

THE LEON REPORTER

O. E. HULL, Editor.
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THE SOUTH'S CLEARER VISION.

Mayor Woodward of Atlanta, glorifying lynch law and warning ex-Gov. Slaton not to "return to Georgia for a year, if ever," and Tom Watson, striving to impart to the case of Leo Frank the false and sinister appearance of a race issue, are fortunately not representative of their section.

If there is in this tragedy a brighter aspect, it is the strong evidence given that the best men of the south disavow, denounce and despise the men and the deed that put a stain upon its honor. The blaze of publicity turned upon this conspicuous example calls keener attention than ever before to the dangers of the casual lynchings the south has tolerated. It may be that out of a flagrant and scandalous insult offered to the law may come higher regard for the law and its sterner enforcement.

A newspaper in Mary Phagan's Marietta home has found excuses for the murder of a ward of the state. One in Macon has stated, untimely but not without force, considerations which woke the anger of the people, though nothing could justify them in turning to mob violence. With these exceptions, no newspaper in Georgia has failed to rebuke mob spirit without hint of excuse, and to express, in the most uncompromising terms, regret and shame for its recent manifestation. No journal in the north has put into more stirring words its horror of the crime than has the Atlanta Constitution.

Leo Frank is, as the Constitution says, "only a detail in the awful story." It was "the state itself" that was lynched. "It is Georgia, Georgia law and justice, that was hanged upon that Cobb county tree." It was the "sovereignty of the state of Georgia" that has been "desecrated."

There is a way for Georgia to make amends to herself; and the leaders of public opinion are making clear the way. It is to punish the criminals who have degraded the state. It is to reform the lax discipline of her prisons that permitted the crime. It is to rebuke and punish threats uttered against public men like ex-Gov. Slaton who do their duty as they see their duty. It is to teach in every corner of the state a new and higher respect for the law. First of all, it is the task of the public officials charged with the law's execution to vindicate it against the mob who defied it.—New York World.

THE LYNCHING OF LEO FRANK.

The lynching of Leo Frank is one of the most monstrous crimes ever perpetrated in the United States. It is a disgrace to Anglo-Saxon civilization and an indelible blot on the record of Georgia. If that state ever expects to hold up its head among enlightened commonwealths, it must hunt down the lynchers and punish them as they deserve. From first to last, Frank has been the victim of a mob. The mob condemned him before he was brought to trial. The mob ruled the court room in which he was arraigned. The mob wrote the verdict of the jury which declared him guilty. The mob harangued and threatened Gov. Slaton to keep him from commuting Frank's sentence, and when this brave governor defied such menaces, the mob attacked his home and has driven him from the state. The mob applauded the convict who tried to cut Frank's throat; and finally, through the undoubted connivance of some state officials, the mob had its will and hanged Frank to a tree. The howling, hysterical, frenzied crowds, which dominated the witch trials of the middle ages could have done no worse.

Is Georgia ready to quit the customs and companionship of civilization? Is she ready to take a running noose for her coat-of-arms, cart tail oratory for her constitution, and vest all power and authority in any irresponsible mob that feels the primitive bloodlust? That is the question before the southern commonwealth today, and for long years to come she will be judged according to the way she meets or evades that question.—Chicago Journal.

Bernard Murphy, editor of the Vinton Eagle, says that the first man he saw violating the anti-tipping law was a state senator who voted for the bill. The second man was a member of the state supreme court. He says he hates to tell who the third man was.

The increased orders for locomotives and cars placed by the railroad companies appear small by comparison with war orders. But the production of peace munitions of this kind is a mere stable basis of industrial prosperity than the output of shrapnel.

THE PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY.

Are we in favor of the presidential primary in theory and against it in practice?

