OUR BALLOT LAW.

FUSION AND ALLIANCE MAY HAVE SEPARATE COLUMNS.

Only Political Parties Entitled to the Big Circle For a Straight Ticket. The Voter Must Have a Clear Opportunity to Designate His Choice of Candidates, and the Names of All Who Have Been Duly Nominated Must Be Printed on the Face of the Ballot.

The Baker ballot seems to be as well understood this year as it was last and is the subject of apparently endless controversy. The trouble just now is in regard to placing of the names of the Fusion and Alliance candidates upon the official tickets. Some claim they will be printed in party columns if certified by a nominating convention and some go so far the other way as to claim the names will not be printed at all, but must be written in blank space left for them. Between the two are shades of opinion born of varying imagination.

The Pittsburg "Commercial Gazette," in order to set the question at rest had a number of lawyers and politicans, who are thoroughly familiar with the original Baker act of 1891 and the amendments of 1893, interviewed.

There is no disagreement among these. They say it is self-evident from a reading of the law that the fusionists, not having polled any vote at the last county election must go upon the official ballot by means of nomination papers. The Alliance candidates must go on the ticket in the same manner. At the last Pittsburg City election the Citizens' Industrial Alliance polled a sufficient number of votes to entitle it to a party column by certificate at the next city election, but that does not entitle it to a party column on the ballot for the coming state and county election in November. The Republican, Democratic and Prohibition parties may have party columns and a cross mark (X) in the large circle at the top of these columns will vote every name in the column. On the other hand the Fusionists and Alliance men must put a cross mark (X) in the square to the right of each candidate to be voted for.

The changes made in the ballot law, which affect the appearance of the ticket, are, first, that all groups are abolished and a single mark in the large circle at the top of a party ticket will vote the straight ticket; second, that the addresses of candidates are omitted. These are the only specific changes that affect the appearance of the official ballot. In all other respects it should be printed the same as last year.

The change affecting parties is that which reduces the vote necessary to entitle such party to nominate by certificate and have a party column, from 3 per cent to 2 per cent of the highest number of votes cast at the next preceding election. For nominations by nomination papers the number of signatures for state office must equal one-half of 1 per centum of the highest vote cast for any candidate at the last preceding election and for the offices in any electoral division of the state, such as county, city, borough township, legislative, senatorial, congressional or judicial district the signatures must number as much as 2 per cent of the highest entire vote cast in the last preceding election in such division or district. All nomination papers must specify the party or policy which the candidate represents, expressed in not more than three words. These words must not be the same nor similar to those used by any party entitled to nominations by certificate. Any objection to a nomination on account of the party or political appellation shall be decided by the court of common pleas on hearing.

Section 14 of the amended law governs the printing of the ballots. The first paragraph says: "The face of every ballot which shall be printed in accordance with the provisions of this act shall contain the names of all candidates whose nomination for any office specified in the ballot shall have been duly made, except such as may have died or withdrawn."

This should set at rest the contention that names of candidates by nomination papers may not be printed. The act says on the face of the ballot must be printed the names of all candidates whose nominations have been duly made. The second section provides that "the names of the candidates of each political party, or body of electors, shall be arranged under the title of the offices for which they are nominated in parallel columns with the party or political appellation at the head of each column. * * * * * and shall be printed in the order, as nearly as possible of the votes obtained in the state at the last state election by the parties or bodies which obtained the highest vote for the candidate at the head of its column at such election."

The law of 1891 provided that candidates by nomination papers should be arranged alphabetically to the right of the party columns. This provision is now omitted. The law of 1891, however, used nearly the same language in arranging the candidates by certificates of nomination as is now used for arranging "all candidates." This amendment was proposed by the Ballot Reform association for the purpose of grouping candidates by nomination papers under their political appellations, in separate columns, the more easily to determine their status when making nominations for subsequent elections. They may not have the large circle for a straight ticket at the head of their column.

The form of ballot recently sent out by the secretary of the commonwealth had three party columns for the Republican, Democratic and Prohibition parties and a fourth column for writing names of persons not printed on the ballot. This was taken by some to indicate the construction of the new law by the secretary to be that only of the names of political parties entitled to certificates of nomination should be printed This would be contrary to the language of the first paragraph of section 14, which expressly commands the printing of the names of "all candidates" whose "nomination has been duly made" either by certificate or by nomination papers.

