

THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE. ESTABLISHED 1877. PUBLISHED WEEKLY. ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR. INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT. MONEY sent us otherwise than by registered letter, postal money order, or draft on New York, will be at the risk of the sender.

THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE. JOHN McELROY, ROBERT W. SHOFFELL, BYRON ANDREWS.

WASHINGTON, D. C., APRIL 15, 1897.

THE MISSISSIPPI FLOOD.

Careful estimates indicate that the area of the Mississippi Valley which was under water, April 6, is 15,800 square miles, and it has a population of 379,685.

It is now hoped that the worst is over in the country above Vicksburg, and that the waters will recede by May 1, which will allow the farmers to make a fair crop this season.

This week the strain comes on the country below Vicksburg. The immense sheet of water now spread over the 15,800 square miles of Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Arkansas is forced into a narrower space by the nearer approach of the hills in the Vicksburg region, and is sweeping down into the lower valley in immense volume.

SENATOR HAWLEY thinks that it is hardly a good time to push arbitration while England is building new fortresses all around us, and parading her fleets in the neighborhood of Halifax and the Bermudas.

"ADVENTURES OF ALF WILSON."

ONE OF THE CELEBRATED "ENGINE THIEVES."

To Commence in The National Tribune of May 13.



JOHN A. ("ALF") WILSON.

every fiber of one's being. The story will be published exclusively in THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE, and appear in no other paper.

FULLER APPRECIATION AT HAND. Veterans may congratulate themselves upon the assured fact that the country is waking to a fuller and more general appreciation of their services than ever before since the close of the war.

Now they are realizing that the greatest of European war stand dwarfed beside our struggle, that we fought on a greater scale than ever before attempted, that we carried on operations over a territory greater than European empires, that we put armies in the field as much bigger than theirs as our continent exceeds theirs in size, that our men showed more individual heroism than the most boasted of theirs, that high courage and unconquerable fortitude, which seem to be qualities possessed by comparatively small proportions of Europeans, were the common birthright of American men, who all fought with indescribable zeal and bravery, enduring unflinchingly reverses which would have quenched the spirit of any other army, and persisting to the end in spite of all discouragements.

Our own people are understanding these things as they never did before, and the result will be every year an enhancement of the meed of gratitude and honor bestowed upon those who survive the years which have elapsed since the close of the war.

NATIONAL character counts for very much in diplomacy. As soon as the bad conduct of the Italian troops in Africa became known the Germans and Austrians began to talk of dropping Italy from the Dreibund. An ally who could make no better showing on the field of battle with semi-savages would be a source of weakness rather than strength.

THE Captain-General of Cuba gets \$50,000 a year salary, besides the most liberal allowances of any official outside of Turkey. Naturally, Weyler holds on to his job like grim death to a deceased African.

It looks as if Pennsylvania is only going to spend \$550,000 for a new State House. That is about \$1 a head for the population of the State, and one-fortieth of a cent on every dollar of the \$2,593,446.33 of the assessed valuation of the property according to the census of 1890.

LILLOUKALANI very modestly proposes to ask President McKinley to set aside the whole proceedings in Hawaii and order a new election to determine whether she or President Dole shall rule the country. This would seem to be a good opportunity to apply the rule of no-reappointment-of-a-former-incumbent on Mrs. Dominis.

"Intensely American."

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: A word for THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE is right here. Many exchanges from all parts of the Union come to my table, but of all of this number I must say, in all truth and candor, that THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE is all "American" — the most intensely American, wof and war, and "sized" deeper with the spirit of '76 than any journal that comes to my table.

A Good Family Paper. [For Lake (Wis.) Representative.] THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE is now issued under its new management. John McElroy continues as editor, Byron Andrews, who has long been in charge of the New York office, and a writer of note, will continue with it. R. W. Shoffell, a well-known publisher, is the new partner. THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE is published at Washington, and is, as it ever has been, the ablest of all the journals devoted to the interest of the soldier. It is a large eight-page weekly, and is a good family paper in every respect. Only \$1 per annum.

I am interested and am proud of the gallant and fearless stand you have always taken in regard to pensions to the Union soldier, and I for one do not know how to express my appreciation of the noble work you have done for the soldier, and I feel that it is the duty of every soldier to do his part, and with President McKinley in command and THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE for its battery we will be able to carry the work we have so long been struggling for, and come out victorious in our demands. And let our demands be granted before another Congress expires, by passing the following bills: The Service Pension Bill, the Army Pension Bill, the Union Prisoner War Bill, — Ex-Union Soldier, Sherman, N. Y.

