

THE RICHMOND DISPATCH BY THE DISPATCH COMPANY.

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THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 1902.

VIRGINIA'S PENSIONERS.

Both houses of the General Assembly have agreed to a resolution setting apart \$300,000 for pensions to be paid this year to disabled Confederate veterans.

The terms under which this money is to be distributed are to be set forth in a law yet to be passed. In the work of drafting such a law the legislative body will have the help of the Committee on Legislation of the Grand Camp of Confederate Veterans.

Whether in view of the explanations that have been made the animadversions of the press upon the grand jury were entirely justifiable we are not prepared to say. It is only fair to the body to state that members of it have declared that efforts were put forth to reach the company, but no power existed in the law by which this could be done.

The grand jury was told, believed the company to be blameable and had every desire to punish it, and force it to adopt precautions against a recurrence of the horror, but found the way blocked by their oath and the technicalities of the law.

This, of course, suggests that the grand jury in New York is not the all-powerful, independent, and untrammelled body it is elsewhere. However, a discussion of that point is academic and apart from the main question.

When the Virginia debt settlement was made in 1890 the railroad companies promised to do the help of the State when the 3 per cent. interest period arrived, and the convention has held them to that promise.

So there is little or no doubt about the ability of Virginia to pay \$300,000 per annum on account of pensions; but the "bar" is that that sum will not suffice—that men who never thought of making applications for pensions will do so now; that counties which never have entered into the race with other counties as to who should get most out of the State Treasury will be stirred into activity.

But just where the committee of veterans ought to interpose with suggestions of a remedial which will prevent this State's becoming the scene of a desperate scramble for pensions, the worthy should be aided. No man who served honorably in the Confederate army should be forced to go into a poor house. We should also continue to give some assistance to needy widows of our dead soldiers.

In short, we believe the tax-payers of Virginia are willing to strain themselves to the uttermost—even to the point of bearing a special pension tax, should it be necessary—to take care of such persons as we have described, but it will be an inglorious day for old Virginia when there is such a scramble for Virginia pensions as there is for Federal pensions. God forbid that Virginia ever should see that day! It would make our dead in Oakwood and Hollywood, at Petersburg, Fredericksburg, Lynchburg, and Winchester, and in other places in and out of this State, turn over in their graves for shame!

It is for the living to do as the heroic and self-sacrificing dead would wish. It is for the Legislative Committee of the Grand Camp of Confederate Veterans to lead the Legislature aright. And to do that let it recommend to the Legislature a pension law which will open the State Treasury reasonably to all truly worthy veterans who are indigent, and shut it to all who have no claim upon the bounty of our people. Thus the veterans may guard the State Treasury; what is more—far more—thus they may guard the fame and honor the cause of the beloved dead.

The provisions of the national banking bill, which is to be made public next Monday, are now quite definitely decided upon. Three very important points will be incorporated into it. It will provide for retiring the greenbacks, for the issue of a moderate amount of asset-secured currency by national banks, and for the

regular organization of clearing-houses somewhat after the plan proposed by Representative Pugsley. There will be also a great number of other features contained in the bill.

The Washington correspondent of the New York Journal of Commerce is informed that there is absolutely no chance of such a bill's passing the House. Objection is made to retiring the greenbacks.

New York's "up-State" elections show Democratic gains, and that is the pretty general political story these days.

President Roosevelt is soon to publish a book on deer. It is announced, a sort of up-to-date "Deerslayer," possibly, in view of the President's prowess as an exterminator of big game.

JEROME'S "BILLY" OVER. District Attorney Jerome is mad with the newspapers—is, in fact, "billy" mad with them, and his anger has "billed" over in a most unbecoming and ungrateful manner.

The Dispatch does not purpose working our city authorities into a panicky condition, but we consider it our bounden duty to remark that "delays are dangerous."

As to some purchases for the Fire Department, all men are agreed that they should be made. It would seem that action "as to them" should be taken at once. Orders given now could not be filled for months. Then why delay?

It is very clear that we are as yet only in the a, b, c of electrical development. It appears now, from a Chicago dispatch, that experiments with the new telephone designed to facilitate communication on railroads have proved successful.

The invention referred to, it seems, uses one wire to transmit both telephonic and telegraphic messages simultaneously, and over a line 400 miles long. It is reported, a train crew on the Illinois Central railroad conversed with the chief operator of that road in Chicago, and every word of the conversation came through distinctly, while, as this was going on, a message was transmitted by telegraph from one end of the wire to the other.

As the New York Sun, from which we get our facts, points out, the full significance of this result is, of course, that at any point on a road equipped with such a telephone service, the conductor or engineer of a train may ring up headquarters and make any report or inquiry desired, without waiting to reach a telegraph office, or even taking the trouble to put the message in writing, and the immense advantage of such an arrangement on roads where telegraph stations are far apart and also at night, when many of the regular offices are closed, is obvious. Verily are we on the threshold of vast improvements, telephonic and telegraphic, as well as in other electrical lines.