The language of the second paragraph distinguishing between a "political party" and a "body of electors" and in directing arrangement of names "as nearly as possible" according to the vote obtained at the preceding election and "beginning with the party or body which obtained the highest vote for the candidate at the head of its column at such election," is all construed to mean that candidates by nomination papers shall be given separate columns. In regard to the three parties entitled to nominate by certificates, they can as easily be arranged by their vote as the party for the first column may be designated. So the "as nearly as possible" provision evidently refers to "bodies" having an indefinite political standing.

It is the opinion of nearly all those conversant with the laws of 1891 and 1893 that the fusionists and Alliance will be entitled to "body" columns on the official ballot or such other arrangement as shall in the language of the sixth paragraph of the fourteenth section, "give to each voter a clear opportunity to designate his choice of candidates by a cross mark (X) in a square of sufficient size at the right of the name of each candidate and inside the line inclosing the column." The same paragraph contains two provisos. First, that the voter may designate his choice of an entire group of presidential electors by one cross mark in a larger square which shall be placed at the right of the surnames of the candidates for president and vice president at the head of such group," such mark to be equivalent to a mark against every name in the group. Second, "That a voter may designate his choice of all the candidates of a political party by one cross in the circle above such column." The circle is thus made to apply only to "political parties," while the other designations are all made to apply to the candidates of any "political party," or "body of electors."

The law might have been clearer in regard to the arrangement of columns, as the law of 1891 was. But the omission of the distinction between candidates by certificate and candidates by nomination papers in the arrangement of columns can only be construed to mean there shall be no distinction. Each "political appellation" is entitled to a column.

SOLDIERS COLUMN.

AT COLD HARBOR.

Some Varied Experiences on Picket After That Battle.

A TRAIN of incidents occurred at Cold Habor, Va., on the 2d of June, 1864, which I should like to give your readers, believing that they will be of interest, and to show that a soldier's life is made up of a variety of strange experiences, and not always fighting and marching or keeping vigilance, even on a picket line.

The Ninth Corps reached Bethesda church after a hard march from the North Anna River, something after dark on the night of the 1st. The rebels had beat us there, and were ready to give us a warm reception.

At midhight three companies of my regiment—the 2d Pa., Prov. H. A.—were sent out about a mile and a half in advance, toward Bethesda church, on a picket line. We were posted along the edge of a dense piece of woods. Immediately around us was a clearing about a quarter of a mile square, the ground being a little marshy and rough.

We were delighted to find a well-preserved line of breastworks along the edge of the piece of woods. It was near here that the battle of Gaines's Mill was fought during McClellan's retrograde movement across the Peninsula.

We soon concluded that we were mighty near the rebel lines. We could hear their mules whinneying, artillery moving, etc., just through the woods; consequently we kept quiet until daylight, realizing that we were only a thin picket line. We had come out here from our lines on an old traveled road into this open square, the road leading out through the woods into the rebel lines and out toward Gaines's Mills.

When daylight came we had a curiosity to learn how far away the rebels were, and some of the boys got over the works into the woods. One member of my company went a few rods to the right and stepped out into the road, as if to cross, and in an instant we heard a crack and down went the poor fellow, shot by a rebel sharpshooter who commanded the road and no doubt was posted in a tree.

Later in the day Capt. Samuel H. Davis, of Co. I, being sent out to view the picketline, came along the edge of the woods on the opposite side of the road from us. We saw he was about to cross the road. He did not understand the word of warning we gave him, but stepped into the road and received his death wound from the same sharp-shooter. How terrible this sort of warfare seems!

