

THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE

Established 1877. PUBLISHED WEEKLY. ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR, IN ADVANCE.

Six months, 75 cents. No subscription for a less period received.

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CORRESPONDENCE.—Correspondence is solicited from every section in regard to Grand Army, Sons of Veterans, Pension, Military, Agricultural, Industrial and Household matters, and letters to the Editor will always receive prompt attention.

THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE, Washington, D. C.

ENTERED AT THE WASHINGTON POST OFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE

WASHINGTON, D. C., OCTOBER 5, 1893.

MEXICAN PENSION ROLL

One Which is Not "Fargled," and In Which There Are No Suspensions

On the Mexican Pension Roll there are the names of 15,215 survivors and 7,282 widows, and something over 3,000 cases were pending at latest reports. This makes a total of 25,497, or several thousand more men than the United States had in Mexico at any one time during the war.

These all receive either \$8 or \$12 a month. Among the names are those of the widow of Gen. Samuel Cooper, a New Yorker by birth, who was Adjutant-General of the United States Army at the outbreak of the war, and used his position to aid the rebels in preparing for the struggle.

The widow of Thomas J. ("Stonewall") Jackson, who was next to Lee the most popular commander of the rebel army, is drawing a pension since June 6, 1887.

The widow of Maj.-Gen. George E. Pickett, who commanded a division in the rebel army. The widow of Maj.-Gen. Gideon J. Pillow, who commanded a division in the rebel army.

The widow of Lieut.-Gen. A. P. Hill, who commanded one of the three corps of Lee's army. The widow of Sidney Smith Lee, who was dismissed from the Navy for "going over to the enemy," and afterward became a Commodore in the rebel navy.

Brig.-Gen. Jas. R. Chalmers, who was Forrest's chief lieutenant. Maj.-Gen. Dabney H. Maury, who commanded the rebel troops at the battle of Chickasaw Bayou.

Hon. S. B. Maxey, late United States Senator from Texas, who has been drawing his pension since May 27, 1887. He was a Major-General in the rebel army.

Hon. Jas. Z. George, Senator from Mississippi, and who served in the rebel army as a Colonel. The number of his certificate is 17,214.

Hon. A. H. Colquitt, Senator from Georgia, who was a Major-General in the rebel army, draws a pension under certificate 19,199.

The widows above mentioned are of men who were educated at the Government expense, and afterward fought to destroy the Government. They went on the roll at once, while last April there were pending the claims of 145,520 widows of Union soldiers who had not yet been able to get on the roll.

Total amount paid on account of bonds and interest notes, principal, interest, and premium, to bondholders to June 30, 1893, and including fiscal year 1891: Principal \$1,791,399,134.70 Interest 2,531,769,221.17 Premiums 119,863,326.71 Total \$4,442,031,742.58

The proposition for a union of the free silver and Protective Tariff men, to prevent on the one hand unconditional repeal of the so-called Sherman law, and on the other wise reduction of the tariff, seems to have died reborn.

THE BEST WAY

To get ready for the great fight for soldiers' rights is to get up big clubs for the veterans' champion, THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF PENSIONS.

The first report of Commissioner Lochren, of the Pension Bureau, which we publish this week in full, will be read with deep interest. It is far less voluminous and comprehensive than has been the rule with his predecessors, which may be accounted for by the newness of the Commissioner in his office.

At the close of the fiscal year for which it is made he had been less than two months in his office—too brief a time to admit of more than a superficial knowledge of it and its multifarious features.

The first thing that arrests attention is the statement that 33,690 pensioners were dropped from the roll last year, from death or other causes. Taken by itself, this shows that the death-rate among pensioners is about double the average mortality in the community.

Even this statement does not set forth the full magnitude of the mortality. The average rate of death in the community is raised by the enormous proportion of deaths of children of five years of age and under. A proper comparison of the rates of mortality would, we think, show that the veterans are dying off four or five times as fast as their fellow-citizens.

An analysis of the table of those dropped shows the following causes: Death, 25,095; Marriage, 1,208; Minors, by legal limitation, 1,845; Failure to claim, 2,916; Other causes, 2,236. Total, 33,690.

The item "failure to claim" may be safely added to the death item, making the total number of deaths among pensioners 27,951. We cannot but regard the Commissioner's discussion of the act of June 27, 1890, and his defense of his procedure under it as quite unworthy of his high reputation as a jurist with which he entered his office.

To even the casual reader it is clear that he is begging the question throughout, and putting a strained and forced interpretation upon the statute quite different from that which it received from the Congress which enacted it, and from the Congress following that.

The interpretation placed upon the law by Commissioner Lochren's predecessor, and which Commissioner Lochren now harshly criticizes, received the most emphatic approval of the Congress which passed the law. The succeeding Congress, which was strongly hostile to Commissioner Raun, never for an instant called in question the correctness of his conception of the meaning of the law, while sharply attacking his application of it to a number of individual instances.

