THE FREE CITIZEN.

E. A. WEBSTER, Editor and Proprietor.

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TIMELY TOPICS.

ONE of the many good points of the new constitution of Arkansas, adopted less than a year ago, is the provision for the payment of the state debt. This provision is now being carried out under the means provided by the last legislature.

Jared R. Buell, of Indianapolis, and Susan D. Gilbert, of Athol, Mass., have "married" themselves by a written contract, which is to "be in force during our physical lives, provided our mutual love natures ever blend as now—but to terminate without prejudice by the wish of either party, if love shall ever cease to be mutual."

IN 1870, New York city had a population of 942,292, and a municipal debt of $122,860,780. In 1871, London had a population of 3,266,987, and a city debt of $25,918,000. These figures are imposing. The city and county debts of the whole union are estimated to be to-day $35,000,000; but as this estimate is only for those having one million and over of liabilities, the total may be set down at a thousand million. Add the state and national debts and there results a heavy load for posterity.

IT is quite discouraging to know that the importation of fire crackers for fourth of July purposes this year will amount to 300,000 boxes—a large excess over the receipts of last year, owing doubtless to the centennial typhoid. The Chinese and Japanese make a good thing out of the squibs, as they alone can manufacture such explosives, the attempts to reproduce them in this country having failed. The invention, however, is deemed by many people, not highly creditable to John Chinaman's civilization.

THE inundations in Southern France have called forth the ready sympathy of the French people, for the sufferers, and relief funds, so familiar to American ears of late, are being raised everywhere. The city of Toulouse, which has suffered so terribly, is very ancient, having been a leading city of the Gauls when the Romans conquered their country. Massive walls of Roman workmanship have been broken down by the recent floods from the river Garonne, on whose banks the city is built. The loss of property is now placed at $60,000,000.

LATER advices from France confirm previous reports of the frightful character of the inundation along the river Garonne. Many towns have been submerged and whole sections of country overflowed. More than a thousand lives were lost, over two hundred dead bodies being found in one village. Twenty thousand people are homeless and suffering. President MacMahon has departed for the scene of desolation to render such assistance as may be necessary. The Garonne rises in the Pyrenees, on the confines of Spain, and is subject to overflow, on account of the general flatness of its banks.

PEOPLE see things differently. For instance, the terrible earthquake that recently destroyed San Jose de Cucuta, in Columbia. When the catastrophe began, most of the inhabitants went down upon their knees and prayed for relief and mercy. Yet, in the midst of the scene, when the earth was heaving, buildings falling, and the dying groans and shrieks of men, women and children filling the air, a wild horde of demoniacal thieves and robbers swarmed into the towns, sacking houses, pillaging bank vaults, and plundering the dead, and even murdering. If an earthquake will not quicken a man's conscience, there is no telling what will.

THE New York World makes the establishment of a zoological garden in Philadelphia the occasion for the presentation of some interesting facts concerning the famous London zoological gardens. The London collection in 1873 included 590 quadrupeds, 1,227 birds and 225 reptiles, and was at that time, as yet, the largest in existence. The first rhinoceros cost £1,000; the four giraffes £700, and their carriage an additional £700; the elephant and a calf, £800, and the hippopotamus, though a gift, was not brought home and housed for less than £1,000. The cost of maintaining the London gardens is very great, but the receipts are ample to meet it.

THE American rifle team has achieved great victory in Ireland over the crack shots of that country. A match was shot last week between the two teams. In the first bout, at eight hundred yards, the Americans were beaten by one point, but in the two succeeding bouts, at nine hundred and a thousand yards respectively, the Americans came out ahead, thus winning the match. The victory of the Americans was received with tremendous enthusiasm, and they were the recipients of the most distinguished honors from the populace and their competitors. The contest has been marked by the most fraternal feeling on all sides. The American riflemen have been treated with the utmost consideration by their hosts, and even the sting of defeat has not caused any suspension of the friendly intercourse.