We were sure Chicago would not be satisfied unless she should surpass New York's Prince Henry entertainment, and we see now she has figured out the cost of her entertainment and Gotham's, and finds that she expended decidedly more per minute than did the eastern city. Great is the western metropolis, and "strictly business," always.

The panic in diamonds doesn't seem to have much affected our citizens generally.

M. Santos-Dumont is to visit this country. It is said, "We wonder if he will come in his air-ship."

The Charlottesville Progress unqualifiedly endorses the bill to permit the women of Virginia to carry concealed weapons in order to protect themselves against being made victims of the "usual crime."

Governor Tat's explanation of how slavery exists in our Philippine possessions does not harmonize the institution with the thirteenth amendment to the Constitution.

The Clarke Courier has "heard the bluebird sing," and has dropped into song itself in praise of gentle coming spring.

The convention will correct one of the few errors it has made in framing a new Constitution when it rescinds its action concerning the holdover senators, and restores the status of things respecting them as it has been from the foundation of the government—Petersburg Index-Appel.

We are happy to say that there seems every prospect that the convention will rescind its action in respect of this matter.

The Philadelphia Record says: "It is a somewhat curious phase of the human mind that most of the protectionists in Congress, including the left-wing representatives, are in favor of the annexation of Cuba. In fact, there is little indication of hostility to that policy save in the South."

Which is equivalent to admitting that save in the South there is little disposition to keep the pledge we made in the Cuban resolutions.

Mother Song. (From the Portuguese.) Heavy my heart is, heavy to carry, Full of soft foldings of downy envelopment.

And the outer fold of it is love, And the next soft fold is love, And the next, finer and softer, is love again.

And were they unbound before the eyes More folds and more folds and more folds would unroll.

Of love—always love, And quite at the last, Deep in the nest, in the soft-packed nest, One last fold, turned back, would disclose.

You, little heart of my heart, Laid there so warm, so soft, so soft, Not knowing where you lie, nor how soft—

Nor why your nest is so soft, Nor how your nest is so warm, You, little heart of my heart, You lie in my heart, Warm, safe, and soft as this body of yours.

This dear-kissed body of yours that lies Here in my arms and sucks the strength from my breast, The strength you will break my heart with one of these days.

—Fall Mail Gazette.

Lincoln Wanted a Pass. The Century publishes a fac-simile of the following application of Lincoln for a railway pass.

"Springfield, February 13, 1865. 'R. P. Morgan, Esq.: 'Dear Sir,—Says Tom to John: 'Here's your old rotten wheelbarrow. I've broken it up' on it. I wish you would mend it, 'cause I shall want to borrow it this afternoon."

"Acting on this as a precedent, I say: 'Here's your 'old chucked hat.' I wish you would take it and send me a new

one, 'cause I shall want to use it on the 1st of March.' 'Y-A LINCOLN."

The application is to the Chicago and Alton railway, of which Lincoln was then an attorney.

Governor Montague and the Roads. (Norfolk Landmark.) If the present Governor of Virginia succeeds in his practical good-roads movement in the State, the credit of that alone will be enough to make his name memorable in the history of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Montague has begun as if he is determined to win his energetic and enthusiastic advocacy of good roads is impressive. His zeal is as contagious as his arguments are effective. We know and he knows, that he has a hard task before him. For some reason, it is more difficult to arouse the people to realization of the evil of bad roads than to make them see evils far more remote and much less glaring. But the people of our State have been aroused; and what the thing is by no means impossible.

The Governor may count on the hearty support of the press of Virginia.

Miss Stone's Debt of Gratitude. (Detroit Free Press.) If Miss Stone accepts the offer of \$35,000 for so many articles she will be under no obligation to divide with the brigands. Without the brigands there would have been no offer.

Fewer and Better Schools. (Clifton Forge Review.) Governor Montague in his message to the Legislature on the re-assembling of the two houses, lays much stress upon our educational system. He urges changes in the rural schools by reducing the number of schools and strengthening those remaining by extending the school terms. The message also recommends all the normal schools and free schools of the State. These changes we believe would be beneficial. It matters not if we have fewer schools, if those which remain have greater strength and which live up to the practical feature will be a great improvement.

A Temperance Story. (Philadelphia Press.) "You seem rather hilarious to-day," the lathe remarked to the buzz-saw. "Yes," replied the buzz-saw, "the man who has brought some whiskey into the shop with him a little while ago."

"Well, I took two or three flingers at his expense."

Decolore. (Chicago News.) Ethel's mother told the grocer to send her a dressed turkey, and when it arrived the little miss said: "Mamma, the turkey isn't dressed at all; it's perfectly nude."