The ludicrous part of our experience on the picket-line I now wish to relate. The enemy made no advance up to 3 p. m. Some of the boys became careless, Porter C. Burns, of my company was one. He was a practical watchmaker by trade and a good mechanic. As we had marched along from the Wilderness battlefield he had constructed a small kit of tools suitable for tinkering watches, foraging through old abandoned blacksmith shops, etc. He had made four extra pockets in his uniform, and each contained a comrade's watch waiting to be repaired,

Burns concluded to repair a watch. He spread a rubber blanket on the ground, took the watch apart, and commenced operations. All at once the woods rang with a clear bugle call. Lieut. Gausline, springing to his feet, says: "Boys, now look out; that's a rebel bugle call to advance."

We soon saw them coming, and up, and gave them a volley, and they broke and ran. It was laughable, amidst all the excitement, to see Comrade Burns, in a nervous state, trying to get the corners of the blanket together to save the watch. As he ran the pieces could be heard jingling and being strewn along the ground, the rebels coming up shouting "Stop, you —— Yank!" He barely escaped. No doubt they captured the watch, or fragments.

When the Confederates made the advance they immediately opened up with a mortar battery, throwing shells across the woods into the open square.

In the stampede I was knocked down, a shell bursting beside me, and I was run over by an unmanageable horse ridden bo the Colonel of the (I think) 24th N. Y. Cav., who happened to be out to the open square at the time, receiving a slight wound in the head and hand, and only escaping being captured by a member of my company helping me to my feet.

I lost my gun, gum blanket and haversack. I was eventually taken prisoner at Burnside's mine explosion, in the crater in front of Petersburg, Va., July 30, 1864, and not released until the end of the war.—CLARENCE WILSON, in "National Tribune."

A NEW YORK policeman has resigned because the commissioners wanted him to sacrifice about six inches of his mustache.

CARRYING MAIL.

THE POSTOFFICE EXHIBIT AT THE WORLD'S FAIR.

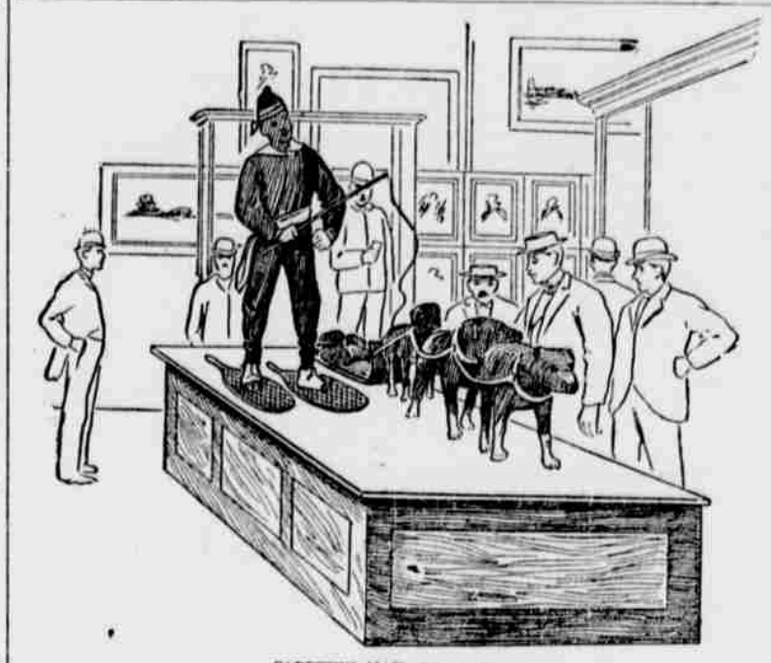
How the Little Two-Cent Stamp Transports Letters in All Kinds of Conveyances—Magnitude of the Postal Service.

UPPER Michigan mail is transported on dog-sleds in the winter. Canine letter-carriers are not beautiful to the eye and it is doubtful if they would even be allowed to enter a cross-roads bench show, but there is a business-like look about a tandem dog team that attracts the attention of every person who passes the stuffed group in the Postoffice exhibit.

The dogs harnessed to the toboggan loaded with the mail pouches were alive and in actual service last winter hauling mail out of Sault Ste. Marie. The wax figure loping alongside is a good likeness of the Indian who drove the team. From his snow shoes to the tassel of his woolen cap the Indian's costume is a faithful copy of the clothes which enabled the bronze-faced mail courier to brave ten-foot snow and a forty degree below zero thermometer. This group is one of the exhibits which show how mail is transported in this country.