Three years ago everybody but the old mossbacks was for presidential primaries. It was held to be essential to clean politics to take the nominations out of the hands of the bosses and place them in the hands of the voters. Pending an amendment to the constitution that would authorize a huge national primary in which a presidential candidate could be nominated directly by the voters, it was insisted that every state must have a preferential primary. In a preferential primary the voters could be allowed to choose between all the candidates, and the delegates, also selected by the voters, must support the candidate for whom their preference might be expressed. Yes, sir! Let all the candidates for party nomination file their declaration of candidacy in every state primary, and let the voters of every state pick out the candidate to whom the support of that state must be thrown in the convention. That was the essence of the presidential primary idea as worked out in a good many states during the last three or four years. Now, however, it is proposed that all the would-be candidates shall not be allowed to go before the people for an expression of their preference. If there are two candidates in the whole west, it is insisted that one of them must go away back and be seated without giving the people a chance to say whether they want to support him or not. The whole west, according to this figuring, must rally round the candidacy of a single man. This is urged on the ground that otherwise the west may divide its support and thereby succumb to the keener political maneuvering of the east. There is old fashioned politics in the suggestion, and it is only by old fashioned political methods that it can be carried out.

If two strong men aspire to office and only one is to be allowed to try for it, who is to decide which it shall be? Oh, let the prominent supporters of the aspirants get together and hold a little conference that will eliminate the one that may be decided on as least available. Intensely practical, to be sure, but what does that course do with the primary principle, to which the dear public is understood to be devoted? If the voters are to be given a chance to vote for only one candidate, who really selects the nominee? The voters? Not at all. As between two candidates in whom the voters are understood to be especially interested, they get a chance to vote only for the one previously selected by the bosses to receive the voters' support. Is that a direct nomination? In fact, it is less direct than if the people sent their representatives to a state convention and let them name the candidate to whom the support of the state would be given. The people have not delegated to the bosses the right to select the nominee.

The idea of going to the trouble and expense of holding a presidential primary to ratify the bosses' selection for a presidential candidate is absurd. Presidential primaries will be held in many western states next spring. If the support of these states is sure to go to a western candidate, and if the name of only one western candidate is to be submitted, what are the taxpayers getting in return for their money they have invested in the elaborate primary?

Are we for the primary principle and against the application of it, or what?—Sioux City Journal.

HIGH PRICES FOR DOLLARS.

The demoralization in the foreign exchange market of New York is of extraordinary intensity. Sterling bills fell to \$4.64 yesterday, which is the lowest figure within living memory. It amounts to a premium of 4 1/2 per cent on the dollar in pounds sterling. Exchange in Paris, Berlin and Italy is at a far worse discount.

This is a situation for England and her allies in particular which will soon demand heroic measures in the way of remedy. They are paying very high prices in dollars for American supplies. They are paying high premiums for the dollars with which to pay. Wall street is predicting that sterling will go to \$4.25. If it should, that would mean a premium of 12 per cent for the dollars with which to pay prices already high.

This involves an enormous addition to the costs of prosecuting the war. It suggests a decided lapse from the gold standard even in England. It cannot go on without serious interference with the American export trade. Why immediate steps are not taken to remedy the situation, either through exports of gold this way or the placing here of loans, passes the understanding.

England and France have gold enough to meet this crisis and will then have plenty to spare. But as matters stand, they might as well be doing business on inconvertible paper issues, as the United States did in the Civil war.—New York World.

WHAT DID THEY EXPECT?

Some of the "German-American" papers are gravely concerned over the note to the kaiser, protesting in horrified accents that it conveys a threat. In the name of God, amen! Did they expect it to be merely an invitation to share President Wilson's pew in church next Sunday, with the drowning of a few Americans in the baptismal font as a side attraction.—Linn Creek Reveille.

The retirement of the last Civil war officer who remained in active service in the regular army is a fresh reminder of how rapidly our national history is made. Col. John L. Clem is but sixty-four years old. Yet to the generation of his early boyhood, the war of 1812 was nearer than are the Civil war dates to us; and when he was born the republic itself was, counting from Washington's first inauguration, of less than his present age.



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