

**Death of Col. John Knapp.**

At midnight last night died C. I. John Knapp, whose long connection with the old Missouri Republican made him a conspicuous figure in the social and political life of St. Louis and Missouri. At the death of his brother, Mr. George Knapp, he assumed the responsible task of conducting the newspaper, and devoted himself with zeal and energy to the work until failing health compelled him to relinquish it in part to other hands. During the last few months his strength declined so markedly that last night's event was not unexpected to his family and immediate circle of friends, but the announcement of it will no doubt be read this morning with a shock of surprise by the general public, which was not aware of his serious illness.—From the St. Louis Republic, Nov. 12.

Jefferson Democrat: "The big majority against Mayor Francis and the Democratic ticket in St. Louis is easily accounted for. Mr. Francis, as a Mayor, considered it his duty to try to have the laws enforced. Among those laws is one recognizing Sunday as a day for rest and worship, on which it is unlawful to sell whiskey or beer, or to even keep a dram-shop, open. By trying to close the St. Louis saloons on Sunday, Mr. Francis arrayed the whole saloon influence against him, and got no assistance whatever from what is known as the more respectable element of the Republican party."

**The Electoral College System.**

The following is one of many communications received at this office on our cumbersome and illogical Electoral College system:

To the Editor of the Times: Please enlighten me as to the origin of the Electoral College. What are its advantages to the people? and what is its basis? Why is not the popular vote taken for President?

A READER.  
Pottstown, Pa., November 12, 1888.  
The electoral college system was conceived and put into operation by the founders of the Republic on the theory that the people should select a number of Electors, equal to the representation of each State in the Senate and House, who would exercise a sound and independent judgment in the choice of President and Vice President. It was intended to remove the election of those two highest offices from the passions of party spirit; but even before the end of Washington's service as President, the Electoral tickets were nominated and supported as partisans, and the whole theory of Electors exercising any discretion in voting for President and Vice President was utterly exploded in the contest of 1796 between Adams and Jefferson, and has continued so ever since.

Voters do not vote for Electors, although they vote an electoral ticket. They vote directly for President, but they must circumscribe around and vote an Electoral ticket to do so. In the late election in this city, men were voted for as candidates for Electors, who could not have commanded half the vote of their party for any office of honor or responsibility, but Electors are mere party automatons when elected, and the only way to vote for Cleveland was to vote the Democratic Electoral ticket, and the only way to vote for Harrison was to vote for the Republican Electors. It is simply an awkward roundabout way to enable the people to vote for a president, and twice since the organization of the government the people have been defrauded out of their choice for Chief Magistrate. Adams won over Jackson in 1828, by the Electoral College system, although Jackson had nearly two votes for Adams' one, and Hayes won over Tilden in 1876, when the people gave Tilden a popular majority of 250,000.

The Electoral College system could not have been adopted when the Constitution was framed but for the deep-seated distrust of popular government that prevailed among many of the founders of the Republic. It was a concession to States Rights as against popular rule, as it gave Rhode Island and Delaware each two Senatorial votes in the Electoral College and made them equal with New York and Pennsylvania to the last extent. The Federalists, embracing Washington, Hamilton and Adams as leaders, were not confident of the success of popular government. Jefferson and Madison as Republican leaders of that day, were the champions of the States Rights, and they taught the doctrine that finally, in its growth and expansion, practically subordinated the sovereignty of the nation to the sovereignty of the State. It is not surprising, therefore, that a Constitutional Convention over which Washington presided and in which Madison was the master leader, accepted the cumbersome Electoral College system as a supposed check upon the ebullitions of popular elections.

All the reasons which dictated the Electoral College system when our government was created have long since perished. When the doctrine of States Rights was defined as subordinate to the national sovereignty by the irrevocable arbitrament of the sword, the last vestige of argument for the Electoral College was overthrown; and the debauchery that the system has lately thrown into our Presidential contest in doubtful States, clearly admonishes every intelligent and dispassionate citizen that the choice of President and Vice President should be made by a direct vote of the people. The President is the immediate representative of the whole people, and every citizen, alike in State and Territory, should be allowed to vote directly for his individual choice for the highest trusts of the Republic, and the candidates for President and Vice President receiving the highest votes should be declared elected.—Philadelphia Times.

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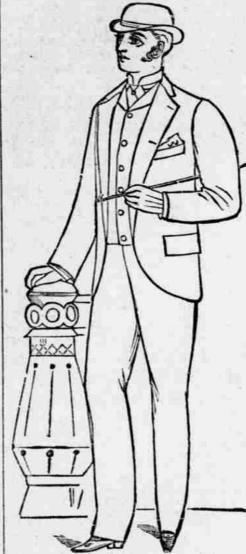
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