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which sometimes elects the candidate who has the smaller number of votes. Under this system there are now and have been for some years certain States which are pivotal States, and whose vote regardless of the popular vote of the country at large decides Presidential elections, and it so happens now that these States are opposed to the free coinage of silver.

POLITICS IN IT.

If there was no politics in the silver coinage question it would in all probability have been decided before now, and decided, too, in favor of free coinage. President Harrison said in his message that a majority of the American people would favor free coinage if they could get it on an international basis of coin values, and he might have said with much reason that a majority of the American people would favor free coinage both of silver and gold entirely regardless of any international understanding.

There is no more probability of such an agreement ever being arrived at than there is of the Gulf stream freezing over. If such a matter could be settled by an understanding between two or three of the leading commercial nations it might be done, but there is not the slightest probability of getting any respectable number of nations into it to make it amount to anything.

Every nation will and necessarily must be the judge of the value to put upon its own coin, and while this value differs as widely as it does among the nations there will be little probability of ever getting the nations to come together and act together on an international standpoint.

Some Volapuk enthusiasts live in the belief that the time will come when the nations of all the earth will swap horses in the same language, a universal language, which will be spoken everywhere, and by everybody. When Adam comes back, hunts around and finds his garden and goes again into the fruit business, Volapuk will become supreme, but not till then. It was proposed by some one sometime ago that the nations of the earth get together in convention and decide upon a universal coin, which would be at home in all countries and recognized at its face value in all.

That would be a good idea, if practicable, a decided improvement on the international coin standard because it would not only bring silver into recognition but would totally abolish the distinctions which now exist in the coins of the nations of the earth and make them of the same value in every country. Then any piece of money issued by any government would pass current in any other country, for it would not be the coinage of any nation but of the world.

There are two classes of people who are figuring actively on this question; both for and against free coinage, the money power, and the politicians who are afraid of the money power on one side, against it, and the people who want more money with the silver mine owners, and the politicians who are afraid of the people on the other.

With the money power and the silver mine owners, it is simply a question of a practical business character by which their particular interests will be, in their opinion at least, materially affected for weal or for woe. The less silver is coined the smaller the volume of the currency will be and the greater the demand for the money which the money-lenders have to lend, the interest on which will be proportionately affected, while the silver mine owner is interested in free coinage, because every additional dollar coined increases the demand for the bullion out of which the coin is made. There is no politics in it with them. It is purely business. On both sides are Democrats and Republicans.

But with the politicians it is all politics, and the course of the large majority of them is governed altogether by the effect their advocacy of one or the other side of the coinage question would have on the prospects of the party to which they belong. If they were sure that free coinage would be the popular and winning card to play, it would be a nip and tuck race between the Republican and the Democratic politicians to see which would play it first and the strongest. But there's the rub. They are not sure of that and therefore both play shy.

They are both pretty well satisfied that a majority of the people of the country are in favor of free coinage, but unfortunately the majority of people do not decide all elections in this country, for there is an institution called the electoral college,

OBITUARY. Capt. John Bragg, the Well Known Telegraph Operator, Falls a Victim to The Grip. Capt. John Bragg, Associated Press operator in the Western Union Telegraph office in this city, died yesterday evening about half past seven o'clock, from an attack of grip, complicated with bronchial trouble. He had been suffering for some time with a severe cold, but it was not until the night of Thursday last—Christmas eve—that he succumbed to the severity of the attack and relinquished his place at the key. Since then he had been confined to his room, receiving the best of attention from his medical adviser, and Mr. C. Brown, the manager of the Western Union office here.

Capt. Bragg had been a resident of Wilmington for the past seven or eight years, and was aged about fifty years. He was a son of the late Gov. Bragg, and a graduate of the University of North Carolina. During the war between the States he served in the Army of Northern Virginia and in the army of the West. For several years afterwards he was connected with the newspaper press of this State, at Charlotte and Raleigh, and at one time was on the editorial staff of the Sentinel with the late Josiah Turner. He was a man of marked reserve in manner, except with his chosen friends, with whom he was ever cordial, frank and open, and kind-hearted and generous to a fault.

Soon after Capt. Bragg was taken sick he told Mr. C. Brown of the Western Union office, that in the event of his death he wished his remains sent to Raleigh for interment. In accordance with this request and by direction of his brother-in-law, Mr. C. D. Heart of Raleigh, who was telegraphed to the body of the deceased was prepared for burial last night by Mr. Woolvin, funeral director, and the casket containing the remains will be taken to Raleigh, leaving Wilmington at 10.15 this morning.

XMAS AT MAGNOLIA.

How the Holidays Were Celebrated—An Unending Round of Enjoyment. The quiet little town of Magnolia certainly needs—merits—a word in the STAR. The holidays came and are passing, but not without one continued strain of enjoyment. We are graced with the company of a dozen young ladies from different parts of the State, and no better, prettier, or more entertaining a lot could we have were it tried for.

The Magnolians are good, too!—a Magnolia is saying so. They have tried and succeeded in entertaining their company and themselves. On Xmas day a grand parade of horsemen was given under the command and control of Mr. W. Fred Pickett, who did honor to the "clowain" part of the parade. For the size of the town "we" think our parade could compete with Wilmington's "Gala Week"; no reflection on the latter, but a compliment to the former. There was something for us every night during these holidays; but especially must Tuesday night's "fancy dress festival" be mentioned; no better case than for the benefit of the poor; no better conducted affair, having had naught to occur to mar the pleasure of any.

It is said that no handsomer decorations were ever seen in Magnolia than we had up at the old college on Tuesday night. The whole was ably conducted by Miss McMillan, Johnson, Hunt and others. The hearts of "those ye always have with you" were that live to do good will be made glad. So a happy Xmas to all—most over, and a happy New Year!

