

The Herald
PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY
BY
W. C. BYRD & SON.
PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
One Year \$3.00
Six Months 1.50
Three Months .75
One Year (in advance) 2.50

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THE INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM, AND PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION.

TO THE CITIZENS OF OREGON:—
The Oregon Farmers' Alliance, Oregon State Grange, Oregon Knights of Labor, and Federated Trades Assembly of Portland, earnestly request that you will help to make the Initiative and Referendum the system of making law in Oregon. Under this system every bill must receive the majority vote of the citizens at the ballot box before it can become a law.

The Initiative means that any citizen may right a proposed law, and if three per cent. of the citizens sign a petition in its favor, the Secretary of State must submit it to a vote of the citizens at the next election. The legislature has no power over the Initiative method of making laws. The law is proposed by some of the people, filed with the Secretary of State and by him sent direct to the people at the ballot box.

The Referendum means that the legislature has the power to propose bills, but any act must be accepted by a majority of the voters at the ballot box before it can become a law.

This is the Swiss method, where in some states it has been in successful operation for six hundred years. Zurich state, population three hundred and forty thousand and Zurich city, population ninety two thousand, for forty years have permitted no law, tax levy or appropriation of public money to be made without a majority vote of the citizens, and they have no beggars, paupers nor home made millionaires. Wealth cannot buy law. Word fresh from the people through the ballot box is the highest law and cannot be overruled by any supreme court or other power. Criminal, corrupt and worse than worthless legislatures, like our last in Oregon, spending twenty-seven thousand dollars for clerk hire, besides other steals too numerous to mention, are an impossibility.

Under this method making law is merely a business proposition of public welfare. Demagogues, wire-pullers, ward heelers and pot house politicians lose their power. Any man advocating a worthy law can bring it to a vote within a year, while bad laws are as easily repealed. By constant study of law-making the people are ready for wise action at all times.

Proportional Representation gives every party representation in proportion to the number voting its ticket. Suppose a district or county casting four thousand votes and entitled to five representatives; then any candidate receiving eight hundred votes, or nearer that number than any other candidate, is justly elected, because he represents one-fifth of the voters. Under the present system, if the democrats have sixteen hundred votes and the republicans, populists and prohi-

tionists eight hundred votes each, the democrats would elect all five representatives and shut out the other three parties, having twenty-four hundred votes, from any representation or hearing. To prevent this wrong, let each voter set the figure 1 opposite his first choice, 2 opposite his second choice, 3 for third choice, and so on. Then if each democrat marks A. as his first choice, B. as his second choice and C. as his third choice, when eight hundred ballots are counted for A. he is elected as the representative of one-fifth of the voters; the other eight hundred ballots are then counted for B, their second choice, and he is elected; no votes are left for C. Every democrat has voted; they have elected their share of representatives and cannot get any more. Each of the other parties, having about one-fifth of the voters, will elect one representative and will be heard in the council or legislature in proportion to the number of votes it casts. All the people will be represented, and instead of party government by party machinery, we will have a country governed by all the people. Under this system each party will nominate only as many candidates as it probably has votes to elect.

Your committee requests that wherever there is no Alliance, Grange or Union, our people will organize non-partisan Direct Legislation Clubs, necessary funds to be raised by voluntary contribution, the only condition of membership being a wish to aid the introduction of the Initiative and Referendum in Oregon. Also, that your organizations will in every case put the following question to every candidate for office: "If elected will you do all in your power, by voting and otherwise, to introduce the Initiative and Referendum in Oregon, by causing a constitutional convention to be called as soon as possible, delegates to such convention to be elected by the system of Proportional Representation, and also that the new constitution framed by such convention shall be submitted to the people at the ballot box for acceptance or rejection?" And, further, that you will ensure the endorsement of this great reform by all the conventions of your different political parties by electing only delegates pledged in its favor.

This educational agitation is absolutely non-partisan in character, and we trust that the proposal to introduce the reform in Oregon will be prevented from becoming in any sense partisan politics, or causing any political advantage to any party. Let it be accepted or rejected purely as a question of public welfare.

To those wishing to further investigate this subject, we recommend J. W. Sullivan's book, "Direct Legislation," which gives a full, clear and interesting history of its effects in Switzerland. Your committee has already circulated 1150 copies of this book, and will furnish single copies for twenty five cents or three for half a dollar.

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Joint Committee on Direct Legislation.

"Not bad looking, you mean to say?"
"Come, sir, I won't allow you to speak so slightly of a person whom you don't know."
"I know her a great deal better than you do—she's my wife."

Small Talk.
Young gent (at a party, to his neighbor)—What a charming apparition, that lady yonder with the golden hair!
"Yes, that hair cost a good 3000 francs."
"And those teeth—a veritable casket of pearls."
"Patent enamel. Guaranteed to last three years."
"In short, she's an angel."

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Columbus at the Court of Ferdinand and Isabella.

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