Commissioner Lochren now takes issue, not only with President Harrison, Secretary Noble, Assistant Secretary Bussey and Commissioner Raun, but with two preceding Congresses as to what the law really means. Apparently, he tries to narrow down the provision, "incapacity to perform manual labor," to the ability to lift stones and carry weights, to dig and delve, chop and hammer—the very rudest and coarsest forms of manual labor.

In a civilization so complicated as ours, such rude struggles with the forces of gravitation form but a small portion of the manual labor performed by our people. Commissioner Lochren's idea is that of a barbarous time, when men were mere hewers of wood and drawers of water, carriers of burdens and weight-lifters.

WHAT IT WILL SHOW.

The examination of 1,000 cases taken consecutively from the files of the Pension Bureau will show absolutely the nature of the whole roll. The shams and frauds, if there are any, are not confined to any one portion of the roll; they were not allowed at any one time, and they are not grouped by themselves.

They are, if they exist at all, scattered about equally through the entire roll. Consequently, 1,000 cases will have just the exact proportion of frauds that are to be found in every other 1,000 cases that are to be found on the entire roll.

They will also have just as many meritorious cases. Whatever there is good and what- ever there is bad on the roll are equally intermingled through. Therefore, an examination of 1,000 cases is exactly as good as the examination of the whole 995,000 for the purpose of determining the nature of the entire roll.

An examination of 1,000 cases could be made in a few days by turning a large force of the Pension Bureau upon it. An examination of the entire roll would take years, and before it was done public interest in the matter would have died out, and most of the pensioners would be dead.

Therefore let us have an examination of 1,000 cases made now, while everybody is talking about pension matters, when the publication of the exact facts will have a wide-spread public interest, when it will affect public opinion and Congressional action, and when the vindication that we are sure it will give will come as a grateful tribute to comrades who are yet alive.

"TREASURY LOOTING." What impedes it is to talk of the veterans of the country being "Treasury looters." Are not the men who fought four long years to save the Nation presumably better guardians of the Nation's honor and well being than men who never made a single sacrifice for the country?

The veterans not only fought for the country, freely impelling life and limb, but they sacrificed a great deal more money by their service than the bondholders lent the Nation; and, furthermore, they came home, and for years subjected themselves to unheard-of taxation in order to pay off the claims of the men who had lent the country money.

They were the firmest champions of paying the bondholders to the uttermost cent of their claims, and in the best money—in gold. Is it not wickedly absurd to speak of such men "looting the Treasury"?

And, too, cannot these men be trusted to make the pension-roll a "roll of honor"? Who did so much as they to make it a roll of honor in the first place? Did the men who now declaim about "bummers," "penny-jumpers," "coffee-coolers," etc., ever speak more complimentary of the Union soldiers? Did they ever say that the enlistment roll of the Union army was a "roll of honor"?

The veterans of the Union army made the enlistment roll one of the brightest honor, and they can be relied on to make and keep the pension-roll one of similar integrity and esteem.

MAKE EVERY CLAIM "SPECIAL."

Let us have every claim now in the Pension Bureau made "special" and settled without future delay. Certainly, 28 years after the war closed, this should be done.

It is high time that the Government paid a debt incurred more than a quarter of a century ago. We have reduced the prices of all our watches to keep abreast of the recent decline incident to the times. It cannot be expected that such a condition will long prevail.

Take for example the Waltham repeater, that formerly sold for at least \$135, now offered at \$65. This is below what the watch cost the manufacturer. It will never be offered at such a price again short of the life of a generation, if at all.

The moral of the situation is: Save money by buying now what you want while it is cheap. See our offers in another column.

THE Free Traders are having a hard time with the delegations which appear before the Committee on Ways and Means in the interest of a retention of the McKinley Tariff, and they are striving to let the country know as little as possible of the proceedings.

Chairman Wilson and colleagues are confronted with two many hard facts to make their contemplated work of tariff smashing an agreeable prospect.

In the face of the constant assertion that there is no drunkenness in France, statistics show that alcoholic insanity has doubled in 15 years, and the number of persons who have been placed under restraint on account of it has increased 25 per cent. in the last three years.

The Brazilian war seems to be of the usual South American type: a great deal of powder burned at long range, a great deal of noise, an immense amount of pronouncements, and scarcely anybody hurt.

The tin-plate liars could not down the industry. The figures show that we have been making much more than we had anticipated.

The country seems to be taking care of itself without waiting for Congress. Business is steadily reviving everywhere.

FACTS AND FIGURES.