GREAT BRITAIN may be grabbing up all the desirable portions of the earth's surface not already pre-empted, and fastening them with Yale locks as she gets them, but Yankee skill and push are yearly detaching large slices from her realm of manufactures. For example: Only a few years ago she had a monopoly of the manufacture of tubing for bicycles, and we had to buy every pound of it from England. Then the Yankees started in to make it, and of better quality than the British. In 1895 England was still selling us about \$1,000,000 worth of tubing a year. Last year she sold us very much less, and it is believed that by the end of this year we shall not be buying any at all. Seven of our larger factories already produce 85,000,000 feet of tubing a year, or more than enough for 4,000,000 bicycles, estimating 20 feet for each. It is calculated that there are 700 bicycle factories in the United States, which manufacture 1,225,000 cycles a year.

For "a nearly pacified country" Cuba seems to be giving the Spaniards an unaccountable amount of trouble. Within a week a heavy Spanish column has been whipped near Matanzas and forced to retreat, with an admitted loss of 34 killed and 51 wounded. At another fight in Pinar del Rio the Spaniards claim a victory, but say that the loss was "heavy on both sides," and the reports are that the Cubans have blown up the fort at Sabercual with dynamite, killing half the garrison and capturing the remainder. Cuba will need a great deal more "pacification" before it becomes attractive to people who "love long life and quiet days."

GREECE'S strength lies in the unutterable and incurable corruption of the Turkish Government. There are enough fighting men in Turkey to utterly overwhelm Greece in a few weeks, and they are only too ready to respond to fanatical religious appeals, and do so. But there is no money in the Turkish treasury with which to arm, clothe, feed, and move troops, and if there were it would be inevitably stolen before it would reach the army.

NEW JERSEY is to try "the indeterminate sentence system" upon her criminals. This is similar to a law now being tried in Indiana. An Advisory Board of Parole is to have the power of releasing a prisoner on probation. He will be kept under the eye of the authorities and treated according to his conduct. If he violates his parole, he will be re-arrested and given the maximum sentence for his offense, but if his conduct is good, a pardon will be given him.

Though the soil is the most fertile in the world, not more than one-tenth of it is cultivated, on account of the danger of overflow. It will be seen, therefore, that any scheme by which the floods could be controlled would be worth untold millions to the country, since it would give us possession of millions of square miles of unsurpassed farming lands.

With the first settlement of the Valley came the natural attempt to protect the lands by embankments or "levees." These developed from individual efforts to comprehensive systems under the authority of the States, and have increased until now they measure about 2,000 miles in length, and have cost an overwhelming amount of money.

Now appears radical differences of opinion as to what is best to do to reclaim all this valuable land, prevent overflows, and improve navigation.

The advocates of the levee system insist that the thing to do is to go on building embankments, but making them high enough, strong enough, and continuous enough to resist any flood. They say that this is a work of such magnitude, and so widespread in its benefits that it should be taken out of the hands of the States and private owners, and given into those of the General Government, which alone has adequate money and power for it. They also insist that by raising and strengthening the banks the water will be confined so that it will deepen its channel by scouring until there will be a sufficient depth everywhere and at all times for navigation. The levee advocates have the numbers, intelligence, and strength of a great political party.

Against them is arrayed a party of corresponding strength and intelligence, which insists that the levee system is a dangerous and expensive makeshift. They claim that the channel does not scour out, but, on the contrary, the bed of the river rises as fast as the banks are raised, thus compelling an endless raising of the levees, at a cost increasing in geometrical proportion, and a corresponding increase of danger when the breaks occur. They insist in support of this view the River Po, in Italy, which has been leveed for over 2,000 years. The bed of the river has as constantly risen, until now the surface of the water at ordinary stage is from 15 to 20 feet above the surface of the country, and passengers on boats are able to look down upon the roofs of the houses in the towns. Every few years the banks give way to great floods, and the loss of life and property is appalling. The same is true, in a still larger way, of the Yellow River in China, which destroys millions of lives in its overflows. They also say that if a system of levees is entered upon it will have to extend to all the tributaries of the Mississippi, which would cost beyond any computation. Some of these claim that the most feasible plan is to construct a great straight canal from Cairo to New Orleans, sufficient to carry off the floods. They say that while it is now about 1,400 miles from the mouth of the Ohio to the head of the Passes, following the course of the river, in the straight line the distance is only about 500 miles. The average velocity of the Mississippi current is about 24 miles an hour. If the distance the water would have to traverse were shortened one-half the fall per mile would be doubled, and the discharge would be several times as fast as at present. Against this view is urged the immensity of expense, the injury done towns, etc., situated along the present course, that it would be impossible for boats to stem such a current, and that it would tear away any bank that could be made. There was another plan urged with a good deal of energy some years ago, which was to cut connections with streams running more or less parallel to the Mississippi, so that in flood

