

get him in a few weeks to change his established economic thoughts sufficiently to get his vote. That the taxation and other measures came so nearly to the victory, speaks volumes for the good sense and honest intentions of the people of Oregon.

Had some strong, virile, eloquent man gone down the state and explained some of the matters, he would have saved the day. It was not considered advisable to have this done.

The measure providing for proportional representation was coupled with several others, all good in themselves, but two distinctly unpopular. It provided for increasing the term of the legislature to six years, and it increased their pay. The people of Oregon at this same election voted down by an enormous majority, a proposition to increase the pay of a circuit judge, and in the city of Portland, two special measures intended to raise the pay of two city officials were voted down at the same time.

Oregon is ripe for the harvest of economic progress, but the reapers must go out among the rows of corn and work. The farmers of Oregon want to be shown. They want to know, and they want time to think. In two of the best agricultural counties of the state, the progressive measures got the heaviest adverse votes, yet these counties could have been easily canvassed. These counties indicated a backwardness on economic matters two years ago. It is useless to send these men literature without missionaries are sent with it.

The Oregon people voted according to their lights, honestly, fearlessly. They cannot be bullied, bribed, bulldozed, nor played for fools. Teach them. Go among them. Tell them. Sing the song of freedom to them and they will listen. Get next to their hearts, and their heads will come after.

They must be made not only sore at the present iniquities of taxation, but they must be shown the way out. Not with literature poked at them, altogether, but with the words of truth taken to them in song and story, in earnestness and faith.

The Oregon people are ready for the march to economic freedom, but no leader

from a far off can direct them. He must be among and of them.—A. D. CRIDGE, Portland, Oregon.

RHODE ISLAND.

THE REPUBLICANS FIND THEIR RECENT VICTORY NO EASY ONE—THE RHODE ISLAND INTERROGATION ASSOCIATION—51 MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE OUT OF 138 COMMITTED TO LOCAL OPTION IN TAXATION AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVE.

Somewhat to the surprise of at least one member of the Rhode Island Tax Reform Association, the election in this State has not been the usual walk-over for the G. O. P. Is any part of the result to be credited to the efforts of the Association? A brief outline of what we have been doing, or trying to do, from the beginning of last Spring up to the day the votes were cast, may enable the reader to form an opinion.

To begin with, the three or four speakers that the association had in the field, made a point at all the meetings held, prior to June 30th, to urge people to register. The advisability of getting on the list was the subject of letters to newspapers all over the State. But, although many of the cotton and woolen mills were running on reduced time, the registration figures for Providence and for the State at large were only slightly in excess of those of 1909, and considerably behind those of 1908. The lists were closed on the last day of June.

At all the meetings held under the auspices of the Association, the property qualification and the inequality of representation in the legislature were denounced, and direct legislation was pointed out as the only likely means of correcting these and other evils of our political system. Col. Liddell was especially emphatic upon these points, and in his condemnation of protection, and the other speakers repeatedly called attention to what was going on in Western Canada. The same course was pursued in the letters sent to the newspapers.

The Democratic platform contained several planks that were especially accept-

able to the Association, among them one favoring the submission of proposed constitutional amendments upon demand of a certain percentage of the voters, and another endorsing local option in taxation.

The Democratic candidate for governor, in his letter of acceptance, took an aggressive stand for direct legislation, going beyond his platform and at once awakening an interest in his canvass. This encouraged the Association to proceed with others who were interested to organize the "Rhode Island Interrogation Association," with the object of introducing into this country the custom of "heckling" candidates. Col. Liddell had been particularly active in advocating the support of candidates, whatever their party label, who would openly declare themselves in favor of measures submitted to them by those whose votes they were seeking. The Rhode Island Interrogation Association makes the claim of being the pioneer American organization for questioning would-be "servants" of the people.

It was decided to call upon the candidates to declare their position with reference to one point only—the submission of constitutional amendments upon popular demand. Some 350 letters were sent out, of which the following is a copy:

TO THE CANDIDATE FOR THE RHODE ISLAND
GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

DEAR SIR:—The undersigned committee, representing by appointment, the State Federation of Labor, the Prohibition State Committee, the Tax Reform Association, the Interrogation Association, also representative of the Independent vote of the State, beg to request of you a statement of your attitude upon the following public question, and the position you will take towards legislation thereon, if elected:

Question: Will you, if elected, vote for, and do all in your power to secure the passage of a Constitutional Amendment which shall enable a majority of the voters of the State to make changes in the State Constitution by means of the Initiative and Referendum?

Please answer immediately, inasmuch as early publicity is intended.