A PRIVATE soldier of Prof. Jenney's escort, in his geological survey of the Black Hills, writes that he found gold by means of a pick and a shovel, while the geologists were trying to find it by scientific principles. His advice is that those desirous of going gold-hunting should hold themselves in readiness, and the instant the Indian treaty is annulled to hasten on. The party had encountered three mining camps on French creek. They were panning out about $10 a day, each, and were of the opinion that, when they get their working apparatus in good order, they will be able to make $50 a day. The soldier had washed four pans of dirt and got about five cents to the pan of scale gold, some of the pieces being a little larger than a pin's head. He did not have to dig a foot down for the dirt, and declares that all that Custar told concerning the treasures of the country was strictly true.

THE statistical reports just published by the agricultural bureau indicate wide-spread disaster to the fruit-growing interest, as will be seen from the following notes: Insect depredations are recorded only in Maine, in some counties of which caterpillars were troublesome. In New England generally the crops were late, and in some parts a tendency to simultaneous blooming excited remark. In the middle, southern and western states generally, the climatic conditions were very unfavorable. The severity of the winter has not only destroyed the fruit germs, but also the trees. The cold snap in the spring changed the scope of this injury, and heavy late frosts in many places destroyed what had survived the winter. In some cases it is noted that the plums stood the severity of the season better than other sorts of fruit. Grapes in many cases escaped on account of late blooming, but the vineyards of several sections were greatly depleted by the extreme cold. Small fruits were less severely affected and are reported as producing very luxuriantly.

COL. BOUDINOT, who has just returned from the Indian Territory, says twenty-seven murder cases have just been disposed of by the United States district court at Fort Smith, Ark., before which all criminal business from the Indian nation comes. Out of this number there were eight convictions for murder in the first degree. Seven of those convicted, including two boys, one seventeen, the other nineteen years, both are to be hanged together on the 3d of September next. The eighth one, a negro, was killed after conviction while attempting to escape. Much outlawry prevails in the Indian Territory and ten men have been killed in the vicinity of Fort Smith within a few months. A very bitter contest is now going on in the Cherokee nation for the position of chief of the nation between the Ross and Downing parties, and it is alleged conspiracy and secret assassination are rife. Col. W. P. Rose, present chief, is a candidate for re-election, and a man named Thompson is the candidate of the Downing party.

Capt. Jas. B. Eades has written a letter to President Grant and secretary of war Belknap, advising them of the progress of the jetties at the South Pass. The main point in the letter is that provisional works, one thousand feet long, are already constructed on the line of the east jetty, and being pushed seaward at the rate of two hundred feet per day. Two hundred mechanics and laborers and four piledriving machines are at work and a large quantity of stone and other material are ready at hand. Additional accommodations are being prepared, and in short the working force will be largely increased. Telegraphic communication has been established between New Orleans and the head of the Pass, and the line is being extended to the works at the mouth of the Pass. Capt. Eads says the provisional work mentioned is what is known as sheet piling, and while it is only preliminary in character, it will temporarily serve the same purpose and produce the same result as permanent jetties. The captain is quite sure that there will be twenty feet of water on the bar, at the South Pass, by the 1st of February.

THE OLD CONTINENTALS.

In their ragged regimentals
Stood the old continentals,
Yielding not;
While the grenadiers were limping,
And like hail fell the plunging
Cannon-shot;
When the files
Of the isles
From the smoky night encampment
Bore the banner of the rampant
Unicorn,
And grummer, grummer, grummer,
Rolled the roll of the drummer
Through the morn!

Then with eyes to the front all,
And with guns horizontal,
Stood our sires;
While the balls whistled deadly,
And in streams flashing redly,
Blazed the fires;
As the roar
On the shore
Swept the strong battle-breakers
O'er the green-sodded acres
Of the plain;
And louder, louder, louder,
Cracked the black gunpowder,
Crashing amain!

Now like the smiths at their forges
Worked the red St. George's
Cannoneers;
And the "villainous saltpetre"
Rang, a nerve-devordant meter
Round our ears,
As the swift,
Storm-grim,
With hot cheer-pine anger
Came the horse-guards clanger
On our flanks;
Then higher, higher, higher,
Burned the old-fashioned fire
Through the ranks!

