

The National Tribune.

GEORGE E. LEMON & CO.,
Editors and Proprietors.

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GEORGE E. LEMON & CO.,

Editors and Proprietors,

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INTRODUCTORY.

Unheralded, without previous announcement of any sort, a new candidate for public favor introduces itself into the journalistic world. There is a necessity for its existence. It is intended to fill a vacancy in journalism that should not have been left unfilled so long. Its life will depend upon its sustenance. When the motives which impel its publication no longer exist, and the objects toward which its devotion is to be directed are accomplished, it will remain then to be seen whether there is need for it longer.

Seldom is a periodical established with a well-defined object; with an actual, expressed motive. The purposes of newspapers are often intentionally concealed; and a pretense may often cover a variety of objects far from the one expressed. But, in the publication of this paper, the intention is, to advocate, particularly, five great measures:

I. The passage of a law by Congress equalizing the bounties paid to soldiers of the late war.

II. The passage of an act by Congress, under which the pension of a wounded, injured, diseased soldier, or the family of a dead soldier, may begin from the time of death, or the date of discharge on account of disability.

III. The extension of the pension laws, so as to include soldiers of the Mexican war.

IV. Putting on pension-rolls all survivors of the war of 1812, and all widows of such, married prior to 1850, regardless of the period of service of the soldier.

V. Action by Congress to remedy innumerable defects in the pension laws, which will be pointed out from time to time, particularly the repeal of section 4717 of the Revised Statutes.

These objects are of direct and personal interest, not only to us, but to every pensioner in the United States; to every soldier who fought

under the Union flag; to every widow and every child of a soldier; and generally, to every soldier's friend. The amount of influence to be exerted by these pages will depend entirely upon the circulation this paper receives. The subscription price has been placed low, so that it is within the reach of all. Let those who receive this copy circulate it among their friends, particularly among the soldiers of their locality. Our interests and the interests of soldiers are mutual. By helping us, you help yourselves. Do not allow yourselves to be drawn into the support of irresponsible advertising sheets, but concentrate your energies here, where they will be directly applied to the purpose you and we wish to accomplish.

A strong effort will be made during the approaching session of Congress to bring about such legislation as we ask above. In order to aid this effort, it was thought best, among some of the friends of the soldiers in Washington, to issue monthly such a paper as this, that in its columns might be recorded what is necessary to be done, the progress that is made, and the reasons why its accomplishment is wise and just.

Let every comrade lend us a hand. The near approach of Congress makes it essential that, whatever is to be done, be done immediately. Let us hear from you quickly.

THE PENSION OFFICE.

Under the management of Commissioner Bentley, the Pension Office has reached a degree of efficiency unknown to the administration of any previous Commissioner. His ripe judgment, sterling integrity, and excellent abilities, combined with a faculty of dispatching business with method and rapidity, give him eminent fitness for the position he holds, and it is for the interest of the pensioners, as well as for the interest of the Government, that he be retained in office. We take pleasure in saying that Commissioner Bentley enjoys the warmest confidence and regard of both the President and the Secretary of the Interior. Congress should, however, make provision for the increase of his salary, which is, proportionately, very much smaller than that of any other officer of the Government of his official rank and responsibilities. The Auditors of the Treasury receive four thousand dollars per annum. The Commissioner of Customs receives forty-five hundred. The Commissioner of Internal Revenue receives six thousand. The Comptrollers of the Treasury receive five thousand. The Comptroller of the Currency receives the same amount, while the Commissioner of Pensions, whose office demands abilities and responsibility equal to all of the above, and greater than most of them, only receives thirty-five hundred dollars. Commissioner Bentley disburses thirty million dollars a year—more than any other single bureau officer under the Government. He has agents under him who receive three and, in some instances, four times as much salary as he receives; and yet he is responsible for their good conduct and official efficiency.

SOLDIERS, don't subscribe to any fund, or pay money to any person under the pretense of aiding in the passage of the bounty bill. No money is needed, and those who ask for it are swindlers. Subscribe for THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE, and circulate it among those who have influence.

WHAT EQUALIZATION WILL COST.

The only argument that is brought against the passage of the bill to equalize the bounties of the soldiers of the late war is, that it will take more money from the Treasury than the Government can spare. But this argument has been met again and again by the testimony of men who know, and by statistics from the official records of the War Department. Some of the enemies of the measure have asserted that three or four hundred million dollars would be needed to adjust the bounties of soldiers with the fairness that should be given to all, but this is absurd.

Adjutant General Townsend, who is more competent to give an opinion on this subject than any other man, because he was in charge of the Adjutant General's Office in Washington throughout the war, and superintended the records of enlistments, gave as his testimony before the Committee on Military Affairs of the House of Representatives, in 1874, that, as nearly as he could calculate, from the records of the department, the aggregate amount of money necessary in order to equalize bounties under the bill proposed, would not be much more than twenty millions.

At the beginning of the late war, the accounts of the army, and the payments made of bounty and pay to soldiers, were kept as if the war were to last only sixty days or so, at which time it was supposed the accounts could be easily examined and adjusted. A defective system, once started, was hard to change, so that the war was closed before the book-keeping of the department became anywhere near as accurate and methodical as it should have been at its commencement. Then the work of classification became one of enormous proportions, and even now cannot be accomplished at all satisfactorily. Had the system of records been more perfect, we could have told exactly how much this equalization measure would cost, but in the confusion, it can only be approximated, using the best data that can be obtained, as General Townsend has done.

The following table will show the number of troops called for, and the number actually obtained at each of the calls during the war:

Date of call.	Number called.	Period of service.	Number obtained.
April 15, 1861.....	75,000	3 months.	93,326
May 3, 1861.....	42,034		
May 3, 1861, regulars.....	22,714	3 years.	714,231
May 3, 1861, seamen.....	18,000		
July 22, 25, 1861.....	500,000	3 months.	15,007
May and June, 1862.....	300,000		
July 2, 1862.....	300,000	3 years.	431,958
August 4, 1862.....	300,000	9 months.	87,584
June 15, 1863.....	100,000	6 months.	16,361
October 17, 1863.....	300,000	3 years.	374,807
February 1, 1864.....	200,000	3 years.	284,021
March 14, 1864.....	200,000	3 years.	
April 23, 1864.....	85,000	100 days.	83,652
July 18, 1864.....	500,000	1, 2, and 3 years.	384,882
December 19, 1864.....	300,000	1, 2, and 3 years.	204,568
Totals.....	2,942,748		2,600,401

Aggregate number obtained, reduced to three years' standard, 2,042,150.

From this table, it will seen, that the total number of troops serving at different times in the Union army during the late war was two million six hundred and ninety thousand four hundred and one. This includes those men who served for three, six, and nine months, and those who enlisted for two or three years, or the war. Thus, for the purpose of calculation, it is estimated, that from April, 1861, to April, 1865, a period of four years, two million forty-two thousand one hundred and fifty men were called to serve three years. As some enlisted early and others towards the close of the war, the question arises: How many enlisted men actually served three years? It is the opinion of prominent army officers, that not less than one-half of the entire army served for this length of time, and they give, as the average force of the army, from the beginning to the end of the war, one million