

West Shore

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The WEST SHORE offers the Best Medium for Advertisers of any publication on the Pacific Coast.

PORTLAND, OREGON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1889.

THE young state of Washington is already inaugurating measures to insure the purity of the ballot box. A bill has been introduced into the legislature providing for the registration of voters throughout the state, and it will undoubtedly become a law. It provides for the division of each county into election districts to be designated by number, no county to have more than twenty such districts. Each district may have as many polling places as may be deemed convenient, but no voting precinct shall be created between the first day for registration and the next succeeding election. Each district shall be under the supervision of a registry agent, chosen biennially by the county commissioners, whose duty it shall be to receive and register the names of all qualified voters for a certain specified period preceding each general election. Every person applying for registration shall subscribe to an oath in which are included the essential qualifications for an elector. Heavy penalties for fraud are imposed by this bill, which prescribes with great minuteness just how the law shall be carried out. It is a meritorious measure. The conditions in the rapidly growing cities are such as to make it impossible to prevent fraudulent voting by the process of challenging. It is but right that the law should impose upon the would-be elector some condition that shall secure him in the privilege and duty he exercises in casting his ballot. Singularly enough Oregon refused a few years ago to provide suffrage safeguards in the way of registration. The result is that political bossism has uninterrupted sway in the larger cities. It is gratifying to see Washington taking a firm stand on this matter.

The WEST SHORE is pleased that a contemporary has granted it permission to "express its mind freely" on political topics, and will gladly avail itself of the

privilege. Its remarks will not be solely directed against the democrats, as is intimated, but a careful examination of its columns will disclose a disposition to criticise shams, demagogies and absurdities of whatever political party, social cast or religious belief. It believes in truth, equity and good, hard sense in all the affairs of life.

Essays on climate are seldom read, and, when scientific in their nature, are more seldom understood, and climate literature has become so associated in the popular mind with land booms that about as little reliance is placed upon it as upon a real estate agent's glowing descriptions of the unrivaled advantages of his ninety-ninth addition. Still, there are times when a few remarks are seasonable, and one of these times is the present. The Pacific coast, especially that portion lying west of the Cascade and Sierra Nevada mountains, is now enjoying a season of copious rains that guarantee a rich harvest for both the farmer and the miner the coming year. The rains of the Willamette valley are so steady and so ample in the winter season as to gain for this region the nickname of "Webfoot" from other sections which, if blessed with those same fertilizing showers, would annually add several millions of dollars to the value of their products. Oregon's winter season—or, rather, rainy season, for there is scarcely enough severe weather to justify the title "winter"—is a guaranty of abundant and never-failing harvests, which the exemption from rain in the summer season enables the farmer to garner without fear of loss from the elements. Then let it come, this blessed rain! Every Oregonian welcomes it, and every "easterner," who, dissatisfied with the almost constant moisture, returns to his former home to encounter the regulation winter of that region, hies him back again to the land of Webfoot at the first opportunity, and adds his voice to the general paean of praise to the warm, gentle and fructifying rain. It is now the second week in December, and what has the rain accomplished? The rivers are running full and on them ply boats that are bearing the products of the country to market, and will continue to do so all winter without fear of interruption from ice. At the same time snow is accumulating in the mountains that will serve as a source of supply to keep the streams at a navigable stage until late next summer. The ground has been softened and rendered cultivable, and plowing and seeding of winter wheat has been progressing for weeks. Grass is growing with the luxuriance of spring and everywhere the ground presents a brilliant tint of emerald. Dairying finds now the same conditions existing in the spring, and green grass will be available for cattle the entire winter. There has not been a frost of sufficient strength to stiffen the surface