

The National Tribune

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WASHINGTON, D. C., NOVEMBER, 1880.

"To care for him who has borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans."—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

"The validity of the public debt of the United States authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned."—SEC. 4, ARTICLE XIV, CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

"The Pension Laws ought of right to be administered by a soldier who has been baptized in the fire of battle, to the end that they may be liberally construed and administered in the broad spirit of justice and liberality."—PLATFORM OF "OUR COUNTRY'S DEFENDERS."

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The Presidential Result.

The contest between Generals Garfield and Hancock for the Presidency has closed, and the former has won the prize of the Chief Magistracy. Happily the majority of the former saves us from any alarming contest such as was exhibited four years ago, when Hayes and Tilden were candidates. We hope for great good from Garfield's administration—good for the Nation, good for the heroes who saved it when in the throes of dissolution. Beyond question he is a man of superior attainments, and having been long in public life he should well understand the needs of the country. One of the brightest points in the character of the President-elect is his known sympathy for the poor and lowly, and, having been a distinguished officer in the Army, he will naturally feel for and be disposed to render ample justice to our soldiers. Most earnestly do we hope he will give the place of Commissioner of Pensions to a wounded ex-soldier or sailor, one who can and will closely sympathize with those of his comrades who suffered in the bitter struggle which saved the life of the Nation. By thus doing too he will be in accord with the statutes of the United States and the views of that great organization of soldiers called "Our Country's Defenders," one plank in whose platform reads:

"The pension laws ought of right to be administered by a soldier who has been baptized in fire of battle, to the end that they may be liberally construed and administered in the broad spirit of justice and liberality."

Health and congratulations for President Garfield

The Condition of Ireland.

The "Green Isle of the Ocean," which has furnished America since the days of her independence from the British yoke with millions of people, famous for their industry, enterprise and valor, as well as their devotion to the land of their adoption, must ever be an object of interest to our countrymen. America owes a large debt of gratitude to the sons of Erin. During the war of the revolution thousands of Irishmen deserted the standard of King George and enlisted under that of Washington, and their loyalty and love for the cause of freedom was in no single instance called in question. When the Union was threatened with dissolution, Irishmen numbering one hundred and forty-one thousand two hundred and twenty-one enlisted under the banner of the Stars and Stripes, each man ready to die for the preservation of our institutions. The Irish Brigades who fought at Lexington, Antietam, Malvern, Fair Oaks, and on many other fields were unsurpassed in valor.

The soil of America has drank the precious blood of thousands of brave Irishmen. We are doing ourselves injustice if we cease to remember the sacrifices of these heroes, and we must feel a deep interest in the land which gave them birth. The present condition of Ireland calls for our deepest sympathy and liveliest apprehension. She is now in the throes of a great political convulsion. There appears to be a general uprising of the people, growing out of the oppression of the landlord system. In what a melancholy situation is this unhappy land. Teeming with fertility, abundantly able to support an enormous population, we behold her people abandoning the country they love so well and seeking homes in foreign lands, to avoid the pangs of hunger and speedy death, or see them, as now, preparing for the conflict with a view of ridding Ireland of the curse of landlordism. Nearly the whole island is owned by a few noblemen, who expend the rental of their acres in sumptuous living in England and on the continent. This money is extorted through what is known as "middle men," who oft take the sum total of all the earthly possessions of the tenant and drive him and his wife and children from the door. It is said that these noblemen own the lands inhabited by this poor tenantry. The letter of the law may give them such property, but how was it obtained? Why by robbery—by conquest, and after conquest dividing among certain chiefs, the progenitors of the present landlords, all the lands of the Island. These lands belonged to the ancestors of those who live in poverty, aye, oft on the borders of starvation—on this very soil. We cannot write on the subject without experiencing feelings of deep indignation. Now, from present indications, two alternatives are presented to the British government as to its policy toward Ireland. It must be prepared to enter upon a bloody and expensive war with that country on its soil, or be willing to do justice to its inhabitants and make Ireland in feeling, as she is in law, a part of the British Empire. The latter course Queen Victoria will find far less expensive and far less dishonorable. And how shall Ireland be pacified? By the purchase from the landlords by the government of these vast estates and their allotment to the now tenantry at very low prices, payable in installments, running through a long series of years. This could readily be done. The amount paid would not increase materially the national debt of Great Britain. The act would be one in the interests of the soundest political wisdom, and would be indorsed and applauded by the Christian sentiment of the world.

