Evening State Journal.

PUBLISHED

DAILY, SEMI-WEEKLY AND WEEKLY,

AT

No. 912½ Main Street, Richmond, Virginia.

EDWARD DANIELS, Editor and Manager.

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One year.....$6 00 | Three months.... 1 50
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SATURDAY EVENING, NOV. 11, 1871.

PHENOMENA OF THE NORTHWESTERN FIRE.

[From the Green Bay Advocate.]

There are some phases of the great calamity which fell upon this region last week worthy of scientific investigation. The testimony of the cooler-headed survivors of the fires at Peshtigo and Sugar Bush and Williamsville is united as to one phenomenon. They say that the fire did not come upon them gradually from burning trees and other objects to the windward, but the first notice they had of it was a whirlwind of flame, in great clouds, from above the tops of the trees, which fell upon and enveloped everything. The atmosphere seemed one of fire. The poor people inhaled it or the intensely hot air, and fell down dead. This is verified by the appearance of many of the corpses. They were found dead in the roads and open spaces where there were no visible marks of fire near by, with not a trace of burning upon their bodies or clothes. At the Sugar Bush, which is an extended clearing, in some places four miles in width, corpses were found in the open road, between fences, which were only slightly burned. No mark of fire was upon them, but they laid as if asleep. This phenomenon seems to explain the fact that so many were killed in compact masses. They seemed to have huddled together in what were evidently regarded at the moment as the safest places, away from buildings, trees or other inflammable material, and there to have died together. Fences around cleared fields were burned in spots of only a few rods in length, and elsewhere not touched. Fishes were killed in the streams, as at Peshtigo.

As we have already noted elsewhere, this phenomena is due to the volumes of gas, highly heated and driven by the wind great distances before it could find sufficient oxygen to consume it. These gasses leaped over the vacant spaces, and destroyed man and beast, not by direct burning, but by suffocation, caused by carbonic oxide and other poisonous gasses. The air through which these volumes of flaming gas passed, would be instantly deprived of oxygen, and all life would be extinct before a fresh supply could come into the burnt district. To appreciate the effect of these vast fires, we must remember that when a certain heat is attained, the tendency is to convert solids and fluids intoin flammable gas in quantities greatly beyond the capacity of the atmosphere to burni t. Ordinary combustion consists of two distinct processes:

First. The conversion of a substance into gas.

Second. The combination of this gas with oxygen from the air.

If we apply great heat without air, we have a destructive distiliation, as in the manufacture of illuminating gas. The leaping masses of flame in great fires, proved to have cleared half a mile of space, are only evidences in some cases of this excissive production of gas. The terror and danger of fire is vastly increased by this fact, but a knowledge of it is essential, to show the insufficiency of our trifling and puny efforts, and lead to the adoption of adequate precautionary measures.

HOW TO REDUCE THE INTEREST ON THE NATIONAL DEBT.

The New York *Tribune* presents the following plan well worth the serious consideration of all thoughtful men. It is substantially what was urged by the Chicago *Tribune* and other leading western papers, and supported by the great majority of intelligent business men in the west, as far back as 1854. It is based on sound financial philosophy, and we believe would tend to relieve the stringency of the money market, and stimulate productive industry everywhere:

Let Congress make our greenbacks fundable at the pleasure of the holder in bonds of $100, $1,000, and $10,000, drawing interest at the rate of one cent per day on each $100 (or 3 65-100 per annum) and *exchangeable into greenbacks at the pleasure of the holder.* Now authorize the treasury to purchase and extinguish our out-standing bonds so fast as it is supplied with the means of so doing by receipts for customs or otherwise; and to issue new greenbacks whenever larger amounts shall be required—every one being fundable in sums of $100, $1,000, or $10,000, as aforesaid, at the pleasure of the holder, in bonds drawing an annual interest of 3 65-100 in coin per annum, and these bonds exchangeable into greenbacks whenever a holder shall desire it.

The benefits of this system would be these:

I. Our greenbacks, which are now virtual falsehoods, would be truths. The government *would* pay them on demand in bonds as aforesaid, which is in substantial accordance with the plan on which the greenbacks were first authorized.

II. Every person having greenbacks for which he had no present need would present them at some sub-treasury and exchange them at par for these bonds. Suppose he has $10,000 which he expects to use a month hence, he can make them earn him $30 meantime, without incurring the smallest danger of loss by bank failnre or otherwise, and with a positive certainty that the money would be ready for him whenever he chose to take it.

III. A merchant leaves New York with $1,000,000 which he purposes to invest in wheat at the West or in cotton at the South. He calls at our sub-treasury, exchanges his greenbacks for these bonds, and takes or sends these to Chicago, St. Paul, New Orleans, or Galveston, to be exchanged for use when needed. After looking about for a month, he buys half the produce he originally intended, converts half his bonds into greenbacks, receives $50 per day, or $1,500 in all, as interest, and makes his payments. After traveling and looking for another month, he invests the remainder of his capital, receives $3,000 as interest thereon for the two months he has held the last half million of bonds, and lays his course homeward. His bonds may have lain nearly all the time he owned them in the vault of some bank; but they were earning money not for that bank but for him.

