

The test made of the Australian ballot system in Massachusetts at the recent election is pronounced as highly satisfactory to all honest men, regardless of party. It is to be hoped that the next legislature of the state of Nebraska will adopt the same or similar election laws. Those now upon the statute books of Nebraska are about as badly mixed as they can be and it is highly important that something more satisfactory be substituted.

It is reported that an effort will be made to unite all of the Central American states with the Republic of Mexico, thereby creating a strong nation. It does not appear that a very substantial government could be constructed, for in all of those countries there are so many revolutions that there is no telling when a person could live there in safety, and the consolidation of the different states would only tend to create new jealousies and consequent trouble.

The supreme court has handed down a decision in the case of Smith vs. Polfberger, affirming the decision of the district court, which gave Mrs. Smith judgment for \$2,500 against defendant. The case originated at Blue Springs, by the defendant selling liquor to plaintiff's husband, he being a habitual drunkard. If the laws of Nebraska are enforced and a few such decisions rendered by the courts, the saloon keepers will be more careful about violating the law.

Black Bart, on trial for train robbing and for robbing the Gogebic stage and shooting one of the passengers in Michigan, has confessed to having committed the crimes. He pleads as an excuse that some years ago he was hurt by a fall from a horse since which he has had spells occasionally when he did not know what he was about, and it was during these spells that he committed the crimes. It is hardly likely that such statements will have much weight with the jury.

The high price of beef in Germany has created a market there for American beef and the animals are shipped direct to German ports alive. After paying the cost of transportation and custom duties the beef can be sold at from 10 to 15 per cent less than the prevailing price of German beef. It is the first attempt of shipping live cattle to Germany and preparations are being made for quite extensive shipments. A contract has been made for nine hundred head to be shipped from Illinois in the near future for the German market.

President Harrison last week signed the proclamation admitting the state of Washington. At the recent election the constitution proposed for Wyoming was adopted and that territory will, in all probability, be admitted to the great sisterhood of states in the near future. With all the new accessions to full rights as states our national law-making body will be largely increased in numbers. It is quite likely that the basis of representation in congress will be changed after the census of 1900, but even then all the newly settled states will have an increased number of congressmen. If the basis of representation is left as it is at present it would make the house of representatives so large that it would be an unwieldy legislative body.

The Russian oil wells along the shore of the Caspian sea, the prodigious yield of which has exceeded in quantity the most noted wells in Pennsylvania, have exhausted the subterranean store of oil from which their production has been drawn. Russia has been this country's greatest rival in the petroleum market. With reports of the gradual failure of the oil fields of Pennsylvania comes the news that further and greater discoveries of oil have been made in Wyoming. Eastern capital is already looking towards the western oil fields and if the supply at the east becomes comparatively exhausted the west will be able to build up a great industry, which will increase the wealth of this section in a manner at once gratifying and satisfactory.—See.

It is reported that Minneapolis will, in the near future, lose some of her greatest milling interests. It is not known where the new location of the industry will be but it is safe to presume that it will be at some western point. Every day it is being demonstrated that it will prove more profitable for many of the great manufacturing establishments to operate further west. The excellent quality of wheat produced in northwest Nebraska is already attracting a good deal of attention and it will not be long before some one will erect a good mill in Sioux county so as to convert the products of our soil into flour without the expense of freight. The acreage of wheat in this county will be greatly increased in 1900 over that of the past year and it will be necessary for our people to make an effort to get a mill located near enough so that they can derive the benefits accruing therefrom.

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"Only Thou, Father, canst govern the waves Drawing thy children and drifting their graves Show us thy Mercy, on Thee are we cast, Guide us, O God! to thy haven at last."

THE ECONOMICS OF PROHIBITION.

Announcement is made of the planting of a new town in Georgia, with prohibition stipulated in every title-deed. We have heard the question asked in this connection, "Will capital seek or accept an opportunity on such basis?" It may be answered by asking, in turn, "Is capital far-sighted and wise?"

