

district to start with 200 ballots already marked before the polls are opened.

The average percentage for the whole United States of males of voting age who voted in 1896 was 71.7 per cent. The percentage for the north Atlantic states was 70.8 per cent., for the south Atlantic, 71.4 per cent.; for the northern central, 79.7 per cent.; for the southern central, 67.9 per cent.; for the western states, 47.8 per cent. The closer the contest the larger the vote. In the northern central group every state was hotly contested. The high figures in West Virginia, Maryland and North Carolina, where similar conditions prevailed, brings the percentage of the south Atlantic group close up to the average, notwithstanding the low figures of South Carolina, where contests are practically determined at the primaries, which are much more generally attended.

In 1896 in South Carolina the nine presidential electors represented 68,907 voters and Pennsylvania's thirty-two electors represented 1,194,355 voters. In the former state there were 7,655 voters to each elector and in Pennsylvania, 37,323. According to the returns the South Carolinian had five times the influence of the Pennsylvanian. If the number of electors each state was entitled to was proportioned to the vote cast at the preceding presidential election perhaps there would be a more general exercise of the franchise or an elimination of those unjust provisions which disfranchise so many citizens in some of the southern states, or, better still, an improvement of conditions which will make intimidation impossible. Another suggested remedy is that of a direct vote of the people for president and vice-president. This would eliminate the possibility of a minority president and would substitute direction for indirection—always a desirable policy in a democratic community.—New York Independent.

INSURANCE AGAINST STRIKES.

An insurance against strikes is the latest idea in Austria. A number of manufacturers have adopted the plan of paying a certain percentage upon their respective payrolls into a common fund. In the event of a strike occurring in the work of one of them an investigation is made by a committee representing the association, and if it is decided the strike was declared unjustly the idle factory is indemnified from the fund. On the other hand, if the committee finds the cause of the strikers just there is no indemnity.

The influence of this organization should be good. Its direct effect will be to cause workmen to ponder before ordering a strike for doubtful grievances, because they cannot possibly win against an indemnified employer. The equally potent indirect effect will be to

make the manufacturer cautious about resisting demands that are just. The risk will not be merely the necessity for supporting themselves through the strike, but of having the moral weight of an adverse decision of the committee against them.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

RAILWAY NOTES.

In the suit against the New York Central, in which a passenger claimed that he was deprived of a seat which he had reserved by putting his baggage into it, the counsel asserts the following self-evident propositions: When a passenger buys a ticket he presumes that he is to get a seat, and unless there is some unusual condition he is legally entitled to it. If he enters an ordinary coach where no seats are reserved and there is no trainman to usher him to a seat it is the custom of railway companies to allow the passenger to choose his own seat. This practically amounts to a regulation of the company. Therefore, the court ruled, if a person occupied a seat, and then for any reason left it without in some way marking it as reserved by himself, and returned to find it occupied by another passenger, he has no right to ask that passenger to give up his seat. If, however, he leaves his cane, umbrella or handbag in his seat when he goes to the platform to buy a paper or for any other purpose, and finds his baggage moved and the seat occupied by another, he has a legal as well as a moral right to that seat.

The increasing popularity of tourist sleeping cars for transcontinental travel is a subject of much comment among railroad men. It is said that 85 per cent. of the passengers to and from California travel in tourist sleeping cars. These cars are comfortable and not nearly so expensive as palace sleeping cars. The Burlington railroad is doing a great deal to encourage tourist car travel, having increased its California tourist car service this season from once a week to three times a week.

A fast run was made on the Canadian Pacific railway on the 12th inst., with a special train carrying Lord Strathcona from Montreal to Ottawa. The train left Windsor street station at 8 37 a. m., and reached Ottawa at 10.27 a. m., a distance of 111.4 miles, in 110 minutes. At least ten minutes should be deducted from this, however, for slow running through Windsor street station yard at Montreal and the Central station yard at Ottawa, and for reducing speed at four interlocked grade crossings, and at Sainte Annes and Vaudreuil to receive and deliver electric train staff. The train consisted of Atlantic type engine 210, with Engineer J. Smith at the throttle, and one coach and private car, "Metaphedia," in charge of Conductor A. Chapman.

The following facts have been ascertained in connection with the reported

strike of the railway telegraphers on the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe railway, reference to which, with the usual sensational headlines, was made in the daily papers of November 14. A thorough examination of the documents in the case shows the exact situation to have been: That on Tuesday, November 6, a committee representing the operators on the Santa Fe lines west of Albuquerque submitted, for the consideration of the officials of the road, a wage schedule, together with rules and regulations governing the employment of operators. Being doubtful of their ability to agree with the committee it was suggested by the officials that the telegraphers request their president to meet with them in conference. At this meeting the committee was advised that the road was willing to pay operators west of Albuquerque the same wages as were commonly paid by the other transcontinental lines under similar conditions, and was willing to apply, west of Albuquerque, the rules and regulations adopted by agreement with the operators on July 1, 1900, and which are now in effect upon the lines east of Albuquerque. No agreement was reached at this conference. On November 9, a letter was addressed to the president of the order of telegraphers modifying somewhat the above proposition, but which also was rejected and the president of the railroad, who was in New York, was asked to arbitrate existing differences. In reply to this demand he wired that he did not think it necessary for outside aid to be called in to settle such a matter, but before deciding he would like to know what questions were to be submitted for arbitration and for how long the decision would govern. The reply made to this by the president of the telegraphers was: First, to order a strike, and later, to submit a final proposition. This proposition was agreed to so far as wages were concerned, with the understanding that if the parties could not agree upon the rules they would be arbitrated. Upon this conclusion the strike order was rescinded, but it so happened, owing to the distance to be covered, that the hour set for the strike had passed by a few minutes before some of the operators received the recall. As a matter of fact, therefore, there was no strike and no delay to trains occurred.

Because it did not maintain a train bulletin board in the station at Veedersburg, Ind., the Big Four railway company has been sued in the name of the state of Indiana for \$227,700 as penalty for alleged violations of the state law requiring railway companies to post bulletins announcing the arrival and departure of trains. The object of the suit is evidently to make money for the informer; the result will probably be to make the law ridiculous and cause its modification or repeal.—Railway Age.