Swamp Lands:

The Annual of 1879 under Florida says that the quantity of land so far selected in the State as swamp and over-flowed land is about fifteen acres, that is under the Act of 1850 the State had in 1880 fifteen million acres of land. The land however, had not all been conserved as the law required, so in 1879 there was only 10,200,000 of which the State had right to dispose. Every State at this time was seeking from the Government help to protect or to rescue territories within itself.

In Mississippi it was the improvement of the river and repairs of its bank. It is the greatest artery of internal commerce in the world, but filled with snags and sand bars. ~~It turns~~ all the discussion which has been going on ever since characterize 1880. The great plea for the control of it was based on the then traffic.

"The system of rivers of which the Mississippi is the grand trunk comprises 35 rivers and 15,000 miles of waterway, floating the largest inland commerce on the face of the globe. Upon these waters float more than 3,000 vessels, with a carrying capacity of about 500,000 tons. This vast fleet is largely increasing year by year, and pushing its pioneers into rivers of the far West and Northwest that were unknown half a century ago. Over thirty steamers more than a year ago were plying upon the Upper Missouri and the Yellowstone. The Mississippi is the outlet for the enormous agricultural productions of the fruitful West. The exportation of grain and of meat and other products of the farm has gained each year an enormous increase. Transportation by railroad when agricultural products are cheap, becomes an item disproportionate to the price received in the market. Commerce then reverts to its old waterways, and demands every facility. The means of water transportation have changed.

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

Swamp Lands (Continued)

A single tug carries down a fleet of barges whose cargoes would load a train of 500 cars. One tug carried a tow of barges into New Orleans with 600,000 bushels of coal, a freight for 1800 cars."

(Appletons' Annual Cyclopaedia of the year 1879. New Series Volume IV. New York, 1880 Pages 635,636)

Every State that had swamp land was a problem.

For instance in 1879 there were 2,198,476 acres.

Digital Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library