman wants the General Land Office. I have referred to his case before. Graham N. Fitch, ex-member, wants the Indian bureau. He won't get it. Bill Brown, the immortal Bill, who came so near the Speakership, he wants a mail agency. He may get it, but Bright is after him with a very sharp stick. Chapman, of Indianapolis, the Chapman that crows, wants the post office of that place. He will probably get it. "I might extend this list, but the above will do for a morning dose.

JUNIUS.

FROM NEW YORK.

Correspondence of the Pittsburgh Gazette.

NEW YORK, March 17, 1853.

The financial pressure does not at all abate, but may be said rather to increase, by a process easily explained. Our first trouble was caused, as those who pay attention to such affairs know, by the overtrading of the new and weaker portion of our banks, who became unable to respond in coin to the demands of credited banks. Banks were generally incoming alarmed at this state of affairs, called in their loans and refused to make new ones. This contraction of liabilities fell first upon stocks, depressing them from six to ten per cent, sweating holders severely. Its next effect has been upon merchants, and largely as the brokers suffered, their losses are moderate compared to the increased rate of interest paid upon commercial paper, by a class not yet in easy circumstances, though aided by free remittances from customers in the interior. The large remittances from California, and the certainty of their continuance, leads many to think that the present embarrassment will wear away, and that a new series of speculations will be consummated before the reaction takes place. A more correct view is taken by those who think that all the arrivals of gold will only be adequate to keep confidence at the present point, and enable us to go comfortably into liquidation.

An accession has been made to the strength of the Daily Times, by adding to its business office one of the young Harpers of Cliff street. The tone of the Times upon the International copyright has caused many to think the accession of the new man indicates on the part of the Times an inclination to strengthen itself by an alliance with the most powerful house, in the way of type, ink and money, in the United States. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that the Times is the most able journal of New York, and deserves to make a fortune, if it does not, for its managers.

The steamship "El Paragua" is about ready to start for Rio Janeiro, en route for the river intended to be navigated by her, and for which she expects a bonus of ten thousand dollars. The leading spirit of the expedition is Mr. Hopkins, formerly holding an official position in those regions, and a gentleman of much energy. He is attended by a younger brother, lately connected with the Courier and Inquirer, and a writer of ability. Capt Wright, with whom all steamboat people are acquainted, arrived here yesterday, with a contract for a new line of steamers, to run to Central America. He gets a bonus of two hundred thousand dollars, and has a monopoly of the coasting trade by steam for ten years, a perquisite of no small magnitude.

Your agricultural readers, who intend to use guano this season, will lose nothing by purchasing in season. The demand is now far in excess of the supply, and cargoes could be sold to arrive, at six dollars above the current rates. Receivers here refuse to sell over fifty tons to a buyer. So small is the supply, vessels have been chartered to bring guano, at nineteen dollars per ton, under the hatches, which promises large profits for a ship to leave here in ballast for guano.

Our Irish fellow citizens have been celebrating the anniversary of their patron saint to-day, by a military and civic procession, of great magnitude. No more soldierly looking set of men are ever seen on our streets than they, or indeed can a finer body of men be found anywhere. Such parades as the one of to-day, develop the strength of our Catholic citizens in a manner not to be overlooked, and he is a dull scholar who fails to see that in New York there is numerical force of Celts that is not to be frowned down.

Mr. Forest is again before our courts, seeking damages to the extent of ten thousand dollars, from the New York Mirror, for libel by republication of an offensive article from the St. Louis Bevelle. It will be hard if the Mirror is beaten, for the ten thousand dollars is too much for any amount of damages it would inflict upon any body. Mr. Forest may have seen the paper containing the libel, and thus have been, for that day, among the choice spirits who see that paper. The attack upon Mr. Forest was uncalled for, and in the worst taste, and a verdict in his favor will have a quieting effect upon Critics.

C.

For the Pittsburgh Gazette.

SPIRIT RAPPINGS.

As a duty to myself, in justice to my family and friends and to the cause of Spiritualism I beg leave to call the attention of the following plain statement of facts and thus disabuse the public mind of false and malicious charges made within the last few weeks, and obtaining large circulation with various versions and comments, through the public press, charging me with fraud and deception, and calculated to bring odium upon a great and good cause.

From an early period of my life I have been the subject of impressions, which, until recently I did not understand, but which I now believe were spiritual. Many facts are familiar to those who have known me intimately and abundant testimony can be furnished as to the correctness of these impressions. At an early age I became connected with the Methodist E. Church in which for 14 years I have already taken active part. About one year since I first became aware of the fact that I was a medium for spiritual manifestations and communications.

This phenomena was unpopular with the masses. Mediums were charged by pulpit and press with delusion, imposture and various epithets. I naturally shrunk from notoriety, but believing in my soul that these manifestations were from the spirit world, and that God was in this age permitting his ministering spirits to speak to man as they did in the days of the Savior, and believing that it was my duty, (if the Great Spirit so willed it,) to submit to being used as a medium for the good of my fellow creatures, I threw my doors open without fee, invited friends and acquaintances who sought to judge for themselves of these manifestations. Nor have I ever received one cent for these communications, nor have I ever, as has been asserted, delivered a lecture on this subject. Since that time up to the present a few friends have continued to investigate with me this great subject. Through me as an humble instrument communications are given. I am magnetised without the agency of any earthly operator, and without volition on my part. Nor do I ever on coming out of this magnetic state or trance have any recollection of any thing that has been said or written through me. Very many communications have been received through me during the past year. Most of these are in the hands of those to whom they were given. If in one of these there is a single sentence which the purest mind may not read, or which does not teach the holy doctrine of charity, love, peace and good will to man I am unhesitatingly hallenge its publication to the world.

As God, whom I reverence and adore, is my judge, I solemnly declare if this be not spiritual, I know not what it is I was not permitted to enjoy my seclusion however. My name was heralded to the world, branded with infamy; charged with deceiving, and destroying the happiness of a family on Long Island, and consigning its head, Mr. George Doughty, to a lunatic asylum. My acquaintance in this family commenced some fifteen months since. I was introduced to Mr. Doughty by his sister-in-law, Mrs. Taylor, in this city, where Mr. Doughty and daughter were on a visit. Some months later, I was urged by Mrs. Taylor and other connections, to visit the family on Long Island. I did not wish to go—could not leave my children, or the business in which I was then engaged, and which was at the time yielding me a large profit. They urged me to go—that in doing so I would render the family essential service—that Mr. Doughty was a wealthy man, and that pecuniarily I should lose nothing, &c. &c.

In April I went on in company with the daughter who had remained in this city up to this time. One member of the family was suffering with a cancerous disease (small pox) on my arrival, and of which she died two days subsequently. Some days afterwards Mrs. Doughty was attacked with the same disease, and in rapid succession every member in the family except the youngest child. I remained with them almost alone (for neighbors and friends feared to approach) treating and curing them with spirits