Then the bare-headed colonel
Galloped through the white infernal
Powder-cloud;
And his broad-sword was swinging,
And his brazen throat was ringing
Trumpet loud.
Then the blue
Bullets flew;
And the trooper-jackets redden-ed
At the touch of the leaden
Rifle-breath;
And rounder, rounder, rounder
Roared the iron six-pounder,
Hurling death!

—Guy Humphrey McMaster.

THE GREAT STAPLE.

Report of the New Orleans Cotton Exchange The Crop Reported in Excellent Condition.

The Committee on Information and Statistics of the New Orleans Cotton Exchange, to whom has been entrusted the duty of compiling a national crop report, made up from returns of various Exchanges appointed therefor by the National Exchange, submit the following for the month of June:

New Orleans, Department of Louisiana—We have 83 letters from 37 parishes, which unite in reporting generally favorable weather. There has been no additional acreage put in cotton since the 15th of May, but there has been some replanting where lands were overflowed and to perfect the stands. The plant has been better cultivated than for many years, and is growing and forming well. Many blooms are reported. The stands are represented as very good to excellent, and the present condition of the crop is most flattering, much better and about one week earlier when compared with last year.

Mississippi—103 replies received. Average date about the 15th. Weather nearly universally represented as very favorable. Stands fine and the plant forming well, though too early for many blooms. The present condition is stated as very good, and much better when compared with last year. No additional acreage put in cotton. Replanting has been done where the plants were imperfect. Labor plenty and efficient.

Arkansas—50 correspondents send in their answers from 22 counties. Since the first of June the weather has been hot, and most enough to promote rapid growth and cause the plant to form and square well. The stands are very good, and no replanting has been needed, except in a few exceptional cases. Bradley county reports the first bloom on the 8th inst., but it is only exceptional, and as a rule blooming had not begun at the date of our answer and correspondents are unanimous in representing the condition as exceedingly promising and far superior to that of last year. Planters are encouraged by the prospect, one of the finest ever known. Considerable attention and care has been devoted to the cultivation of cereals, and owing to the excellent harvest, a feeling of independence is very noticeable in our correspondence.

Charleston, Department of South Carolina—97 answers received from 24 counties, reporting weather since May 15 as generally favorable. Some complaints of cool nights. Very little additional planting. Stands represented as good. 31 answers say forming well; 39, say few forms, and 9 no forms. All agree in stating, no blooms up to date of answers. Present condition good, though small, being clean of grass and some parts compare favorably with last year. Heavy storms of wind and hail are reported in six counties since June 7, doing much real damage. Lice are reported in four counties.

Augusta Department, covering that portion of the state of Georgia not included in the Savannah report—Weather favorable; no additional planting; some little replanting; stands good; forming well but no blooms. General condition good. Crops generally very clean. Labor plentiful and good.

Savannah Department—Savannah Cotton Exchange, covering Northern, Middle and Southwestern Georgia and the state of Florida—Weather dry and generally favorable; no additional planting of any consequence; stands good; plant vigorous; generally forming well, but no blooms except in the southern portion of the state; condition good; crop clean and well worked; plant somewhat smaller and a few days later, but rather better than at the same time last year.

Florida—Dry and favorable weather clearing the fields of grass; stands good; plant forming well and commencing to bloom; condition good and compares favorably with last year, though small from dry weather and somewhat later than last year, promises to be well-fruited at the bottom, which is the principal part of the crop.

Mobile, Department of Alabama—From fifty-two counties, 126 replies: The weather has been generally favorable, rather too dry in some places, but not enough so to injure the plant. There has been very little replanting or additional planting. The stands are good and the plant is forming well; very few blooms; the condition as compared with last year is reported from as good to much better; there are scarcely any unfavorable circumstances relative to growth or condition of the crop; only a few reports of lice and grasshoppers, and complaints of cold nights and drouth. The crop is clean, in good condition and better cultivated than last year.

