

Work for the Australian Voting System. From the Cal. Patron, Official Grange Organ.

Some agitation is now being made in favor of a new and stringent law governing our system of voting, in order to prevent frauds through various unfavorable influences exerted upon elections under our present regulations. The Australian system, recently published in our columns, or something quite similar, seems to most popularly meet the opinions of those who are anxious for a reform. We believe this is one of the most important measures for farmers, as well as all other good citizens, that will come before the legislature at the present session. The National Grange has declared in favor of strong action in this line.

We should like to have it discussed by different writers in our columns. We urge every honest voter to take an interest in this matter, and in one way and another do something to help bring about so desirable a reform. Let it be the subject of debate in each grange, at its first meeting if possible.

We recommend that the secretary of each grange draw up a letter to the legislative representatives of the district, to be signed by as many members of the grange as possible, and forward it to the representatives without delay.

Some of the points of advantage in the so-called Australian system of voting lie in the fact that illegal voting and counting of ballots are greatly curtailed, if not entirely prevented. Some of its important features may be briefly mentioned as follows: All the ballots are printed by the State. Each ballot contains the names of the candidates of all parties. Each voter enters the balloting place separately, is provided with one ballot only by two attending government officials. In an apartment by himself alone he marks or checks such names as he desires to vote for. He then passes to the front of the ballot-box, deposits his vote and passes along some distance and out, no one but the two officers being allowed to approach the voter in the voting apartment during the process of voting. All ballots not voted are accounted for and returned by the officials. This plan has worked well in other places, and it is believed, if adopted in California, would prevent nearly all the frauds and do away with most of the political "hangers-on" that the State is now cursed with.

How Switzerland is Governed.

From Reynolds's Weekly.

It has about one-twelfth the population of our "two little islands," and its tiny territory is surrounded on all sides by powerful States, chiefly despotic. The inhabitants speak some German, some French, some Italian. In religion they are divided into Roman Catholics and Protestants, the latter being chiefly Calvinistic Presbyterians. Yet this strangely composite population admittedly possesses the oldest, the freest, and the most enlightened form of government in the world—a government to which the people are so devoted that in its defense four hundred thousand citizen soldiers can be relied on to take the field on the shortest notice.

And what is the Swiss form of government? The Federal. Little Switzerland contains not merely four, but twenty-four separate "cantons" or commonwealths, each governed by its own laws, legislative, and executive. The supreme authority of the nation is vested in a parliament of two chambers, the State council and the national council. The former consists of forty-four members, two from each canton. The latter is chosen directly, one deputy for every 20,000 souls. The two together constitute the Federal assembly. From the Federal assembly emanate the Federal council, or executive of seven, and the Federal tribunal, or supreme judicature of eleven. The harmony of all the parts of this wonderful machine of government is complete; and whenever a constitutional amendment is proposed, it has to be put to the vote of the entire electorate—yes or no.

Natural Opportunities Taken.

From the Newark Evening News.

The greatest display of assurance made within the century is that exhibited by the Lehigh valley railroad company in its proposal to sell the city of Newark a supply of water at \$30 a million gallons. This is the company that recently, through a pliant legislature, secured the right to abandon the Morris canal. The canal was built to "meet a public demand," and the right to use the waters of the lakes and rivers in the upper section of the State to feed this canal was granted solely with a view to meeting this "public demand." And now the canal is to be abandoned to meet the "demand of the railroad!" because the canal takes part of the traffic from the railroad at cheaper rates. And this company, having secured the waters of the lakes and rivers for a canal, which it abandons for selfish purposes, has the cheek to offer to sell this water to the people of Newark. It might as well offer to sell the roving winds that sweep the hills through which the waters flow.

Reform the Ballot Box.

The North American Review pronounces this question to be "The Next National Reform." And it is correct. It is a waste of time, says the Review, to discuss whether this or that party is the greater offender in any election. No temporary remedies will suffice. It should be an uncompromising crusade against political knavery—a war to the death—as it was a war to the death against American slavery.

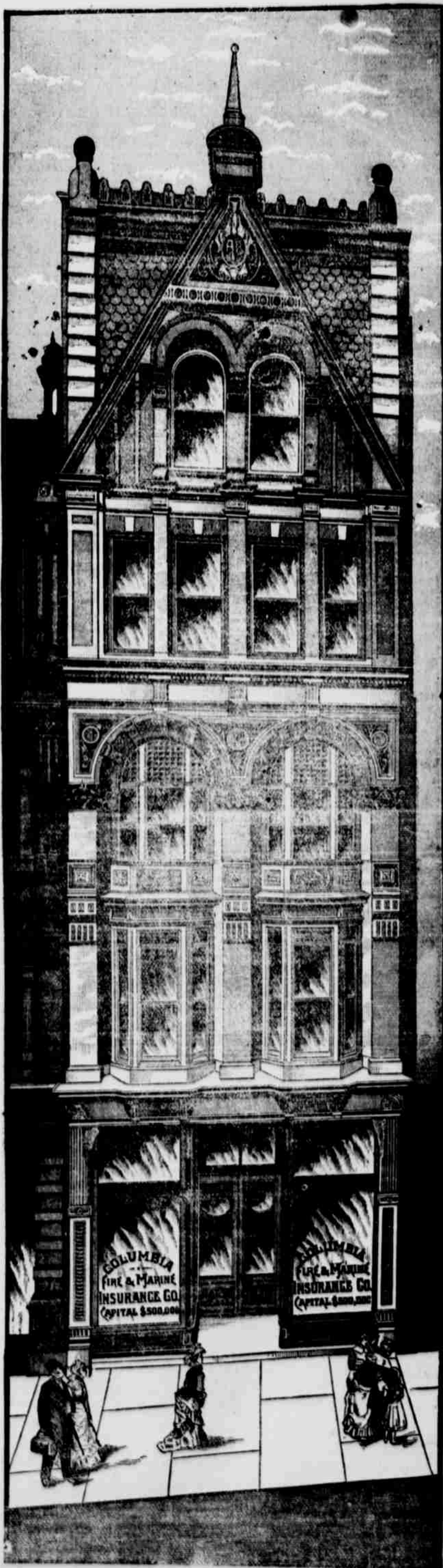
The editor of the Review then goes on to explain and recommend the Australian voting system, to secure a secret ballot, just as we explained it in these columns three weeks ago. That is the next reform. We need it here in Oregon. We need it right in Portland. Hon. H. H. Northrup, a prominent member of the Oregon legislature, has just spoken in honor upon the subject of the proposed reform.

Reformation is long.

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