

# West Shore

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.

L. SAMUEL, Publisher, { Second & Yamhill Sts., PORTLAND, OREGON.  
Main & Stevens Sts., SPOKANE FALLS, WASH.

Entered in the Post Office in Portland, Oregon, for transmission through the mails of second class rates.

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES---Strictly in Advance.

One Year, . . . . .	\$4.00	Three Months, . . . . .	\$1.25
Six Months . . . . .	2.25	Single Copies, . . . . .	.10

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

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 1890.

With this number WEST SHORE celebrates its first anniversary as an illustrated weekly by enlarging the size of its page and adding a new department for "Boys and Girls, conducted by Miss Emily A. Kellogg, a writer of national repute on juvenile topics. The larger page gives the artist more scope and adds much to the attractiveness of the paper. Other new features will be added from time to time.

IT would be impossible to find any subject upon which has been expressed a greater diversity of opinion than that of electric execution. The first application of the subtle force to the legal extinction of life was, to say the least, not a complete success. The range of discussion is a wide one, and the opinions, such as are not dictated by self interest or prejudice, seemed to be governed by the ideas of the writers on the subject of capital punishment. If the question be divested of dross and the object aimed at be kept clearly in view, it ought not to be difficult to come to a satisfactory conclusion. Clearly, the object to be gained in adopting some less barbarous method than hanging for the legal killing of murderers is not so much to save the victim himself from a few moments of pain as to lessen the brutalizing effect such a custom has upon the people using it. A nation that still commits such barbarity as the hanging of condemned criminals can not be said to have yet reached a high plane of civilization, no matter how wealthy it may be, how advanced in the arts and sciences or how much progress it has made in the paths of literature. If it were not for legal hangings there would be no illegal ones when a new generation shall have risen purged of the debasing influence of the custom. That electric execution is a step in advance for us as a people, and not a more painless way to die, is its recommendation, and if it also possess the latter attribute, so much the better. There is a growing sentiment against hanging, and it is one of the evidences of our progress towards higher and better things. Yearly it becomes more difficult to secure a conviction before a jury where the penalty is death upon the scaffold, and courts of appeal are showing a decided leaning towards the side of mercy. The natural result of this is public clamor against the method in which justice is being administered, resulting in threats of lynching and even in actual execution of the threats. A people whose minds were not dulled in their sensibilities by such a brutal custom would never resort to it illegally under such circumstances. It is also true that more criminals would be convicted and punished were some less repulsive form of punishment adopted. The cry that the murderer deserves hanging because of the agony he has caused his victim is the growl of the brute side of our natures. No man can give voice to such a sentiment without turning from that which is the highest and noblest in his nature, without casting his eyes down from

that which is above him and towards which he should climb and letting his baser and more brutal instincts secure a firmer hold upon him. The time is coming when our children, of possibly, not more than the second generation, will look with as much horror upon our custom of hanging as we do upon the wheel and the rack. Electric execution is but a step in our evolution towards a higher, more intellectual, more sensitive and more philanthropic civilization, and because it is a step it will undoubtedly be taken.

The spectacle of the two great political parties in congress frittering away the time and money of the people in an all-summer session, which is nothing but a political tournament to see which party will win the most prizes or inflict the most damage upon the other, is not one of which a citizen of this great republic can boast. No matter how much he may favor the one side or the other, he can hardly hold up his head and say, "See what my party is doing in congress; I am proud of it." It is the hope and expectation of thousands of true Americans to have a party in the halls of congress of whose conduct they can speak with pride. As it is now, both the democratic and republican parties are but machine organizations, existing chiefly for the glory and financial advantage of their managers, from the man in the presidential chair down to the lowest ward politician. Behind them are the votes of hundreds of thousands of men that are cast more from habit than from principle. The mere names "republican" and "democratic," without reference to the principles advocated or opposed, are potent to hold the votes of men who, were they divorced from inherited or acquired prejudices, could not be induced to support either of the two parties bearing them. The predicament of a man compelled to choose between these two for the first time is well illustrated by the artist on the last page. He represents the new states of Idaho and Wyoming as in a quandary as to which of two dilapidated inns they will give their patronage. Both of the inns are simply kept from falling into ruins by props representing the sources from which the parties receive their support, while they are patched here and there by unsightly and unsavory rords. In the distance a fine American hotel is being erected. Undoubtedly the time is coming, and that rapidly, when lodgers will abandon both the republican and democratic inns and put up at the new American. The American sentiment is reading rapidly, under the impulse of such incidents as the school contests in Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. The motto is not the old know nothing one of "America for Americans," but the broader and more liberal one of "America for American principles." To this any loyal and intelligent foreign born citizen can subscribe heartily, and it is one of the best indications for success of the movement that it is participated in by many citizens who were not born on American soil. The American party in California has nominated an entire state and congressional ticket, composed of men of ability, personal and political purity and known loyalty to the fundamental principles of our government, and only the blind worship of a party name stands between them and success. The sentiment is strong everywhere, and were a party organization made in every state, around which it could crystalize, it would not be long before it would become a political power.

Portland has honored herself this week by entertaining the Oregon Press Association. The editors of Oregon when thus gathered together proved to be a body of very able and pleasant gentlemen. No doubt this pleasant intercourse will unite both city and country in closer bonds of friendship.

If the *Atlanta Constitution* had sufficient forethought to provide itself with a hole, it could now, with good grace, retire into it and pull the string. A small hole will do.