

# The National Tribune

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

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

P. O. Drawer 325. 916 F Street, WASHINGTON, D. C.

## Back Numbers.

Friends, we are sorry to inform you we cannot supply back numbers. We have had such a rush and demand for them, that we exhausted a large extra edition. You can have the January number, 1879, free.

## Cheering Words.

Soldiers, we thank you. From every quarter we are receiving new subscriptions, singly and in clubs, and still let the work go on with you. Forward your names and those of your friends in a club, and stand by us. We have "enlisted for the war," and we will battle for you till your just rights are all secured. Let your watchword be: "Stand by the TRIBUNE, which stands by the soldiers."

## Our March Number

Will issue immediately after Congress adjourns, which, being the short session, will be on the 3d of March. This number will be a specially interesting one, embracing, among other matter, all private acts passed for the benefit of those who served the country as soldiers or seamen, or their heirs.

The general legislation of Congress pertaining to soldiers will also be reviewed. In the present number we were obliged to give much space to treating on the arrears bill, all are now talking about, and other deeply important matter has been crowded out. Now is the time to subscribe.

## Happy Soldiers.

From all parts of the country we hear cheerful words from the soldiers about the passage of the arrears bill. The "boys in blue" feel they are becoming more and more appreciated.

Mr. Clifton, who calls himself "A poor invalid pensioner," sends us a poetic contribution, which, however, we have not room for entire, the first lines of which run:

'Tis good to be merry and wise,  
'Tis good to be honest and true.  
Our Congress has passed a good pension law,  
Huzza for the Red, White, and Blue.

Mr. Clifton, there is another treat in store for you. The *Equalization Bounty Bill* is demanded by the soldiers all over the land, and Congress is bound to listen to their demands. Then you must be ready with another poem.

## Partial Resumption.

The Government has resumed specie payments. The promises to pay issued by the Treasury during the war cease to be "promises," they are performances. We have evinced no disposition to repudiate the enormous amount of bonds and greenbacks issued during the war, and yet we have but partially resumed. Our legislation has been chiefly in the interest of the monied classes. Let us recur briefly to the past. Soon after the rebellion of 1861 commenced, we had exhausted the funds in the Government coffers and were, in fact, a bankrupt nation. Not a dollar could be obtained at the Treasury for any claim, and when Secretary Chase, having consent of Congress, launched forth his greenbacks upon the country, general distrust and suspicion rested upon them. Wall-street capitalists, and bankers all over the land, fancied the nation engaged in a struggle which might speedily eventuate in its complete dissolution. It was a period that we look back to almost with dismay, for the Ship of State appeared to be driving directly upon the inevitable rocks. In this sad condition of affairs, who promptly stepped forward to our relief? *The soldiers.* When President Lincoln issued his first call for 75,000 men, hundreds of thousands volunteered. They were ready to fight for \$13 per month in greenbacks; they had faith in the Republic, and they determined to uphold it.

Imbued with the spirit of those who left the marks of their blood-stained feet at Valley Forge, we believe they would have fought for their country without reward. Their action and example infused new life and courage into the nation. It was discovered by timid politicians and lukewarm millionaires that the "plain people," as Lincoln called them, were determined to save the country. Suppose, for an instant, that these \$13 per month privates had stood back and exclaimed: "We will not fight in this cause; we refuse to leave our wives and children and homes; let the politicians and noted men take up the musket; it is no war of ours." We repeat it, suppose the soldiers had thus declined to answer the President's call; what now would have been the status of the nation? We can readily imagine. A general disintegration of the Republic, with States, which had belonged to it, constantly at war, as were those of Greece. Well, this action of the soldier rallied the spirits of the people all over the land; every one felt buoyed up by their strong arms and stout hearts. But, notwithstanding the power and numbers of the Union troops, they met with many reverses. They fought against valiant men, headed by a Lee, a Jackson, and a Johnson. Regiments were decimated and destroyed and fresh troops took their places. "When would the war end and how would it terminate?" were questions constantly in every mouth. Government funds depreciated, during our darkest days, to such a degree that a one dollar greenback was worth but forty cents. Bonds for enormous amounts were issued, bearing a rate of interest of six per cent., which were paid for in these greenbacks worth forty cents on the dollar. The soldiers, deprived of all the comforts and pleasures of home, uncomplainingly performed their duty, though paid but a mere pittance, in a depreciated currency, with which to add to their comfort in the field or to send to their poor families and home, while the bankers, the speculators, and the contractors were reaping rich harvests, out of Government funds and in supplying the wants of the army. Surely here is a strong, equitable, unquestionable claim, due every Union soldier. The amount of it, however, could not well be arrived at, but we think that the bill equalizing bounties, which has already passed the House of Representatives, will be deemed by the soldiers as a proper method of settling their claims. The faith of the nation is solemnly pledged for the payment of this debt. Every recruiting officer, in the regular and volunteer service, promised bounties, and such promises were but slightly redeemed. In 1862 especially, during the darkest days of the war, many thousands enlisted who never received a cent of bounty.

