

Ballot reform is destined to become a great factor in the coming campaign in Oregon. A strong organization has been effected by members of all the parties who are interested in elevating and purifying our elections, and an address has been issued which is given on another page. The Oregon style of elections has been a stench in the nostrils of decent people for years, and it is high time an effort were made in earnest to reform the corrupt methods of political bosses. Trickery, perjury, bribery and treachery are the known and detested means of political manipulators, and yet but little effort has been made to overthrow those guilty of these practices, because it was well understood that to dethrone one corrupt boss was simply to enthrone another. What is wanted is a ballot system that will render these corrupt methods difficult, if not impossible. This movement is not aimed at individuals, but at a system which renders the objectionable conduct of certain individuals necessary. There is entertained no hope that the political boss can be abolished. He is an American institution too firmly rooted to be destroyed. It is expected, however, that a system of balloting can be adopted that will render bribery less effective, perjury less easy, intimidation less potent, and treachery of political managers in tampering with ballots absolutely impossible. No honest man can say this is not a thing much to be desired in Oregon.

President Oakes, of the Northern Pacific, was in Seattle this week eagerly working for a grant of the small strip left unoccupied on Railroad avenue. He realizes now, if never before, that the hostile attitude of his road to Seattle has seriously jeopardized its interests in that great city. The people are cold and severely critical, and grant with reluctance favors that have been shown rival roads with enthusiasm. Mr. Oakes promises that if arrangements can not be made for a grand union depot, the Northern Pacific will begin this year the construction of one that will cost \$300,000. The true policy for Seattle is to declare Railroad avenue a perpetual highway in common to all railroads, under the direct control of the city. Other roads are certain to come to the city and desire the use of this great highway, which should not be under the control of any one or more of them.

In the generosity of their hearts, moved by a feeling of gratitude for the generous gifts made them in the hour of their distress, the people of Seattle raised a subscription of \$5,000 for the relief of the destitute in San Francisco. However, it was declined with the assurance that San Francisco could take care of her own poor. In view of the fact that an application had been previously made to the government for relief of

the unemployed and starving people of San Francisco, this refusal of Seattle's generous gift looks like a piece of cheap buncomb. Bread from Seattle would taste as sweet as bread from Washington to those who find bread from San Francisco a hard thing to get.

Land valued at \$3,000,000 in the south end of Tacoma has been staked out in mining claims on the plea that gold exists there in paying quantities. A number of shafts are being sunk to bed rock. This is the second time that efforts have been made to get hold of valuable property near that city through the mining laws, but it will doubtless fail. Miners do not have an unquestioned right of way in this country nowadays, and if land is more valuable for other purposes than for its minerals it will be difficult to secure it under the mining laws.

The Washington legislature has done itself no credit by the shabby way it has treated the bill for organizing a national guard. If any state in the union has cause to be proud of, and grateful to, its militia, that state is Washington. The magnificent conduct of the military at Seattle and Spokane Falls calls for the admiration of all, and a member from either of those cities should be the last man in the legislature to speak of them with "humor and sarcasm." The necessity of a well organized and instructed national guard is being recognized everywhere, and the new states should lead in the matter.

It is to be hoped that Congressman Wilson will be successful in securing an appropriation for removal of the sand bar between Vancouver and the mouth of the Columbia. Such an important port as Vancouver ought not to be cut off from the ocean by an obstruction so cheaply disposed of. If he fail, however, the citizens of that place should undertake the work themselves, for they will be amply repaid in the growth of their city that will follow.

The senate committee has rendered a majority report in favor of Sanders and Power, the two republican senators-elect from Montana, and as this virtually settles the question of their admission to the senate the political muddle in that state may be said to be over, and the two parties will have a chance to fight for supremacy again at the next election, when it is to be hoped that a legislature will be chosen that will attend to its duties.

The two factions of the republican committee in Portland should be added to the common council building committee, as they are both trying to make the city haul.