The Postal Service.

There were in the service of the Post-office Department the 30th of June, 1880, 5,862 contractors for the transportation of mails on public routes. There were also 1,857 special officers, each with a mail-carrier, whose pay from the Department is not allowed to exceed the net postal yield of the office. Of the public routes in operation there were 11,112, aggregating in length 343,808 miles, at an annual cost of \$18,747,991. Adding compensation of railway postoffice clerks, route agents, mail-route messengers, local agents, etc., amounting to \$3,548,278, the aggregate cost of the entire service for the fiscal

year ended June 30, 1880, was \$22,296,269. The service was divided as follows: Railroad route, 85,320 miles in length; annual transportation, 96,497,463 miles; annual cost, \$10,539,271 of which amount \$1,259,216 was for railway post-office car service. Steamboat routes, 23,320 miles in length; annual transportation, 5,668,538 miles; annual cost, \$887,221. Other routes on which the mails are required to be conveyed with celerity, certainty and security, 235,248 miles in length; annual transportation, 76,070,995 miles; annual cost, \$7,321,499. During the year railroad routes were increased in length 5,329 miles, and in cost \$971,681. Steamboat routes were increased 2,080 miles in length, and in cost \$132,833. Star routes were increased in length 19,768 miles, at an increased cost of \$919,669. There was an increase over the preceding year in total length of routes of 27,177 miles, at an increase in annual cost of \$2,024,183. The increase in cost for railway post-office clerks, route agents, etc., amounted to \$259,214, making a total increase in the cost of the service over the preceding year of \$2,283,397.

Washington and Georgetown.

Before the city of Washington was laid out by its immortal founder, Georgetown was a place of consequence. It and Alexandria, below on the Potomac, shipped more flour to home and foreign markets than does now New York city, and it was the residence of hundreds of the old families of Virginia, who indulged in abundant hospitality and display. Behold the change. "Time does indeed work wonders." Now the Capital City contains 170,000 inhabitants, while Georgetown, separated from it only by the little stream called Rock Creek, is a mere village. Soon the ancient town will be swallowed up by its younger sister and its name be no more. There are doubtless children now living in Washington who will oft be asked the question by their children: "Father, where was that place called Georgetown I hear old folks talking about?" In regard to taxation, police, fire service, and sanitary regulations, the two places are now one, and an order has just been issued to name the streets and number them to correspond with those in Washington.

Silver for Our Soldiers.

The production of silver in the mines of Colorado and Nevada, as well as the new ones recently opened in Mexico, is rapidly increasing. The demands of commerce, owing to the rapid growth of our people, will soon make it the legal metal as a standard of value. Now vast quantities of it fill our Government coffers. According to the report of the United States Treasurer seventy-three millions of standard silver dollars have been coined within the last two years. Of that vast amount only thirty-four per cent. has gone into circulation; the balance, forty-three millions, is in the Treasury awaiting Congressional legislation. Some writer who appears to be posted on the subject estimates there are eight hundred wagon loads thus hoarded up and of no more use to the people, as a circulating medium, to push on the prosperity of the country, than eight hundred loads of old iron. Well, what should be done with this dormant silver? Why, let it be used to pay some of our just debts to the soldiers, especially that due under the Equalization Bounty bill, that ought to have been passed years and years ago. What great good would this specie, now idle and worthless in Government vaults, do to our soldiers all over the country; how it would start the wheels of business in hundreds of localities. Now is the time—at this session of Congress—to put this bill through, for, as Senator Morton said in his great speech on the subject:

Mr. President, justice to the soldiers cannot always be deferred. It must and will triumph some time. If it does not come this Congress it will come at some other Congress. It is a part of the war debt, as much as the 5-20 bonds or 10-40 bonds. It is founded on the same principle of justice. It is an obligation resting upon this Nation, and if it takes \$20,000,000, or \$50,000,000, can make no difference. It is a debt this Nation honestly owes and it ought to be paid. In other words, let the bounty be equalized; put all honorably-discharged soldiers upon the same basis; pay them at the same rate. They are entitled to it. The justice of it no man can dispute, and that is all that this bill contemplates. I am for it. I vote for it with all my heart.