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THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 1902.

#### THE LAEOR VOTING.

During election we hear much about "the labor vote," and what it will do and what it requires of a candidate for office, etc., but after election, if we study the returns, we find the strength of the "labor vote" was an iridescent dream, a thing to conjure with rather than base expectations upon. The labor people bark a great deal through their leaders, but they stay together at the ballot box about as well as a handful of chaff thrown upon the water, separating aimlessly and unwisely. In short, the labor vote hardly knows what it wants, expressing its uncertainty as do other men, who steer without course or compass to the port of Nowhere.

In the late election the "labor vote," said to have been 6000 to 7000 strong, was nowhere in the returns. Union men were named on both tickets to meet its demands, but in no case received any appreciable support from their "brothers." In the case of Mr. Nottingham in Portland, he, who refused to vote as a member of the legislature for some labor measure, led his ticket. And Mr. Barnes, a Portland candidate, one who was on labor's black list, defeated Mr. Hewitt, one whom the "labor vote" endorsed. And Mr. Driscoll, another Portland man, said to be a special favorite with the "labor vote," got nothing!

What has labor to say to this indictment? Nothing. It is a condition of labor voting everywhere, for it is unnatural for men to act together like a band of sheep or a gang of slaves, unless they are entirely devoid of the spirit of independence and without brains or individuality.

When men are constructed exactly alike mentally and physically this concert of action can be expected, but so long as they occupy a plane of intelligence above the dumb brutes they will be found free from the bridle and gear of their own unions and orders, and it is well for free institutions and free men that this is true. If this truth was recognized by the thick-headed politicians and office seekers there would be less capital to be made out of labor voting and less disposition to sway men in hands and drives like they were so many cattle upon the block.

#### FRUIT OF PARTISAN POLITICS.

The tragedy at the penitentiary at Salem is a sequel to the story of partisan politics in Oregon. It is the custom for the positions in the prison to be parceled out as political patronage and for the last four years, if not for a longer time, fitness has had little to do in the selection of men to serve the state, while politics has had everything to do with it. At any rate the prison guards have proven to be unfit to guard the interests of the state or to protect their own lives from two desperate prisoners.

The fact of the matter is, a prison guard should be selected regardless of his political relations, strictly on his merit as a cool-headed, brave man and a dead shot with revolver or rifle. This was a demonstrated fact at the recent session of the national prison congress in Kansas City. Wherever the system has obtained of making prison positions the spoils of office, there some tragedy like that at Salem has occurred.

The guards at the Salem prison who fell victims to the unerring aim

of the two desperate convicts, were good and brave men but they were needlessly sacrificed, because not proficient in the use of arms and not cool-headed under the stress of great excitement. They fired at the escapes many times without result, and while the escapes killed three of the guards, the guards only succeeded in wounding slightly one of the convicts.

In short, the guards were political pie counter frequenters, one of them being an ordinary farmer, with no special fitness for the work which they were required to perform. The result is, they are dead and three families are without a head, while the state is injured even more than that from a law and order standpoint, while prison discipline and authority everywhere are weakened and desperate men made more determined to resist the state.

Guards should be selected solely upon merit, proven, if need be, by actual demonstration in shooting straight, those failing to use shooting irons effectively to be turned away, regardless by whom recommended or what ticket they voted at the previous election. A little reflection will convince anyone that penitentiaries should be placed upon a civil service basis along with other institutions, if the state is to be better served and the politicians less so.

The incident—a tragedy—at Salem clinches the point.

#### THE FOWLER BILL.

Just now the Fowler bill for branch banking and currency issue on assets other than national bonds is attracting attention. The theory of the bill is that such a system of branch banks and currency will equalize the rate of discount or interest by preventing currency congestion in the money centers.

The Bankers' Magazine for January, 1899, published a statement of the reasons which are believed to support Mr. Fowler's bill. Bradstreet reports the average rate of discounts from 1893 to 1897 in different parts of the country, showing the increase in rate with the increase of distance from New York, as follows, the average of the lower and the higher rates being given:

	Lower.	Higher
New York	4.41	5.36
Cincinnati	5.01	5.87
Chicago	5.74	6.53
St. Louis	5.90	7.23
Milwaukee	6.27	7.02
St. Paul	6.60	7.41
Omaha	7.98	8.69
Denver	10.00	11.67
Richmond	6.90	6.40
Charleston	7.02	7.96
Savannah	7.39	8.75
Galveston	7.31	8.00
New Orleans	5.55	7.05

In these rates may be found one cause, and a great cause of the intense Southern and Western agitation of the money question. With money at 4.41 in New York and from 5.90 to 10 in the south and west, is it any wonder that the people are willing listeners to charges against Wall street and plans for making money plenty?

