

## OUR VIEWS IN BRIEF.

Let the NEWS say for itself, here and now, that it is opposed to the attempt of any party or combination of parties to urge a man to accept an office which his vacillation has caused his friends to believe he would not accept, or which his expressed declination has caused to be given to another.

Let the NEWS further say it can see neither wisdom nor policy in attempting to overturn a program that has been virtually agreed upon by the various elements in the community that have announced with a great flourish their desire to institute an era of municipal reform.

Let the NEWS further say that it sees neither sense nor success in the sentimentalism that insists on an exactly equal or pro rata distribution of the offices among existing parties or religions; it thought the present movement was to secure the adherence of good men and the inauguration of good government, not the mathematical division and partition of the "spoils."

And finally, in the light of the foregoing, let the NEWS say that it cannot be, and is not, "pledged" to any ticket or policy that is incomplete or undefined; that those who have authority to pledge its support and endorsement are not those who go around talking about it. This latter explanation is for the benefit of those contemporaries and others who are so premature as to ascribe to this paper the endorsement of proceedings of which it as yet is only partially informed. When the NEWS has any pledges to make, its editorial columns will make them.

## CREDIT AND DEAL.

The differences between a cash trade and the trade of a frontier country would be almost incredible save to those who have observed or had experience in both methods. The one is simple, easy, satisfactory; the other risky, varied and partly speculative at best. With the first, accounts are created, credit is given, cash paid and the transaction is at an end; in the other, produce is the currency, credit is lengthy and settlement is sometimes deferred for years. The farmer gets credit until his crop matures, the sheep man until his wool is marketed; the one disposed to build pays in orders or due bills by arrangement with his local store; and not infrequently these orders or due bills cancel many debts before they are presented at the counters. This sort of exchange has its basis in general confidence that redemption is certain when needed.

It is not uncommon, in fact custom has made it universally understood, that there are some restrictions upon the purchasing power of these orders or due bills in any country, where the replenishing of a stock is not quite easy. So, in the early days, a man with a twenty dollar order or due bill was limited as to the amount of factory, nails, sugar or other commodity, for which the merchant had paid close cash and upon which custom had determined the smallest kind of a margin of profit. When the

holder of such an order presented it for redemption, it was optional with the storekeeper whether he should receive it at all, or what the merchandise given in exchange; and if these terms were not agreeable, the one presenting the order had his recourse against the one from whom he received it. If the store was even owing the latter, this limit of responsibility and character of the goods to be supplied was universally recognized. To demand this, or that, or the other, on an order would have been resented as an interference with the business of the dealer. Even a due bill issued by the store itself, no matter how made, was subject to the same custom; it was meant to be redeemed in general merchandise. Here and there a difficulty might arise, but this was the rule; and to insist on other than this would have affected such a man in his general deal, and to have suggested suit on an order, by way of compelling a storekeeper to accept that, and pay in any special article, would have been the height of absurdity.

This class of orders are the convenient currency of the Territory, particularly in the south, where money is not yet a drug; and for the sake of good feeling, men giving or accepting them, and storekeepers paying them, should have consideration of all the surrounding circumstances, avoiding selfishness and controversy as far as human nature will admit. Most dealers are anxious enough for trade, sometimes too much so for their own trade. They accommodate beyond their ability, for they, too, have to pay for what they buy. As to sugar, for instance, cash is now the rule. The storekeeper cannot be said to carry it for profit, but as a help and necessity for his general trade; and for a holder of a ten or twenty dollar order to demand the whole in sugar assumes almost the character of an outrage and injury to the store, which at best may be limited as to capital, but which now under present circumstances may be cramped almost beyond endurance. In a word, the thoughtfulness, patience and accommodation which have been so frequently urged in these columns and elsewhere, should be exercised in fairness, fulness, and justice in this matter of credit and deal.

## THE TEMPERANCE PROBLEM.

The fifth special report of the United States commissioner of labor is now published. It treats on the Gothenburg system of regulating the liquor traffic and seems to be a carefully prepared document, valuable for the detailed and reliable information it contains on the subject. The report briefly sketches the history of the liquor legislation in Sweden and sets forth the conditions of the people leading to the various liquor laws and finally to the celebrated Gothenburg system; it then follows the adoption of this system by the Norwegian people and investigates the results as seen in the principal localities of the two countries.

The Gothenburg system of regulating the liquor traffic has on previous occasions been explained in these columns. Its promoters take it for granted that the evil with which they deal

cannot be entirely eradicated, at least not at once. Their efforts are therefore directed towards the minimizing of it in every possible way. By depriving the sellers of intoxicating drinks of every pecuniary interest in the sale, and by restricting the saloons to certain hours of the day and otherwise, as well as by donating the profits to public benevolent institutions, the object is sought to be obtained.

One merit of the system is that under it the saloons have no political power whatever. The stockholders in the company are as a rule eminent men of all parties and the saloon keepers are but paid servants, whose positions are not dependent on the political undulations. This feature alone is one of great importance.

A noticeable fact is that no community that has tried the system has afterwards abandoned it. It seems to give perfect satisfaction. This is all the more significant, because Sweden in particular was once a country drenched in liquor and cursed with all the concomitant evils. Only fifty years ago a deluge of brandy was flowing over the country. About forty million gallons were annually consumed by a population of about four millions. The very marrow of the nation was poisoned, and degradation, physical and moral, was the result. Philanthropists woke up to the seriousness of the situation and set to work to stem the awful tide. Today they can look back upon a successful work, if the general results are considered. The victory of temperance in Sweden is encouraging to the workers in that cause in every country and should prove that the means employed are worth while testing in other places.

The commissioner justly says: "That the system is perfect no one will be sanguine enough to maintain; but that it represents the best means which have yet been devised for the control of the liquor traffic where licensing is permitted at all, few who understand its true character and have studied its operation will behold enough to deny."

## THE RELIGIOUS CONGRESS.

The parliament of religions held its closing session in Chicago Wednesday night (September 27), the occasion being mostly devoted to farewell addresses. It has been, as far as known, a fairly harmonious assembly in the true spirit of evangelical alliance, applied on a broader scale than ever before. That the deliberations will be productive of much good may hardly be denied.

An incident or two may be mentioned now, as the delegates wend their ways to their respective countries. One is the warm reception accorded to Dr. Briggs. He was recently pronounced a heretic by the highest authorities of the Presbyterian church; and yet in this gathering he was received with cheers by the assembled thousands. This was a popular verdict in his case, an acquittal by a tribunal above the general conference that branded him as a heretic. To the non-religionist it must have seemed a notice to the churches of the world that the odium which used to follow findings of that kind in the middle age is gone.