In conclusion, then, let the United States fully resume. Let it meet the honest and just demands, of the soldier of Indiana as well as the banker of New York. Is this a nation where favored classes are alone entitled to consideration? Thousands of

contractors and speculators have reaped the richest harvests from the Government, and now when the man who exposed his bosom to the storm of battle and endured every hardship comes forward, asking his simple rights, there are found men—shame upon them—who exclaim, "We are too poor to pay you." Too poor to pay the men without whose assistance we would have been without liberty, without law, without everything dear to us as a people!! But what is this enormous (?) sum, necessary to pay, in order to do justice to our soldiers and sailors? Adjutant-General Townsend estimated it—and he had charge of all the enlistments during the war—at \$20,000,000, and the Paymaster-General believes it will not exceed \$28,000,000. What a paltry sum for the United States to pay! Soldiers and sailors, you have justice as your constant advocate, and you will secure the passage of this Equalization Bill, by using unrelaxed efforts to obtain your honest demands, for

"Ever the Truth comes uppermost  
And ever is Justice done."

## Appropriations for Arrears of Pensions.

Ever since the passage of the act granting arrears of pensions, which act went through both Houses, as having the approval of both Committees on Pensions, and of the Commissioner himself, no effort has been spared in certain quarters to raise difficulties, suggest questions, magnify the sum demanded, and in all ways hinder and defeat the enjoyment and use of the provisions of the act itself.

We have elsewhere demonstrated that the law in question was based upon contract, that its justice has been admitted for years, and delayed time and again by various accidents of legislation.

From the date of its passage, the officials intrusted with its execution, who formerly sustained it, have changed front for some reason and under some pressure, and the great New York dailies have constantly quoted the Pension Office as raising difficulties in relation to the construction of the law.

No serious effort appears to be in progress either in the House or Senate to provide the necessary funds to carry out the law.

It begins to look very much as if Congress intended to back down and fail to appropriate at all.

They seem frightened by the magnitude of their own previous action, and alarmed by the results of the measure so unanimously passed.

It is to be hoped that this spirit of inaction will pass away, and that they will set themselves manfully and honestly to give efficacy to the law.

If, upon a careful review of the act now in force, it shall appear that anything should be struck out, or anything added, let it be done, and done at once, and then let the money be raised in some clear and definite form, and be made immediately applicable.

Not only is this demanded by considerations of justice to the pensioners, but it becomes a question of high political and economic importance.

Thirty-four millions of dollars of just debt due by the United States for the consideration of its own continued existence, a just debt to its own citizens and soldiers for the outlay of life and health, which preserved the Union, and by so doing preserved the national credit—these thirty-four millions of dollars immediately set free and circulating in small sums throughout a hundred thousand neighborhoods, will give the needed stimulus to local enterprise, will infuse new blood into the channels of trade at home, and will help more than any other one thing to quicken the dragging steps of the Nation up the steep path of improvement in its financial and industrial affairs.

To the luxury of paying an honest debt will be added the certainty that such payment will be a good business operation, and will be returned in a short time a hundred fold in the general advance and progress of society.

Do not delay then; and, above all things, do not let this session pass without final action.

## Arrears of Pension Blanks.

Remember, we send to all our subscribers the blanks for arrears of pensions free, on receipt of a three-cent stamp to pay postage. They can fill up these blanks and send them at once to the Pension Office. The sooner they are filed, the sooner they will receive attention.