Few consider what they are doing when they stick a two-cent stamp on an addressed envelope. They know that the person whose name and address are on the envelope will receive the letter. Few of them, however, appreciate the fact that the stamp places the United States Government under a cast-iron contract to place that letter in right hands at the earliest possible moment, even though the hands are felling trees in the almost inaccessible depths of an upper Michigan pine forest, or working in the tangles of a Florida everglade. To do this the Government uses human legs, wagons, bicycles, railroads, steamboats, dog sleds, horses, ponies, ocean vessels, river boats and anything else that will carry the letter over land or water, mountains or plains, swamps or snowdrifts, in summer or in winter, at all times and any time.

Lives have been sacrificed that a letter might go forward, millions of dollars have been spent preparing the way for other letters and yet people place the two-cent stamps on their envelopes and drop the letters into the red boxes on the street corners with no appreciation of what they are doing. A visit to the Postoffice exhibit in the Government Building is apt to increase one's respect for the little postage stamp. There are displayed all the means used for transporting mail, as well as a thousand other interesting things which might keep a visitor busy half a day.



CARRYING MAIL IN ALASKA.

DEAD-LETTER OFFICE CURIOS.

General Hazen, who was Third Assistant Postmaster-General under Presidents Hayes and Harrison, took a great deal of interest in assembling the exhibits, and is on the ground daily for it is a member of the Government Board. He wished to show the development of the service and has succeeded admirably. No greater contrast could be found than is formed by the two models of ocean mail steamers. There is a model of the old Southerner, the first ocean steamship built to carry United States mail. Forty years ago it did the service which is now performed by nautical greyhounds such as the City of Paris of the International line, whose beautiful model is placed near the old ship.

FOUND IN DEAD-LETTER PARCELS.

A queer mail carrier is the Oklawha, which runs on the river of that name in Florida. Assuming that the model is a good miniature, the Oklawha is all above water, a regular floating house. According to General Hazen its draft is so light that it could follow a sprinkling cart. The Oklawha can travel in eighteen inches of water.

Much handsomer is the model of the City of St. Louis, a side-wheel mail packet that brings letters to the river towns on the Mississippi.

An old-time Rocky Mountain mail coach, swung on its leather straps, with its boots full of mail sacks, occupies a prominent position. It was built in 1868, and was among the first to carry the mail in Montana. Once a week it made the run between Helena and Bozeman. To-day four mail trains perform the service daily. In 1877 the old coach was captured by Indians, and after a hot pursuit by General O. O. Howard was recaptured. Before General Garfield became President he rode on the coach through the Yellowstone country, President Arthur sat on the boot with its driver in 1883 and General Sherman in 1877 made a trip on the ancient vehicle.

Near the old-timer is the modern yellow-bodied open coach used in the Yellowstone Park for carrying tourists and mail. It has usurped the proud position once held by the stage coach, which Indians used to capture. The post rider, mounted on his spirited broncho, armed with revolvers and booted and spurred, tells of the letters carried over alkali plains, broad prairies and wild western lands. This mounted group is the admiration of the small boys, who gaze on it with wide-open eyes. The pony express was the original letter-carrier across the plains, and to-day 1000 mail routes use ponies and bronchos. The Indian question was a most serious one to the men who carried mail-bags through a country swarming with redskins. In the dead-letter exhibit is a mail-pouch stained with the blood of a post rider and slashed by the keen blade of the Indian murderer.

From these exhibits, around which people gather in wondering groups, to the mail car, mail-delivery and mail-collecting wagons, the special-delivery messenger astride the bicycle, and the familiar city carrier and railway postal clerk, is coming from the romantic to the realistic commonplace.

Statistics are usually dry, but the large tabulated postal statistics from 1775 to 1893 are always the center of an interested group. The totals reach almost incredible figures and demonstrate the enormous business transacted by the Postoffice Department. Benjamin Franklin was the first postmaster-general. He was appointed by the Continental Congress July 26, 1775, and apparently made no report of the work done in his department. Samuel Osgood, appointed September 26, 1789, who was the first postmaster-general of the United States to hand down reports, had seventy-five postoffices to look after in 1789, and 2275 miles of post routes. The gross revenue for the year amounted to $7510, and postmasters were paid $1657 for salaries. The total number of mail pieces of all kind handled was 500,000, evidently an estimate.