IV. Our greenbacks, no longer false, but convertible at pleasure into bonds bearing a moderate gold interest and exchangeable as aforesaid, could not fail to appreciate steadily until they nearly reached the level of gold. Indeed, they would, unless issued too profusely, be really better than gold. Drawing a higher rate of interest than British consols, and convertible at pleasure, as these are not, they would in time obtain currency even in the Old World.

V. The trouble so inveterately borrowed by thousands with respect to "over-issues," "redundant currency," &c., would (or at least *should*) be hereby dispelled. If there were at any time an excess of currency, it would tend to precipitate itself into the bonds aforesaid. If there should ever be a scarcity of currency, bonds would be exchanged at the treasury for greenbacks till the want was fully supplied. Black Fridays and the locking up of greenbacks would soon be numbered with lost arts and hobgoblin terrors.

VI. Though the demand for these bonds might for months be moderate, their convenience and manifest utility would soon diffuse their popularity and stimulate an ever-widening demand for them. They would be a favorite investment with guardians and trustees who should expect to be required to pay over the funds held by them at an early day, whether fixed or uncertain. They would say "though I might invest or deposit these funds where they would command a higher interest, I choose to place them where I *know* they will be safe and at hand when called for."

VII. Ultimately, we believe they would become so popular that hundreds of millions of them would be absorbed at or very near the par of specie, and that with the proceeds an equal amount of our outstanding sixes might be redeemed and cancelled, without advertising for loans or paying bankers to shin for us throughout Europe. The interest thus saved to our country would be an important item.

Such are the rude outlines of a plan which we did not originate, but which we heartily indorse. Why not give it a trial? We should dearly like to inform Europe that, since she seems not to want any more of our bonds at five per cent., we have concluded to take the balance ourselves at 3⅔.

The Mormon ladies, in their petition to the wife of President Grant, given in another column, assure her that they appreciate their husbands "as highly as it is possible for you, honored Madam, to appreciate yours." The idea of the merely fractional interest in a husband which the unregenerate Gentile mind associates with polygamy does not appear to occur to the disconsolate Mormon spouses. In spite of occasional hyperbole in statement, the petition in question has sundry touches of genuine pathos which even its absurdities cannot impair.

MEETINGS.

NOTICE.—Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Company, Cashier's Office, Richmond, Va., November 3d, 1871.

The annual meeting of the Stockholders of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Company will be held in the city of Richmond, on THURSDAY, the 7th of December, 1871.

The attention of the Stockholders is called to the following extract from the by-laws of the Company:

"All proxies to represent Stockholders at a general meeting shall be in writing, and signed by the person thus transfering the power; partnerships may sign in the name of partnerships, and the signature of either member of the firm shall be valid. No proxy shall be valid given more than sixty days prior to the meeting of the company.

"The books of transfer shall be closed fifteen days previous to any general meeting."

no 3—td J. GARRETT, Cashier.

THE FINE ARTS, &c.

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no 2—dts

FINANCIAL.

NOTICE.

REDEMPTION OF FIVE-TWENTY BONDS OF 1862.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, September 1, 1871.

By virtue of the authority given by an act of Congress approved July 14, 1870, entitled "An act to authorize the refunding of the national debt," I hereby give notice that the principal and accrued interest of the bonds herein below designated, known as

FIVE-TWENTY BONDS,

will be paid at the Treasury of the United States, in the city of Washington, on or after the first day of December next, and that the interest on said bonds will cease on that day. That is to say, Coupon Bonds known as the first series, Act of February 25, 1862, dated May 1, 1862, numbered as follows:

1 to 30699, inclusive, of $50 each.
1 to 43572, " 100 "
1 to 40014, " 500 "
1 to 74104, " 1000 "

And Registered Bonds of the same Act—

1 to 595, inclusive, of $50 each.
1 to 4163, " 100 "
1 to 1899, " 500 "
1 to 8906, " 1000 "
1 to 2665 " 5000 "
1 to 2906, " 10000 "

The amount outstanding (embraced in the numbers as above) is one hundred million ($100,000,000) dollars.

Coupon Bonds of the Act of February 25, 1862, were issued in four distinct series. Bonds of the first series (embracing those described above) do not bear the series designation upon them, while those of the second, third and fourth series are distinctly marked on the face of the bonds.

United States securities forwarded for redemption should be addressed to the "LOAN DIVISION," Secretary's office.

J. F. HARTLEY,
Acting Secretary.

se 2—S1aw10t&weow3t

FASHIONS, &c.

A CARD FOR THE LADIES,

In consequence of misrepresentations of certain interested but unscrupulous persons, we beg leave to remind the

LADIES OF RICHMOND

that the agency for

BUTTERICK'S PATTERNS

is still at the

OFFICE OF THE

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Surplus (gold).....299,637

Total assets (gold).....$799,607

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mh 15d&wtf

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ap 1—d&w tf

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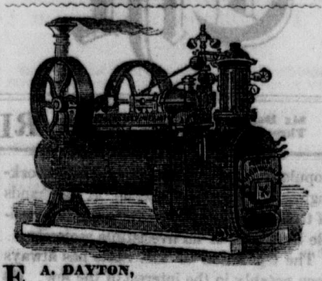

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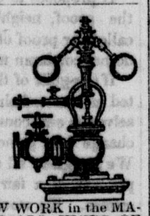

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