Thoroughly Appreciated. (Judge.) Minister: Well, today, I hope you enjoyed the services this morning? Boy: Yes, sir. Pop fell asleep six times, and ma had to stick a pin into him each time to make him wake up.

Not Worth Saving. (New York Weekier.) Mike (going down a ladder): Hold on, Pat. Don't yez come on the ladder till I get two or three and cracked.

Pat (getting on): Arra, be aisy. It would sarve 'il' boss right to have to buy a new one.

In New York Society. (Chicago Record-Herald.) "Were you and your husband engaged very long?" "Oh, no. He had good luck and got his divorce right off. I had already secured mine when we first met."

Frederick the Great, Washington, and the Fabulous Sword. To the Editor of the New York Sun: Sir,—Although the Washington sword at Albany had no connection with Frederick the Great, there is a notable episode of American history which it is with which I desire to supplement my letter in the Sun to-day (March 20).

Before doing so, however, I wish to modify one or two of my statements concerning the sword. As you are correct, it could not coax him to write about Washington, he did three times allude to the American war, though without revealing any interest in it. In Frederick's "Memoirs for the People," he alludes to the Partition of Poland, he says: "General Washington, who was called at London the chief of the rebels, gained at the commencement of hostilities some advantages over the Royalists, who were assembled near Boston, that in all, I should rather have said that Frederick permitted the Hessians to pass through his territory to get to America than that he 'threw the sword'." (He stopped the sword in the air, following the saying he never recognized the independence of this country it should have been added "until after the war.")

To return to the sword. It is one of the five swords presented by Washington to his five nephews (without particularizing about any, as he would naturally have done had either been the gift to Frederick the Great). This dress sword was chosen by Benedict Washington, and his death passed to his brother, George, thus inherited by Colonel Lewis Washington, of Bel Air, near Harper's Ferry. Truly a curious phase of the human mind that most of the protectionists in Congress, including the left-wing representatives, are in favor of the annexation of Cuba. In fact, there is little indication of hostility to that policy save in the South.

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DRINK HIS UNDOING. Young Man, After Spending Small Fortune Yields to Temptation. A young white man named Eddie Vial was arrested yesterday morning by Detectives Gibson and Wren on the charge of stealing tools from his fellow-emigrant, Brown's marble yard, Main and Madison streets. He is held at the Third Police Station, and will be brought before Justice Crutchfield to-day to answer the charge.

The history of this man is an illustrated temperance lecture. Three years ago, a young man in his prime, and the master of a fortune of \$10,000, was in command and held his position. He was left a fortune of about \$3,000 by the death of a relative. He gave up his place, and immediately proceeded to enjoy life. After a few months his fortune began to shrink, and he opened a saloon on west Main street, which became a resort for boon companions, proving anything but profitable. He soon sold out and left town.

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The question at issue is the constitutional right of the State to impose a tax, and as it is a matter involving many legal points, it will be watched with considerable interest.

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The sum of \$3,000 was subscribed on Monday night at a congregational meeting of St. Paul's Episcopal church, to build the new church on the rectory site. The meeting was not a large one, and it is expected to raise the full amount of \$3,000 by the Easter festival of the members of the church.

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TO STOP FIRE LOSSES. The Dispatch dislikes to have to urge large appropriations for the Fire and Water departments both at the same time, but it is unavoidable. The condition of affairs here demands it. Richmond needs a good and reliable supply of clear water for drinking, bathing, and other household purposes, and it needs a plentiful supply of any sort of water it may please the City Council to furnish with which to put out fires.

The city also needs a large fire department—aerial water and hose towers and ladders, especially. And, keeping in mind the lamentable occurrences at the Park-Avenue Hotel fire, close attention should be given by us to the matter of fire escapes. The law on that subject ought to be vigorously enforced. If it is not, and deaths result in consequence, the fire and the Fire Commissioners will be blamed. We wonder if the fire-escapes here are regularly inspected with reference to their location and listing condition?

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James River Improvement Committee Acts—City Hall. At a meeting of the James River Improvement Committee, held last night at the City Hall, the question of lighting the city with electricity was discussed. The committee, consisting of Messrs. L. D. Crenshaw, J. T. A. Cary, and W. M. Turshaw, Jr., was asked to consider the matter and report as soon as possible. In order that the question can be gotten before the City Council, it was announced at the meeting that a pump of very large capacity and sufficient hose can be purchased and installed for about \$1,500.

The Council Committee on Grounds and Buildings will meet this evening at 7:30 o'clock. The sub-committee will meet on Friday evening at 8 o'clock, for the purpose of taking up the question of lighting the streets of the city with electricity. It is understood that there will be a lively fight for the new contract.

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