

production but of transportation, and the real cause lay in the lack of sufficient facilities for shipment afforded by the Mississippi River, and the opening of other routes to the New York markets.

As early as 1842 the New Orleans *Picayune*, in characteristic fashion, had called the attention of its readers to the fact that the transportation facilities of the Mississippi were extremely unsatisfactory: "Our conceptions are every day awakening more fully to the important and intimate connection of trading interests between New Orleans and the towering city of St. Louis, a bond of union already vibrating with loud pulsations from one place to another. * * * The Upper Mississippi, in its present condition, is the greatest wet blanket upon the spirit and enterprise of the West that may be conceived, or could possibly exist. The cry for relief is already swelling in the West, and shall we not lend our echoes to promulgate the sound? Yes, and let our united voices commingle in a roar, loud as the surge of the broad-spread Mexico, that shall, even like the singing sea-shell, buzz in the ears of Congress until proper action is taken upon a subject of such magnitude. * * * Illinois, alone, can victual the whole United States! Beef, bread, beans, potatoes, and a vast amount of the surplus produce of this prolific and fertile state is driven to Chicago and so across the lakes. The trade from Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa flies our market by the same route."¹

To the same effect was a memorial to Congress from the Galena chamber of commerce, February 6, 1840.² At the Memphis convention of 1845,³ the question of improvement of the Western rivers was discussed, and a report was read

¹ Quoted in *N. W. Gazette and Galena Advertiser*, Jan. 29, 1842.

² *Exec. Docs.*, No. 68, 26th Cong., 1st sess., vol. iii.

³ This was a convention of delegates from Tennessee, Missouri, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Illinois, Indiana, Texas, Iowa Territory, Mississippi, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Ohio, met to consider internal improvements and the general industrial condition of the West, South and Southwest. See *De Bow's Review*, i., p. 7 (Jan. and June, 1846).