

The Oregonian

Entered at Portland, Oregon, Postoffice as Second-class matter. Subscription rates: In Advance: (By Mail.) Daily, Sunday included, one year \$3.00...

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TRIED AND FOUND WANTING.

Those who imagine that the proposed abolition of the Oregon State Senate would be a step of progress must be ignorant of the history not only of the states of the Union, but of other democratic countries. This is the history of the attempt to organize democratic rule, whether republics in name as well as in fact or republics in fact under the forms of monarchy...

The English Parliament met in one chamber for about the first century of its existence. The House of Commons and the House of Lords were two and has so remained ever since. During the revolutionary period of the seventeenth century the House of Lords was abolished and the Long Parliament and its successor, the "Short Parliaments," ruled with such arbitrary tyranny assuming such executive and judicial as well as legislative power, that no man's life, liberty or property were safe...

By the proceedings of this Parliament you see they stand in need of a check or balancing power. An agreement was reached in 1658 that Cromwell should appoint members of a Council of State, but many of those he appointed refused to serve, and the Commons, violating their agreement, reopened the discussion. Cromwell, in disgust, dissolved Parliament and thereafter ruled alone until his death. The Convention Parliament, which met in 1689 and recalled King Charles II, declared that "the government is and ought to be by King, Lords and Commons."

Arguments against a two-chambered legislature apply almost solely to those upper houses in which membership is hereditary or by appointment for life or for long terms and which represent one or more privileged classes. Such an upper house is admittedly or in effect a protection of the aristocracy or the wealthy against popular attempts to destroy privilege or to overrule the Senate. But two-chambered legislatures are adhered to not only by the more or less autocratic monarchies of Russia and Germany and Austria, but by the republics of both Europe and America. The recent change in Europe have been in the direction of strengthening and popularizing, not of abolishing the upper house.

Italy in 1911 reformed its Senate. This body formerly had an unlimited number of members, all appointed by the King, but the number was limited to 350, of whom the King appoints less than one-third, the rest being elected by the universities, Senators, deputies, provincial councils, communal assemblies, former deputies, presidents of Chambers of Commerce, agricutural associations, workmen's societies and heavy taxpayers. The Netherlands has a second chamber of fifty members elected by the provincial estates from among the largest taxpayers, but it is the least powerful in Europe. It cannot initiate bills nor amend them; it can only reject them for long terms.

France twice tried a single chamber during revolutionary times. When the States General met in three houses in 1789, the Third Estate forced the nobles and clergy to join with it in a single national assembly. The committee on constitution in 1791 reported in favor of two chambers, but the assembly, controlled by the Jacobins, rejected this plan and in 1793 adopted a constitution establishing one chamber, but this did not come into effect while the mob continued the Reign of Terror. The Terrorists were no sooner crushed than the bicameral plan was adopted by the Directory. The uni-cameral experiment was repeated for only a short time under the present Republic of 1848. The present Senate is pronounced superior in personnel to the Chamber by Ives Guyot; it has supplied more statesmen to the republic. A. L. Lowell says of it: "The Senate does very valuable work in correct-

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