Sol Haas on the Southern Situation.

Mr. Sol Haas, traffic manager of the Richmond and Danville system, and a former citizen of Wilmington, says that the South is not as bad off as some people say it is. Cotton is low, but the South has made up for the loss on cotton by raising all the grain and meat it needed. He believed the South owes less money to day than it owed ten years ago.

AN IMPORTANT MATTER.

The treasury department is determined to enforce the provisions of the Act of Congress approved February 21, 1891, relating to the marking of vessels' names on their bow and stern and providing for the marking of draughts. The Act in question is as follows: "Section 4178. The name of every documented vessel of the United States shall be marked upon each bow and upon the stern, and the home port shall also be marked upon the stern. These names shall be painted or carved and shall be in Roman letters of the color of a dark ground, or in dark color on a light ground, and to be distinctly visible. The smallest letters used shall not be less than four inches high. Any vessel of the United States shall be marked without these names being so marked the owner or owners shall be liable to a fine of ten dollars for each name omitted. Provided, however, that the names on each bow may be marked within the year eighteen hundred and ninety-one.

No River and Harbor Bill.

The Democratic leaders in Congress concur in the opinion that there will be no river and harbor bill, or if there is one it will be limited to take care of such works only as are absolutely indispensable. The public building appropriations, too, will be limited, and in every way possible the majority will seek to get back to the landmarks of the last House they controlled. If they do this it will be an achievement.

What De Precher talk 'bout to-day, brudder Julius?

"Oh, he telled 'bout Samson beat dem Philistines, en you know I lose dem to tink dem poor cretters couldn't get no Salvation Oil."

FROM THE NORTH TO FLORIDA.

The Atlantic Coast Line's Special Service for Tourist Travel—The Finest Trains in the World. On January 4th, 1892, the Atlantic Coast Line will put on another through train from New York to Florida, leaving New York at 9.30 a. m., arriving at Jacksonville 7.00 p. m. next day (only one night out), making three through fast trains per day, with through Pullman Palace Sleeping Cars from Boston to Jacksonville, New York to Tampa and Port Tampa, (alongside steamer for Cuba); New York to Jacksonville; New York to Thomasville; New York to Savannah.

On January 18th the magnificent "New York and Florida Special," running through to St. Augustine, Fla., will also be added, making in all twenty-four trains each way per week, the most complete service ever offered to Wilmington, Charleston, Savannah, Florida and Cuba. The equipment and general character of train service over this line is equalled by few and excelled by none, while the "Florida Special" is without doubt the finest train in the world. The beautiful drawing-room cars, the "Ideal" and "superb" will, as heretofore, form part of the equipment of these trains. They are the only complete drawing-room cars ever built, and are run exclusively over the Atlantic Coast Line.

This line is so situated that two hours south of Richmond tourists encounter the influence of the Gulf Stream, and all the conditions which constitute the general and balmy Southern climate, making it the natural as well as the shortest and most popular route from the North to Florida.—Wilmington (N. C.) Star.

The Robeson County Homicides.

Concerning the two homicides in Robeson county last week—one near Allordsville and one near Moss Neck—the following particulars have been obtained:

Leslie Norment, who is charged with killing a man named Robertson, near Allordsville is a son of a "Black" Owen Norment, who was killed years ago by the Lowery outfit. Robertson attended a party Christmas Eve near Allordsville, and during the evening Leslie Norment went to the house and called Robertson out. There were no eye-witnesses of the affair, but Robertson, later in the night was found dead near the house, stabbed in several places and shot through the head. Norment has not yet been arrested, but he is thought to be in the neighborhood of Allordsville.

In the affair at Moss Neck, it is said that Marson Britt had on a woman's dress and a false face, or mask. He dressed up in a buggy, and without any provocation shot Powell dead, Britt then took to the swamp, where he left his disguise and came out. He was very drunk, and told some one if he killed Powell he didn't know it. He had not been arrested at last accounts.

THE GOLDSBORO TRAGEDY.

The Evidence Upon Which Weightman Thompson Was Held for the Murder of the Pearsall Family. The Goldsboro Argus of yesterday in relation to the murder and burning of the Pearsall family near that place, says:

The circumstances that surround Weightman Thompson and that guided the coroner's jury very properly in holding the latter responsible for the murder of Pearsall and his family are these in brief. Thompson was the last man known to be with Pearsall before the crisis reached. On the latter's return from the burnt dwelling, Thompson had gone with him that evening from Robt. Ham's, and Pearsall carried with him a pair of suspenders that he had purchased in this city on Monday and had left at Ham's on Tuesday till a more convenient time to carry them home, which occurred on Wednesday. Pearsall's company with Thompson, Pearsall's home and himself and family were destroyed by fire Wednesday night. These clothes and suspenders were found hid away in the woods in Thompson's valise subsequent to the burning, and he claims that he purchased them in Halifax, and that he had made a pair of suspenders that he had purchased in this city on Monday and had left at Ham's on Tuesday till a more convenient time to carry them home, which occurred on Wednesday. Pearsall's company with Thompson, Pearsall's home and himself and family were destroyed by fire Wednesday night. These clothes and suspenders were found hid away in the woods in Thompson's valise subsequent to the burning, and he claims that he purchased them in Halifax, and that he had made a pair of suspenders that he had purchased in this city on Monday and had left at Ham's on Tuesday till a more convenient time to carry them home, which occurred on Wednesday. Pearsall's company with Thompson, Pearsall's home and himself and family were destroyed by fire Wednesday night. 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