IMPROVING THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

Now There Will be a Revival of the Old-time Earnest Discussions of Ways and Means of Preventing the Destructive Overflows.

The unprecedented flood in the Mississippi Valley, with its enormous destruction of property, its widespread injury to business of all kinds, and a very considerable loss of life, is a National calamity of the most serious kind. As it may greatly retard the cotton crop for a year, the actual destruction of property and damage to business may approach in amount that caused by the Chicago and Boston fires, while the misery to people will be even greater.

This calamity is sure to revive, in all their earnestness, the old-time strife among the different schools of advocates of plans to improve the river and prevent the recurrence of these periodical catastrophes.

The management of the banks presents unusual difficulties. The soft, alluvial soil has no tenacity. It can hardly be made to resist the erosion of the water. It is so deep down to hardpan that no foundation can be found for permanent walls of more enduring material. The water is constantly liable to burrow under anything that can be placed across its course, even piling. The course followed by the Commission has been to lay a foundation of brush, upon which immense weights of stone were piled. If this were done at the right angle to the current the river itself would at once begin helping in the work by depositing silt and forming a bank. Banks that were being eaten into were protected in the same way. Above low water they were covered with brush-matting, staked or weighted down. Willows were planted to assist with their roots in retaining the surface, and to catch silt when the water rose. The levees have been built on an average of about three feet above the surface of the highest preceding floods, their slopes made up to 1 to 3, or even greater, and covered with thick growth of the tenacious Bermuda grass.

Up to June 30, 1895, the Commission had expended in this work \$29,558,699.20, and the appropriation for the present fiscal year is \$3,533,383.

In all probability the whole subject will be brought up before the present Congress and thoroughly reviewed, upon an urgent demand from the people of the whole Mississippi Valley, for a grand, comprehensive system which will give adequate protection against such terrible calamities in the future.

TRIBUNETS.

A COMPLEX CASE OF DEAFNESS. "The card which you gave me," said the lady of the House who sent it, "said that you were unable to see a living man account of total deafness, and you played off on me quite a show of finger talk and signs. I have been quietly watching you through the window while you were eating the meal I gave you, and I noticed that you jumped from your chair and looked around in great alarm when Tower gave a low growl just behind you. You are a bungler, and you can hear just as well as I can."

"Madam, you do me great injustice," said Tattered Watkins, with the elaborate politeness of a man who has just dined to his entire satisfaction. "You have the usual failing of your charming sex of jumping at a conclusion before having all the facts in the case. My card stated the exact truth, but my case is a new revelation in medical science, which is exciting the greatest attention among physicians, and I am now on my way to Philadelphia to have it examined by the eminent specialists of that city. You have heard of color blindness, where a man can see perfectly clear colors, but is totally blind to some particular ones. Physicians have long supposed that there must be a similar disease of the hearing, and I am discovered to be a melancholy illustration of it. Some sounds and words I can hear perfectly, while to others I am totally deaf. Even as to my case could never hear my mother's call to get up in the morning, nor to bring her in a load of wood, while I could distinguish the very lowest note of the dinner bell. The disease has grown on me with my years, in spite of all that I can do to arrest it. I finally became so deaf to calls to work of any kind as to prevent my earning my own living, while in some other respects my hearing remained unimpaired. This was a great misfortune to me, I assure you, for I am really of an industrious disposition, and would like to work if I could only hear and understand what anybody wanted me to do. I am sure that a lady of your intelligence will understand my affliction and sympathize with me."

"I think I do," said the lady of the House with a cold glitter in her eye, "and it scares me to think that your disease may be contagious. I have a boy that shows the same kind of symptoms, and for fear that you may transfer some microbes to make him worse, I'll just let loose Tower and run you off the place."

IT WAS ALWAYS SO. Teacher of Political Economy: Give me an instance of inequality of distribution, of which there is much complaint.