Missouri—Nineteen counties, 56 replies. The weather has been generally favorable, needing rain in some counties, and some complaints of cold nights, producing lice. There has been very little replanting or additional planting; stands are good and plant forming well; only a few blooms; present condition of crop is better than last year at same period the only unfavorable circumstances are those noted above; the favorable circumstances are, the crop is cleaner, better cultivated and more advanced than last year at same time.

Norfolk and Portsmouth Department—Fifty five replies from 29 counties in North Carolina, six replies from two counties in Virginia. Forty-five replies report weather dry and cold; 14 say favorable, and only two represent the weather wet and cold. Fifty-four answers report the stand as good; some few complaints on stiff lands; some ferms; no blooms. Seven replies from seven counties in eastern Carolina represent the stand as below the average; condition very generally stated as good; crop well cultivated and free from grass and weeds; plant smaller than at the same time last year, and from eight to fifteen days later. Five answers from five counties in eastern Carolina report condition bad. Correspondents state that the weather since the 15th of May has been too cool for rapid growth, but with warm and seasonable weather a great improvement is looked for.

Memphis Department—145 answers received. Weather generally represented as favorable; no additional acreage put in cotton since May 15; stands good and satisfactory; plant generally squaring and forming freely; 12 reports of blooms dating from 18th to 20th; condition good; fields free of grass and well worked; some complaints of cool nights, lice, etc., dating from May 15th to June 5th, mostly remedied by subsequent favorable weather.

Galveston Department, Texas—We have received 120 reports from 39 counties, embracing the period between May 15th and June 20th; weather very generally said to have been favorable; no addition to acreage in cotton since May 15th; some little replanting where seed failed to come up; stands represented as good, and in the coast range reported to be forming and blooming well.

A large majority of our reports agree in the statement that the season is from one to three weeks later than last year, and that the plant is generally small, but is clear of grass and in good condition. Rains are needed. The caterpillar is reported in three counties, but so far has done no material damage.

How He Caught Them.

Some years ago, an eccentric genius, the Rev. Thomas P. Hunt, used to give temperance lectures. One night he announced that he would lecture in Easton. Now, temperance was not in favor among the male portion of the burg. The women, however, were all in for the pledge, and consequently, on Hunt's first night not a man showed himself in the hall. The benches were pretty well filled with women, though, and Hunt commenced; but, instead of temperance, he put them through on the vanities of dress, etc. They wore great puffed feather sleeves then. They—the sleeves—caught it, then their tight lacing, and so on through the whole catalogue of female follies; not a word about temperance. And the ladies went home hopping mad, told their husbands about it, and voted old Hunt down to the lowest notch.

He had announced that he would lecture at the same place the next night. Long before the time appointed they commenced to come, and when Hunt hobbled down the aisle the building was comfortably well filled with men. The old fellow looked about, chuckled, and muttered: "Hogs, I've got you now!" The audience stared. "Aha, hogs, I've got you now!"

After the crowd had got quiet a little, the lecturer said: "Friends, you wanted to know what I meant by saying, hogs, I've got you now, and I'll tell you. Out west the hogs run wild; and when folks get out of meat they catch a young pig, put a strap under his body, and hitch him to a young sapling that will just swing him from the ground nicely. Of course he squeals and raises a rumpus, when all the old hogs gather round to see what is the matter, and then they shoot them at their leisure. Last night I hung a pig up; I hurt it a little, and it squealed. The old hogs have turned out to night to see the fun, and I'll roast you." And so he did, pitching into their favorite vice with relish and gusto.

—"Sir," said a little blustering man to a religious opponent, "to what sect do you suppose I belong?" "Well, I don't exactly know," replied the gentleman, "but to judge from your appearance, and constant [illegible] I should think you belonged to the class generally called insect."

THE LOST FLORINDA.

New Orleans Picayune, June 28.