Where branch banking prevails and flexible currency is permitted no such difference is found. The Reichsbank of Germany has branches in 316 cities, and the rate in them is identical. The bank of France through its branches has an identical rate for the same class of loans and securities in every department. The Bankers' Magazine says that the same conditions exist, due to the same cause, in Italy, Belgium and Holland. In England the country bank rate is always the same and in Scotland a thousand banks have the same rate.

In the Dominion of Canada the branches of the thirty-seven chartered banks everywhere make the same rate, whether in the lumber towns of Ontario, the wheat districts of Manitoba or mining camps of the Rocky mountains, and it never exceeds an

advance of 2 per cent upon Toronto, Quebec or Montreal.

The New York Journal of Commerce approves these statements of the Bankers' Magazine and adds that in this country alone is the principle of branch banking disregarded. In the days of state banks, however, branch banking was recognized, with the result that rates for money were equal everywhere in the state. Hugh McCulloch, who ranks among the great secretaries of the treasury, organized the state bank of Indiana, with branches all over the state, and as president of the mother bank at Fort Wayne, put an end to the Indiana "red dog" currency and redeemed the financial reputation of that state. Surely a system that has worked well in other countries, and that was in successful operation here until the state banks were abolished by our national system, is deserving of close examination, as a means for equal distribution of the loan fund of the country, in order to equalize the rate of discount.

All bankers believe that the public and private credit were put in great peril by the agitation of false financial theories in 1896. If they believe also, that one great cause of this peril was the inequality in the rate of discount which made the use of credit costly at points remote from money centers they should accompany their opposition to the Fowler bill with a suggestion of some other means to get the results expected of that measure. The borrowers are a more numerous class than the lenders and their interests must not be forgotten, for as a rule they represent the commercial and industrial enterprise of the country.

#### PEACE TERMS BOER WAR.

The peace terms that end the Boer war are creditable no less to the vanquished, who made such a heroic fight, than to the victors who have taught the world a lesson of tolerance and moderation by the generosity of their concessions. It may be that King Edward's desire to be able to say in his coronation address that his empire is at peace has inspired the agreement that restores the prisoners to their homes, restocks their farms and permits them to continue their own language in the schools and in the courts, but whatever the motive, the world must recognize the fact that England has granted these favors to the people who have cost her a hundred thousand men and a billion dollars.

It makes some amends for the obstinacy that forced an unnecessary war on the Boer republics, and it is to be hoped that the lesson taught the big empire by the two little republics will be heeded as was that other lesson given by America a century ago.

However, the war is over and South Africa will not be wholly the loser by it.

The influence of England will make for the development of the entire continent, and the example of progress that is bound to show in English Africa will spread until the wide, rich regions that have been parcelled out among the other nations of Europe feel its effect, and Africa will cease to be the Dark Continent.

Progress and civilization will roeem the jungles and deserts alike. The Cape to Cairo railroad will be put through, and will do the work for the most backward of the great

#### HANDICAPPED.

The man who started to run a race in chains and fetters would be visibly handicapped. No one would expect him to succeed. The man who runs the race of life when his digestive and nutritive organs are diseased is equally handicapped. In the one case his strength is over-weighted, in the other it is under-weighted. Success demands above all else a sound stomach.

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divisions of the earth that transcontinental railways did for America.

Under the terms England granted South Africa will have practically the measure of independence that Australia has, under which Australia has prospered materially and politically. It is from Australia, the freest nation on earth have borrowed the ballot that safeguards our elections, and it may be that in the not too far distant future there will come out of Africa something that does as much for human independence as the Australian ballot.

The final formal victory of England, though the world may regret that it was against such a gallant little band means much for progress, and the opening of one more great field for the supply of the people of the earth with what they need.

The Boer republics were picturesque aggregations of peaceful farmers, but they were practically hermit nations; the new English speaking empire that will rise in their place will be as the mill to the spinning wheel or the railroad to the stage coach in its relation to the Great March.

In the greatness of this empire that is to be, the descendants of those farmers who made the world stare at their courage will have the greatest share. A nation, whatever its political destiny, sprung from such men will be a nation of giants, and, regardless of immigration, the spirit of South Africa, though inspired by the progressive Anglo-Saxon, will always be the spirit of the Boers.—American and Journal.

In Texas and Louisiana there are now more than 100 canals and pumping stations, each capable of flooding 1000 acres of rice. They are owned by irrigation companies which supply the water needed to the rice farmers.



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