Bright Pupil: Paper this morning says the flood in the Mississippi is still rising, while the Government of New South Wales is ordering general prayers for rain to break the drought.

The will of Mrs. Anna Miller, of Wilkesbarre, Pa., leaves her husband, who deserted her years ago, one cent, to be paid five years after her death. This was to let him know she was Miller enough to get a grind on him.

Colorado forces up to position just behind the band in the column of progress with a new militia law permitting women to be enrolled in the National Guard. Let her be represented in the next inaugural parade by that long-ago predicted troop of side-saddle cavalry.

Col. W. Augustus Ray, who commanded the 40th Wis.—a 100-days' regiment, which was part of the garrison at Memphis when Forrest made his raid on the city, and did good service in driving him off—died at Chicago, April 8. He had been for 25 years a prominent operator on the Board of Trade, and was at one time Vice-President of it. The body of Gen. Jas. S. Fullerton has at last been found. It will be remembered that he was killed in the wreck at the bridge across the Youghiogheny River, near Oakland, March 21. Last Friday morning a farmer hunting ducks found it beside a raft about eight miles from Oakland. It was in a good state of preservation, but the neck was broken. All the valuables were still on the body. It was embalmed at Oakland, and sent on to Washington, and from thence to St. Louis, where it will be interred.

Col. C. L. Best, of the Regular Army, died in New York, April 8. He was born in New York, and graduated from West Point in 1841; received three brevets for gallant service during the war in the Army of the Potomac, and became Colonel of the 4th U. S. Art. in 1863. He was retired in 1882.

Veterans everywhere will learn with much gratification that Secretary Alger has appointed Gen. H. V. Boynton President of the Chattanooga National Park Commission, to succeed Gen. J. S. Fullerton, deceased. This is a recognition of Gen. Boynton's eminent services in bringing the Park into its present highly creditable shape as a great object-lesson in history and patriotism. He was a gallant soldier in the Army of the Cumberland, and commanded one of its best regiments—the 35th Ohio. He was in all the fighting around Chattanooga, until he was severely wounded in the assault on Mission Ridge. He was one of the earliest and most energetic of the promoters of converting the battlefield of the great Chattanooga Park, and has devoted to the work, which has been one of love to him, his great energies and abilities. Certainly no one is entitled to more credit for all that has been accomplished. Gen. Boynton is one of the foremost of the newspaper correspondents in Washington.

John W. Parks, Dallas, Tex., is a candidate for appointment as Railroad Commissioner, the position now held by ex-Senator Wade Hampton, of South Carolina. Comrade Parks has a high standing as a railroad man and a citizen in Texas and the Southwest, where he is widely known. He served four years in the army, going in as a private in the 23d Pa., serving as a Lieutenant in the 57th, and as a Captain and brevet Major of the 14th Pa. He has been for 21 years in the service of the Texas Pacific Railroad, and holds quite a responsible position on it. In 1893 he was Commander of the Department of Texas, G.A.R., and did an immense amount of good work in building up the Order in that State. He is very popular with all who know him, and his competency for the position he seeks is undoubted.

MUSTERED OUT.

Veterans of the Country's Grandest Army Who Have Answered the Last Call.

FOSSETT.—At West Duluth, Minn., Oct. 18, 1896, John E. Fossett, Co. G, 3d Me. Charles Evans Holt, Adjutant, writes that Gorman Post, No. 1 of Duluth, Minn., was a member, admitted suitable resolutions.

DEAKE.—At Philadelphia, Pa., recently, Alexander E. Drake, U. S. A., retired, aged 78. Col. Drake was born in Kentucky. In June, 1854, he was commissioned 1st Lt. in the United States Navy by Gen. Jackson, and served with land forces during the Seminole war. Having studied engineering during his leisure hours, he resigned from the Navy, Jan. 28, 1857, was appointed a topographical engineer in the Army, and was Acting Lieutenant of draughts in Florida. He served with distinction during the Mexican war, and in 1859 was Assistant Engineer on the Southern Pacific Railroad. He was in the Bureau of Construction from 1854 to 1857. Jefferson Davis, as Secretary of War, transferred him to the line of the Army on March 19, 1857. During his war service, Comrade Drake was with Rosecrank's Brigade, and was promoted several times for gallant and meritorious services; in May, 1861, to First Lieutenant, and October, 1861, to Captain. 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