At the close of the fiscal year, 1892, there were 67,119 postoffices in this country. The extent of post routes aggregated 447,591 miles, the miles of mail service performed reached the amazing total of 363,087,695, the gross receipts were $70,930,475 and the postoffices cost $76,960,846. There were 2,543,270,210 ordinary postage stamps issued, 593,684,700 stamped envelopes and wrappers, 511,433,500 postal cards. Of registered letters 15,260,094 were carried and 6,781,180 pieces went to the dead-letter office. The domestic money orders issued amounted to $120,066,801 and $15,120,271 were sent by international money orders. During the year the Postoffice handled 4,776,575,076 pieces of mail matter of all kinds.

From 1851 to 1883 the postal rate was three cents for every half-ounce. In October, 1883, the rate was reduced to two cents. The total receipts for the last year of three-cent postage were $45,334,950. The first year of the two-cent rate dropped receipts to $42,560,844, but the figures crawled up so rapidly that last year they amounted to $70,930,475. General Hazen was a firm advocate of cheaper postage. He believed that the slight decrease in receipts would be made up rapidly and he also predicted that the sale of postal cards would suffer. The figures bear him out. Postal cards were first issued in 1874, and the first full year 91,079,000 were issued. In the last year of three-cent postage 379,576,750 cards were sold, but the first year of two-cent postage dropped the total to 339,416,500. It took five years for the postal cards to regain their original figures. The magnitude of the postal service of the United States as compared with that of three other leading administrations of the internal postal union is placarded in a way to delight the enthusiastic young Americans. The figures are taken from the reports of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1892. They read as follows:

GROSS AMOUNT OF POSTAL REVENUE.

United States	$70,939,476
Germany	57,790,118
Great Britain	50,214,270
France	33,493,177

The figures do not include telegraph receipts for the foreign countries.

MILES OF MAIL SERVICE PERFORMED.

United States	363,087,695
France	260,581,126
Germany	165,912,265
Great Britain	63,205,500

PIECES OF MAIL MATTER MAILED AND DELIVERED.

United States	4,302,786,926
Germany	2,776,248,719
Great Britain	2,750,535,594
France	1,881,322,911

"Big-tailed" Sheep of Persia.

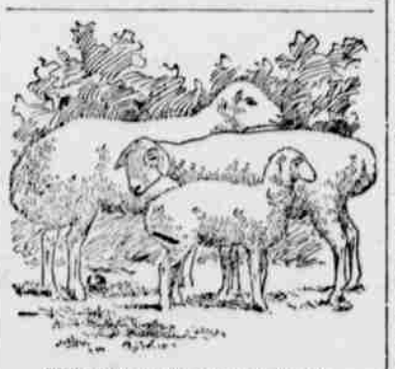
Mr. John W. Northrup, of the State Agricultural Board of California, is making arrangements to secure a consignment of the famous "big-tailed" sheep of Persia. This lot of sheep will be imported by the State of California, at great expense, a previous effort to import and breed them made by the United States Government when Jerry Rusk was Secretary of Agriculture having failed, as out of the fifteen "big-tails" imported only four are now alive.

"These sheep imported by Secretary Rusk came from Bushire, Persia," said Mr. Norhrup at the Gilsey House. "They were shipped by Mr. Truxton Beale, the United States Minister, and were treated in a royal manner. From the time that they were selected from the great flocks of 'big-tails' in the Persian agricultural districts until they arrived at their final destination in the balmy climate of California they received attention similar to that accorded a $100,000 race-horse. Only the handsomest and strongest animals were selected.

"In England the 'big-tails' were placed aboard the Helvetia in padded compartments kept at an even temperature while on the ocean. They reached this country in safety, but in a much weakened condition.

"When they arrived in Lower California they were so weak it was impossible for them to stand. They were fed carefully on prepared fodder and nursed along, but they dropped off one by one.