Some Interesting Regimental and Other Statistics of the War. EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: In looking over "Fox's Regimental Losses in the Civil War," I have gathered the following information which may be new to many readers:

Table with columns: Regiment, Killed, Wounded, Missing, Present. Includes entries for 1st Minn., Gettysburg; 24th Wis., Gettysburg; 26th N. C., Gettysburg; 6th Wis., Shiloh; 10th Tenn., Chickamauga; 20th Mass., Fredericksburg.

Table with columns: Regiment, Killed and Died, Died of Disease, Died of Accidents, Drowned, Murdered, Killed after Capture, Suicide, Executions, Causes not stated.

It seems the records of losses were not correctly kept in the rebel army, and the Union army not accurately. The mortality statistics of the war of the rebellion will never exactly be known.—W. C. YARD, Co. K, 4th Pa. Cav.

RECENT LITERATURE. THE BOOK OF THE FAIR. By Hubert Bancroft. Published by The Bancroft Co., Chicago. It is a question worthy of some consideration as to the best form in which to preserve such features of the World's Fair Buildings and Exhibits as are best worth preserving.

THE American Farmer. The Oldest Agricultural Paper in America. 1729 NEW YORK AVENUE, WASHINGTON, D. C. Published on the 1st and 15th of Each Month. Price, 50 Cents a Year.

THE SIGN OF FOUR. By A. Conan Doyle. Published by J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, and for sale by Brentano, Washington. Price \$1. This is an admirable detective story, and much above the usual range of such stories in plot, skill of construction, and art of telling.

THE American Farmer and THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE will be sent to any address for \$1.25 a year. Mr. Reed as a Philosopher. Before the conversation had gone beyond the serious point, I remember asking the ex-Speaker how he felt at the time when the entire Democratic press of the country had denounced upon him when he was being held up as "The Czar."

Loss of Both Eyes. Mr. Gallinger recently introduced a bill (S. 304) providing that from and after the passage of this act all persons on the pension-roll, and all persons hereafter granted pensions, who, while in the military and naval service of the United States, and in the line of duty, or as a part of their military or naval service, had lost both eyes, shall be entitled to and receive pensions at the rate of \$100 per month.

PERSONAL.

Wm. A. Palmer, of Derry, N. H., who served in a Massachusetts regiment, and was captured and confined in Libby Prison. While in Chicago he visited the Libby Prison Museum. Pointing near a certain corner in one of the rooms, Mr. Palmer said: "I slept in this corner."

Gen. Lew Wallace says that few persons have any idea of the amount of work, aside from the actual writing, which goes into a book. The patient research, the perseverance necessary to establish a date or confirm a fact, seems incredible to one who has never tried the labor.

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MUSTERED OUT.

Veterans of the Country's Grandest Army Who Have Answered the Last Call. [Senders of obituaries will please address strictly to the Editor, National Tribune, Washington, D. C. Notices must be brief and be sent immediately after the event to which they relate.]

TRACY.—At Chelsea, Mass., recently, of heart disease, John Tracy, recently, of heart failure, John Tracy, 13th Mass., aged 91. At the time of his death he was a Paymaster in the United States Army, and served through the war. Comrade Tracy was born at Chelsea, Mass., in 1802, and was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic.

DOOLEY.—At Clarksville, Mass., Sept. 18, of heart disease, Capt. Peter Dooley, 37th Mass., aged 77. Capt. Dooley was born at Chelsea, Mass., in 1816, and was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic.

McCready.—At his home near Star Valley, Kan., Sept. 22, John McCready, aged 84. He was born in Westmoreland county, Pa., and enlisted from that State.

SCULLY.—At Carroll, Iowa, Sept. 3, J. Scully, Co. E, 25th Iowa. Comrade Scully enlisted April 7, 1862, and served through the war. He was a member of Jeff C. Davis Post, and was buried by that organization. He leaves a widow and six children.

MISSOURI.—At Stamford, Ky., recently, Grayville, Miss., Co. G, 1st Ky. Comrade Grayville enlisted in the 1st Missouri Cavalry at Stamford, and has always been a good worker in the Order. He leaves a widow and three children.

BOSSART.—At his home near Penola, Kan., Sept. 16, of disease contracted in the service, Joseph J. Bossart, aged 73. Comrade Bossart was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic, and was a member of Kingman Post, 28th, and was buried by the Order at Penola, Kan.

The Same Characteristics. We notice by a South Carolina exchange that a man named Roberts was gathered in by the police while suffering from an aggravated and aggravating case of Jim-Jams. (Jim-Jams is a disease resulting from a prolonged abstinence of water.) It would seem from the unfortunate experience of Col. Roberts that the liquor dispensed by the State has the same characteristics that endures to all hearts the poison dispensed by individuals before Gov. Tillman took the star-eyed goddess into his confidence. Then what shall it profit a man to get drunk and be in accordance with ordinances made and provided, if he is to be hauled off to jail like a common malefactor, and fined \$10 and costs when he sobers up?

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