Neglect to reply will be considered as a refusal to support the legislation asked for.

A. E. HOHLER,
President of State Branch of American
Federation of Labor.

HIRAM VROOMAN
LOUIS E. REMINGTON
LUCIUS F. C. GARVIN
CHARLES H. LEE

Nearly a hundred Democratic, about 30 Prohibitionists, half a dozen Republican and one or two Socialist candidates answered "yes," and the secretary of the Interrogation Association has their answers on file. Several, including Governor Porthier, returned non-committal replies, one or two had something to say about the "dictates of conscience," and the remainder were not heard from.

Of those who answered in the affirmative, 29 Democrats and two Republicans were elected to the House, and six Democrats to the Senate. A few days before the election the newspapers had published the entire list of those who answered favorably. The members of the Interrogation Association were more or less active in their respective election districts in behalf of the candidates who pledged themselves. The Interrogation Association held weekly meetings in "Tax Reform Hall"—all through the campaign, some of which were addressed by candidates or representative members of all the parties except the Republican. It is proposed to continue the meetings and to establish branch organizations in all the cities and towns, and in as many election districts as may be practicable.

It is the general feeling among those interested in taxation and other reforms, that "heckling" has obtained a permanent foot-hold in this State, and it is anticipated that a larger number of answers, whether favorable or otherwise, will be received next year; that the number of candidates who "stand upon their dignity" will be considerably reduced.

The "People's Forum" meetings continue to be crowded and a larger hall is very much needed. There is no question but that these meetings are having an influence upon the community, and it is hoped

that similar meetings will be inaugurated in other cities and towns.

The altered complexion of the Assembly, 51 of whose 138 members are committed by their platform to the support of local option in taxation, as well as the constitutional initiative, warrants the expectation that the former measure will receive more consideration than it did last winter. If, as appears probable at this writing, local option has been adopted in Oregon, it no longer can be objected to by Rhode Islanders on the ground that it is a "foreign innovation." Our Joint Special Committee on the Tax Laws, can't seem to get hold of anything that is going on in Western Canada, but it may be possible to draw its attention to Oregon.

The first sign of "insurgency" that appeared in Rhode Island was towards the end of the campaign, when it became evident that there was foundation for the report that Senator Aldrich had designated Henry F. Lippitt as his successor. Things do not seem to be moving so smoothly for the G. O. P. since the demise of Boss Brayton, and the outlook for the happening of something worth while is all the more hopeful. Several times in her history, Rhode Island has been the leader, or among the leaders, in movements of importance, and another of those times may be nearer than we imagine.—H. J. CHASE, Providence, R. I.

FROM EX-GOVERNOR GARVIN.

For two and a half years an agitation, much of the time active, has been going on in this State. It has been a period of seed time rather than of harvest. Indeed, I believe that in any State it is necessary to prepare the ground before one can expect, or even seriously to attempt, to reap the fruit.

We have acted upon the theory that the educational work, kept up all the time, should be directed to the principle of deriving public revenue solely from land values; but when the time comes to ask for legislation, the exact form of the law to be enacted depends upon circumstances, upon the conditions existing at the time.

For that reason, the bill presented each year in the legislature has not been a general Act exempting from taxation personal estate and improvements, but a local option measure granting, to any municipality so desiring the power to concentrate taxation upon land values.

At the recent election, as I wrote to the last issue of the *SINGLE TAX REVIEW*, it was hoped that the question of home rule in taxation might be made a leading issue in voting for members of the legislature. In order to render the pledging of candidates to that policy effective, it was necessary to have the active support of organized labor. The design was to put two questions to candidates, namely, the initiative and referendum for constitutional amendments, and local option in taxation. The labor members of the campaign committee said they would support the first one alone, or both, provided a third question were added pledging to a minimum wage of two dollars for city laborers.

The Tax Reformers decided that the first question alone was preferable to the three, for the reasons that the three would invite partial answers from candidates and that legislators pledged to direct legislation would be liberal representatives of public sentiment in other respects.

The Democratic platform included both of our planks. Of the 138 members of the legislature 51 are Democrats, some of them men of much ability.

In my last letter to the *REVIEW*, I said that we were expecting Mr. John Z. White. It was thought best, however, that he should go to Colorado to work for the Direct Legislation amendment to the State Constitution. It is evident that his efforts there were not lost, since the amendment was carried by a good majority.

It had been our expectation that Mr. White would come to Rhode Island on the first of last July and remain for a year. Now it is anxiously desired here that he should enter upon his work in this State at once and continue it until after the next election. A year's work beginning now, will be worth much more than a year beginning and ending in midsummer. During that period the planting which has