"But California is bound to have these valuable sheep feeding on her pastures within a few years. This time we will select a larger number and on their arrival in this country will detain them a much longer time than were the Government sheep, so as to give them an opportunity to recoup their strength after the very weakening ocean voyage. Then two or three stops will be made before they finally reach California. By taking this care in transportation we hope to have better luck than did Secretary Rusk."—New York World.



THE BIG-TAILED PERSIAN SHEEP.

"Bobbing" for Flounders.

The popular way at present for catching flounders along the Connecticut coast is by the "bobbing" method. When a fish bites the "bob" is raised perpendicularly, and then the excitement begins. As soon as the "bob" rises a rush is made for it, and there is a chase of several minutes sometimes. In nine cases out of ten the fish is caught. The number of "bobs" generally used is eight.—New York Herald.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

There are seventy-seven zinc mines in Prussia, which produce one-half the world's zinc.

In a garden at Lexington, Fla., there are said to be 122 different varieties of roses.

In 1783 Noah Webster printed the first spelling book ever manufactured in this country.

The first copper exported from this country was a cargo of ninety tons from New York in 1766.

Most of the centenarians in England have been lean people, small eaters, and very moderate drinkers.

A Connecticut paper has an advertisement of "a cottage to let containing six rooms and an acre of land."

A large black turtle, weighing nearly 2000 pounds was caught off Cape Lookout, North Carolina, recently.

The topaz took its name from a Greek word meaning guess, since the ancients could only guess at the locality where this beautiful stone was obtained.

The people of Germany and Belgium are the greatest potato eaters; the consumption in these countries annually exceeds 1,000 pounds per head of population.

The orange was first planted in Southern California by the Franciscan fathers soon after they established their first mission in the state at Sag Diego, in 1769.

The Hebrews had no coins of their own until the days of the Maccabees, who issued shekels and half shekels, with the inscriptions, "Jerusalem, the Holy," "Simon, Prince of Israel." These bear no images.

The earliest American coinage was made for the Virginia Company at the Bermudas. The coins were of brass, with a "hogge on one side, in memory of the abundance of hogges that were found on the islands at their first landing."

Among the most interesting of the pieces of gold plate used at the recent royal wedding breakfast at Buckingham Palace were several magnificent flagons taken from the flagship of the Admiral who commanded the Spanish Armada.

The narrowest part of the Strait of Florida, through which the Gulf stream flows at the rate of five knots an hour, is fifty miles wide, and has a mean depth of 350 fathoms. If this were stopped up the climate of this country in winter would be totally changed.

The Nineteenth Century will not end till midnight Monday, December 31, 1900, although the old quarrel will probably again be renewed as to what constitutes a century when it winds up, and thousands will insist on a premature burial of the old century at midnight on December 31, 1899.

The expression "from pillar to post" is derived from a custom practiced in the riding schools of olden times. The pillar was placed in the centre of the ground, and the posts were arranged two and two around the circumference of the ring at dual distances. Hence, "from pillar to post" signifies going from one thing to another without any definite purpose.

Was Accepted.

It is generally supposed that the idea of the young girls proposing marriage in leap-year is a pleasant little fiction of the humorist, but there is evidence that sometimes the fair sex does avail itself of its quadrennial privilege. An anecdote told in England of a member of the House of Commons is a case in point. According to the raconteur who is responsible for the story, the Commoner had been paying attention to a young lady for a long while, and had taken her to attend the House until she was perfectly posted in its rules. On the last day of the session, as they came out, he bought her a boquet, saying,

"May I offer you my handful of flowers?"

She promptly replied, "I move to amend by omitting all after the word hand."

He blushingly accepted the amendment, and they adopted it unanimously.

Certainly the proposal was most subtly put, and only goes to show how much better and more practical than that of most men is a woman's proposal.—[Harper's Bazar.

Might Be Worse.

Mrs. Kaller—"Let me sympathize with you, dear, won't you?"

Mrs. Weeps—"Doctor has just told me the worst; husband has—boo-hoo—incipient paresis."

Mrs. Kaller—"That's nothing to cry about; mine has dyspepsia."—[Once A Week.