

# West Shore

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

Saturday, May 17, 1900.

AT last an effort has been made to secure governmental supervision of congressional elections. Senator Hoar, chairman of the senate committee on privileges and elections, a short time ago reported such a bill to the senate, and now Representative Rowell, chairman of the house committee, has reported a similar measure. It provides that upon the petition of fifty legal voters a United States supervisor shall be appointed in any election district, who shall keep a poll list and make a list of all rejected ballots, showing a reason for their rejection, and the ballots themselves with the voter's name written on each; to inspect all ballots as they are canvassed and make separate returns of the result; to compare their returns with those of the local officers so as to note any differences. A canvassing board, composed of the chief supervisor, United States district attorney and United States marshal, shall receive and canvass these returns and make a tabulated return, sending a copy of each to the attorney general and the clerk of the house of representatives. The latter is to compare these with the certificates of the state officers, and if there is a conflict between them to the extent of declaring different persons elected, then the name of neither shall be enrolled until the house officially decides the contest. The question is now fairly before both branches of congress as to whether the government shall supervise national elections or not. That the will of the people—by people is meant legal voters—is being nullified in many places is unquestioned, and it is for congress to say whether the interest of the government in an honest election of its members is such as to justify any interference with their management by the local authorities. But it can hardly be said that this is an interference with, or suspension of, local control of elections. The local officers man-

age the elections the same as though the supervisor were not present. All that is required of them is that they give the supervisor an opportunity to observe what is done and to keep his own register of the proceedings, and no government interference is possible, save where they refuse so to do. In case the polls are not opened by the local officers, the supervisor is authorized to open them for the reception of ballots for congressman only. Wherever an honest election is contemplated there can be no objection to a national supervisor exercising the powers prescribed; but where it is proposed to count fraudulent ballots, to alter the returns, to deny the right to vote and to otherwise defeat the will of the people, there will naturally be a strenuous opposition to this measure. There will be much said about "federal bayonets," "Caesarism," "the power of might," etc., but it is difficult to see wherein these apply to so peaceful and modest a check upon fraud as this measure contemplates.

There seems to be little doubt of the earnestness of Huntington's intention to build a line of railroad from the head of the Willamette valley up the middle fork of the Willamette river and across the Cascades into Southeastern Oregon, and on through Nevada to transcontinental connection and through California to San Francisco. Such a line will necessarily be, in a measure, a rival to the Southern Pacific, of which road Huntington is president, but in spite of this surveys are being made and right of way secured. The general route chosen is one far superior to the present one between Portland and San Francisco for operation in winter time.

An effort is to be made to protect American railroads from suffering in their competition with foreign roads by reason of the exemption of the latter from the provisions of the interstate commerce law. A bill has been introduced into the senate requiring foreign roads to procure a license to exchange business with domestic roads, and this license is to remain in force only while those roads observe the provisions of our interstate commerce law. This is extending the principle of protection to railroads, to which they are as much entitled as farmers and manufacturers. Whether the method be practical is another question.

Baker City is coming to the front rapidly. The establishment there of extensive reduction works and the centering there of large railroad interests have attracted the attention of capitalists, and there has been an unprecedented investment in property by outsiders. Baker City occupies the one location for a large inland city in an extensive region of vast and varied resources that is being opened up by railroads.