There is an abundance of capital now lying idle in this country. It desires investments that shall be safe and profitable. Does the liquor traffic add safety and profit to business of any kind anywhere? If so, then town-building should not ban the traffic on commercial grounds alone. Does the liquor traffic render business generally less safe and less profitable? Then the builders of a new town are commercially justified in banning it, if they have the power. Does a saloon next any residence or other property increase the market value of such property? Then the new town should secure all the saloons possible. Does a saloon decrease property values around it? Then they who build the new town may well and wisely condemn saloons in advance, and forbid their advent altogether.

Speaking of prohibition and its effects in Des Moines, the Iowa State Register says:

"For every man who drops a dime or a dollar in a hole-in-the-wall, there are 5,000 workmen whose weekly wages now go to buy food and clothing and the comforts of life for their families, and not a cent into the tills of saloon keepers."

Five thousand workmen represent 5,000 homes, and these comprise, we will say, a city of 25,000 people. These and the necessary stores, factories, markets, etc., which go to the making of a town. Homes are the unit of town-building, the superstructure upon which every town is reared. A thrifty home implies a sober workman, and his regular patronage of the merchant, the manufacturer, the fellow-artisan, is for the welfare of all. Regular patronage of these means the thrift and growth of the town, and thus means the wholesome profit of capital invested in establishing its mills, its factories, its varied improvements.

When Mr. Powderly says that in one Pennsylvania county \$17,000,000 were spent for liquor in a single year, and that \$11,000,000 of this came from workmen, what does it signify? That at least 10,000 homes lacked comfort, and at least 50,000 people went ill-clad, underfed. And this signifies that a great deal of honest capital saw smaller dividends than were possible; while general prosperity suffered.

Two things are required by capital to insure its continued welfare—good dividends and small taxes. Dividends come of prosperity in business, well paid industry, a demand for the proceeds of labor (which capital employs), and the common distribution of money through reciprocity of trade. Taxes come of public burdens or public improvements. Make public burdens light and taxes will be light, under any average of improvements; make these burdens heavy and capital suffers as the inevitable consequence. The sure way to guarantee heavy burdens is to multiply consumers who are not producers, and the surest way to multiply these is to maintain a saloon system. Every man is a consumer who earns less than he and his require to feed, and clothe, and house them. Grant that he earns fifty dollars of surplus every year; then put a saloon between him and his workshop, let him be its daily patron and he become a consumer, a burden to the town or the state, in some degree, for he consumes more than his surplus. He is a producer now, only as he is a tax-producer. He is a drag on capital from this time forward.

Vinland, N. J., was started on the prohibition basis, and though now saloons may be a matter of vote there, they are regularly and almost unanimously voted down. In the entire borough, at the last election, only nine men voted for license. Bessbrook, in Ireland, has been a temperance town these forty years. In the great linen factory there 3,000 persons are employed; but the place, having no saloon or other liquor-selling concern, has neither policeman, prison, pawn-shop or pauper. Its taxation is light, because its burdens are light. Prohibition Maine, according to the governor's inaugural statement in January last, will have lower taxes next year than ever before since 1860, on about one-sixth the levy of thirty years ago.

Could it be shown that saloons contribute to the general good of a town, then capital might well shrink from their prohibition at the outset of a town's career. No man can show it. The saloon is a parasite upon industry, a leech upon capital, a robber of commerce. That capital should ban it where capital can, is but

an exercise of common sense. There are large acres of land in Great Britain whence by title-deeds the liquor traffic is banished forever; and we predict that soon they will be matched in America. The economies of prohibition are being studied everywhere, as never before, and these mollify prejudice, convince capital and serve morality. They do not appeal to the highest standards, or excite the loftiest impulses, but they are persuasive. We would gladly see the liquor traffic abolished as a matter of virtue, and religion, and right; we are quite willing to array men against it as a matter of business, of justice, of legitimate self-interest.

An English syndicate closed the deal for a number of St. Louis breweries; the purchase price being \$12,250,000. That is said to be the largest investment ever made of English capital in the United States at one deal.

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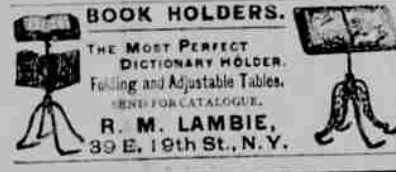
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