Recent revelations have excited an intense and growing interest in the fate of the fifteen or twenty men who, more than a quarter of a century ago, chartered the schooner Florinda and set sail for the golden shores of California. For twenty-six years the families of the adventurers have mourned them as lost. The last news of the Florinda was received late in the year 1849 from Rio Janeiro. She had put in at that port some time previous and then proceeded on her way, leaking badly, it was said. A vessel touching at Rio Janeiro shortly afterward, reported having spoken the Florinda in the Pacific, just beyond Cape Horn. From that time forward nothing more was ever heard of the Florinda, and it became an accepted theory that she had been cast away and her crew lost somewhere on the South Pacific coast. No tidings reached the families of the ill fated argonauts, and twenty six years slipped by without a waif or whisper to disturb the melancholy conviction which had sealed the record of their lives. Their children have grown to manhood and womanhood without the knowledge, with scarcely the memory of a father's love. The hopes that clustered around them have long ago been transferred to that other world in which they were believed to be.

Such is the story as it has passed current all this time, with the general public and with the greater number of the relatives of the Florinda company. At first, of course, there were doubts and fears and expectations, more or less reluctantly resigned for certainty, but to this conclusion all eventually came and the loss of the schooner with all on board has, for fully a quarter of a century, been regarded as a fact about which there could be no sort of question. The unfortunate men have been as utterly given up as though their burials had taken place in presence of the whole community, and to have told any of their families that they were still alive would have been to ask them to believe that the dead had risen after twenty-five years of sepulture and walked forth once more among the living.

Within the past few days, however, precisely this proposition has in effect been made. The strange and startling statement has transpired that Harmon Jones and his fellow voyagers were not lost as we have thought, but are now [illegible] unknown island in the lower Pacific.

About a month ago a friend of Mrs. Harmon Jones read in an English paper an account of some British vessel having been driven out of her course in a storm and sighted an unknown island. Much to the surprise of the crew the island turned out to be inhabited, and still more astonishing, by men who spoke the English language. The rest of the story, as given in the paper referred to, is that the castaways told the ship's company that they were the Florinda party who had sailed from New Orleans in 1849 bound for California, that they had been wrecked on the island and had dwelt there ever since, it being then more than twenty-five years that they had not seen a human face or a sign of the world from which they were so utterly eliminated. The paper gave the names of several, all of whom are known to have been of Florinda's crew, and in many other ways, according to the version of Mrs. Jones' friend, the identity of the party was established as none but themselves could have established it. It was further stated that the British vessel offered to take the men on board, but they declined, saying they had been lost for a quarter of a century; that they knew not in what situation they would find the families they had left, and that they preferred staying and ending their days there rather than venture back to such a doubtful and uncertain future. This paper was four months old when Mrs. Jones' friend saw it, one month ago, and the events narrated were described as having occurred four months previous to the issue of the paper. It is just nine months then since the island was discovered by the British vessel, and at that time all, or nearly all, of the Florinda party appear to have been alive.

It need not be said that this news has aroused the deepest interest. To the community at large it recalls the familiar occurrence of the Florinda's sailing from New Orleans with its adventurous company. To the families of the ill-fated men it comes like a message from another world, and is as though it were the announcement of a resurrection. Within the past few days the relatives have been living in a state of constant excitement, and many of them, especially the sons of Harmon Jones, Jno. A. Sidney, and Capt. Kenmore, the skipper of the Florinda, have devoted themselves to the task of following the clue given by the friend who saw the English paper. Extensive inquiries are now on foot, and the British consul has kindly interested himself in the affair so far as to agree to forward to the war office in London a full statement of the circumstances so that the name of the vessel which touched at the castaway's home can be ascertained and the bearings of the island taken from her log. It would greatly facilitate this end, however, if a copy of the paper giving the original account were found, and it is still hoped that some one who sees this publication may have noticed the paper and be able to tell us where a number can be had. On that contingency depends much that will simplify and expedite the quest, but it is certain that in any case the friends of Florinda's crew will never rest again until the mystery is fathomed to its uttermost depth.

FACTS AND FANCIES.

—Mrs. Chibbles has great ideas of her husband's military powers. "For two years," says she, "he was a lieutenant in the horse-marines, after which he was promoted to the captaincy of a regular squad of sap-heads and miners."

—Out of 296,000 of the last levy of conscripts in France 25,000 have been declared exempted from both active and passive duties in the military line. It looks bad when so many men are not even fit to be food for gunpowder, though the fact should be considered as a good sign in behalf of peace.

