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SATURDAY, MAY 2, 1891.

THE TREATMENT OF CONVICTED CRIMINALS.

There is a quite general opinion that the pardoning power has been exercised in the states of Oregon and California in a manner that does not inure to the good of the commonwealths. The trouble in such cases may be charged to weak or corrupt executives. But the wisdom of giving the governor alone the power of pardoning convicted criminals whom the courts have placed where they cannot harm society, is beginning to be seriously questioned, and there may be profit in observing the course of older states in dealing with this unpleasant feature of our civilization.

In New Jersey a law has recently been made that is likely to produce interesting results. The pardoning power in that state does not belong to the governor alone, but is vested by the constitution in the governor, the chancellor, and the six judges of the court of errors and appeals, who, in their collective capacity, are known as the court of pardons. The new court of parole just provided for is to consist of these officers and the keeper of the state prison. This body is invested with exceptional and extraordinary powers in regard to the liberation of convicts. It is authorized in its discretion to release on parole such prisoners as have behaved well in prison, and can obtain immediate employment if let out. The paroled convict, after being thus set at liberty, must make a report once a month to the governor, giving an account of the manner in which he has spent his time and of the money which he has earned. He must live a decent, orderly, and industrious life, and abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors. If he does this until the end of the term for which he was sentenced to imprisonment, he becomes entitled to a certificate of discharge which restores him to his rights as a citizen. If, on the other hand, he fails to fulfil the requirements of the law as to good behavior, he is liable to be arrested and returned to prison to serve out his sentence.

This is a long step in advance, and it is hoped it will prove an important one in the solution of the problem of dealing with crime. If in practice it proves to be what there is reason to believe it will be, other states will hasten to follow the example of New Jersey.

"The only good Indian is a dead one," said some bumptious boomer, and the sentiment has gotten abroad pretty extensively. In view of the prevailing disposition to kick the Indian simply because he is an Indian and can not help himself, it is refreshing to note such observations as the following by Agent Matthews, of the Klamath reservation:

If those who talk disparagingly of the Indians could only put themselves in the Indian's place a little while, their mental picture of the aborigine would undergo a change both as to character and color. Indeed, if these solemn, ignorant kickers were in poor Lo's place they would kick in less than twenty-four hours, and the kicks would be higher and louder than any Indian kicks heard as yet. I am satisfied that the Indians under my control are industrious, peaceful men. I am equally well satisfied that people generally do not know the Indian as well as they should. When they do know him, they will see in him, not a red man, nor yet a "bad Indian," but a man.

Dishonest government agents and dishonest missionaries of religion are largely responsible for the "innate devilishness" of the American Indian. His ignorance does not of itself make him treacherous but it makes him a prey to the crafty vicious who are supposed to aid and protect him and who are invested with authority and paid for that purpose. The "Christian's thirst for gold" is at the bottom of Indian treachery and violence.

In 1790 the census showed the population of the cities of the United States to be 131,472, or about one-thirtieth of the total population of the country. In 1890 the population of the cities was 18,235,670, or nearly one-third of the total population. During the past decade the growth of the

cities has been nearly forty-four per cent., and of the rural districts scarcely twenty per cent. This tendency of the people to gather in the cities is an element of weakness that many view with alarm. The tide of immigration pouring into the United States goes largely to the cities where foreign elements are most dangerous. There is hardly a city of any size that does not have its Irish, Polish, Italian or Chinese districts, where the clannishness of the foreign nationalities builds up un-American customs and generally lowers the moral tone of the people. The many instances where these districts have become menacing plague spots of national concern indicate the evil that is sure to follow the system that permits these festering sores to become established and to consume the social and political fabrics of the nation. Instead of drawing the foreign elements together in one homogenous mass, the combination is becoming alarmingly heterogenous, and it needs prompt and vigorous treatment to keep it within bounds.

Speaking of the growth of cities brings to mind that the new state of Washington presents a very remarkable record for the past decade. The three cities of Spokane, Tacoma and Seattle precede all others in the United States in the percentages of gain during that period. In Spokane the increase was over 1,900 per cent., in Seattle 1,112 per cent. and Tacoma was between the two.

The God-in-the-constitution people came off victorious in Kentucky and the constitution just framed in that state specially recognizes the Deity. This was probably done to add pungency to the speech of Kentucky colonels.

Away back in 1787 a treaty was made between the United States and the bey of Tripoli, and in article xii of that treaty it is expressly stated that "the government of the United States is in no sense whatever a Christian government." As an official declaration of the attitude of our government on the question of Christianity this seems pretty clear, but it is possible that it does not suit the religious monomaniacs who essay to tinker these latter-day constitutions.

The error in surveying the international boundary between Canada and the United States has been rediscovered. The deflection of the line begins on the Montana boundary, and it is between 200 and 300 yards out of the way at its western end, the difference being in favor of the United States. However it may be, the line as surveyed and actually marked by iron posts from Boundary bay to Lake Superior has been officially ratified, mistake or no mistake, and it must stand as the international boundary even if it does not mark the forty-ninth parallel according to the more modern calculation. Some ten years ago the error was first detected.

Oregon's freak governor may be depended upon to get to the front at the most inopportune moment. He possesses a genius for exactly hitting the time when an expression of some of his cranky notions will gain the greatest currency. His opinions are sent broadcast because he happens to be a governor and they are of the kind that makes them curiosities. The asininity of Oregon's executive is so vast and dense that it is positively instructive.

The picnic and ice cream season has arrived and the newspapers will soon be laden with accounts of seasonable mishaps such as poisonings, boiler explosions and marriage engagements. The festive shark should begin to whet his appetite and the ubiquitous sea serpent to disport himself in the sad sea waves. The European war scare and the Blaine boom are becoming decrepit and should be tenderly laid away for a rest.

What is Oregon going to do about a world's fair exhibit? More than any other of the state of the northwest Oregon needs to make a good display at Chicago because it has long been known, and it appears to be sinking into insignificance by the side of its rapidly rising sisters. Oregon must have a good exhibit.

President Harrison will be in Oregon next week. Of course he will be warmly welcomed in this state as he has been elsewhere on this trip. It is a patriotic impulse to honor the chief executive of the nation, and Oregon will not lag in this respect.

To J. G. Blaine, Washington: Boo!

(Signed) RUDINI.

To Marquis di Rudini, Rome: Scat!

(Signed) BLAINE.