—Only two hundred years ago the old moss-back who was governor of Virginia got up and said: "I thank God that we have no free schools nor printing presses, and I hope we shall not have any for a hundred years; for learning has brought disobedience and heresy and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them and libeled governments. God keep us from both!"

—It is well that a parent should know the peculiarity of the pulse of each child. The pulse of a healthy adult beats seventy times in a minute, though good health may be enjoyed with fewer pulsations. But if the pulse always exceeds seventy, it indicates disease, the human machine is working itself out—there is fever or inflammation some, where, and the body is feeding on itself.

—The college orator is now abroad in the land. His voice is heard from the four quarters of the earth, telling of the efforts he has made for distinction in the past, and his hopes and aspirations for the future. He is sanguine—far more sanguine, than he will be a few years hence, when he shall have encountered and been conquered by some of the stern realities of life. Thus far his education has been only theoretical; in the future it will be practical. Whether the former shall fit the subjects for the latter, the future alone can determine.

—If a man wants to go anywhere in a brief space of time he must walk fast, but he loses his popularity in proportion to his rapidity. Balzac, who seems to have thought it worth while to notice this contemptible fact, says: "Violent gesture or quick movement inspires involuntary disrespect. One looks for a moment at a cascade, but one sits for hours lost in thought and gazing upon the still waters of a lake. A deliberate gait, gentle manners and a gracious tone of voice—all of which may immense advantage over those vastly superior to him."

—All good men should live in Archangel; all angry men in Ireland; all murderers in Kildare; all circus-men in Somerset; all brokers in Stockholm; all cold men in Chili; all geometricians in Cuba; all fools in Folly Island; all horticulturists in Botany Bay; all wags in the Bay of Fundy; all perfumers in Muscat or Cologne; all brewers in Malta; all gluttons in Turkey; all beggars in Hungary; all laconic men in Laconia; all mourners in Siberia or Wales; all confectioners in Candia; all children in the Crimea; all oil speculators in Greece; all gamblers in the Faro Islands; all stumblers in Tripoli; all curious men in Pekin; all shoemakers in Bootan; all soldiers in Armenia or Warsaw.

—A Brussels paper gives a painful account of the ex Empress Charlotte of Mexico. Her physical condition is good, but her mental condition is hopeless. She lives in constant communication with imaginary beings, and dislikes the presence of any living person. She speaks only when obliged to do so, and gives orders to her attendants in writing. She dresses herself without permitting assistance, takes a fixed walk in the park every morning when fine, frequently plays on the piano-forte, and sometimes draws and paints with decided taste. She recognizes no visitors, not even her brother, King Leopold or the queen. The latter always accompanied the physician on his monthly visit, when, in reply to his inquiries as to her health, the empress coldly says she is well, and immediately retires. She has become stouter, and shows a tendency to corpulency, but at present it is stated that this has only increased her beauty, which is now truly striking.

—It has been justly said that the greatest discovery of our lives is that the world is not so bad as, in the first disappointment of youth's extravagant expectations, we are disposed to regard it. The passage from boyhood to manhood is "over the bridge of sighs;" and our first experiences of life as it is, resemble the flavor of the forbidden apple—we are enlightened and miserable. Gladly would we command the secret of feeling as we once did; but, alas, every day takes from us some happy error—some charming illusion—never to return. We are reasoned or ridiculed out of all our jocund mistakes, till we are just wise enough to be miserable, and we exclaim with Lady Mary Wortley Montague, "To my extreme mortification I find myself growing wiser and wiser every day." But a time comes, at length, when our views are more just. We leave our imaginary Eden with "solemn step and slow," and begin to appreciate the good qualities of those whose friendship we thought hollow, and the necessity of that labor which we deemed a curse. We exchange ecstasy for content, and, "forgetting the four rivers of our ideal heaven, open our eyes to the manifold beauties of earth—its skies islanded stars, and its oceans starred by islands, its sunshines and calms, and the goodness of its great heart, which sends forth trees and flowers and fruits for our benefit and exultation."—*Professor Mathews.*