

tioning candidates for the legislature. The State Federation of Labor, the Prohibitionists and the Tax Reform Association, have taken steps toward the putting of such questions by a committee delegated for the purpose. It is hoped that one or two influential women's organizations and possibly the State Grange, may also appoint each a delegate. We are satisfied that here, as in Missouri, one or two fundamental questions, such as direct legislation for the State and home rule for municipalities, will be answered by candidates, provided they are satisfied that there is a strong vote behind the questions.

We regard the labor organizations as the most effective force for securing reforms in this state, and with scarcely an exception when appealed to, as quite generally they have been, they indorse most willingly our petitions for local option in taxation. At the present time, however, we are making especial efforts in another direction. While many thinking men in the state accept the theory that public revenue should be derived from monopoly, rather than from production, the number of aggressive leaders in the cause is limited. We are trying, therefore, by personal interviews to awaken a deeper interest among college graduates in the economic and moral issue involved in local taxation. The field certainly needs cultivating. It is surprising how many men out of college only a few years, are at sea covering fundamental facts of political economy. It is not unusual for instance, for a lawyer or other alumnus to say that the effect of exempting personalty and improvements from taxation and increasing the rate upon land values, will merely cause the landlords to put up the rent paid by their tenants and thus recoup themselves.

It was expected that the special session of our State legislature, held in August, would enact the tax law which had passed the lower House at the regular January session. The whole matter, however, was referred to the next legislature, which is to be elected in November and to meet in January. As the House is to be composed of 100 members chosen from separate districts, instead of 72 members elected from the thirty-eight municipalities on

general tickets, a very different kind of body will deal with tax legislation in the future than in the past. It is not improbable that there may be a few representatives chosen well qualified to deal with the question of deriving public revenue in a broad and modern spirit. Indeed we are told here that the members of the Special Commission, to which the tax bills were re-committed, became convinced at the International Conference recently held in Milwaukee, that our general property tax, so far as it relates to personal property, is a blunder. We are led to hope that after further consideration, they will see that every objection which applies to tangible personalty holds against the taxation of improvements, the only difference being that the one can run away and the other can stay away.—LUCIUS F. C. GARVIN, Providence, R. I.

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## OREGON.

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THE INTERESTS AT WORK—SOME OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS.—THE TAX PAMPHLET PREPARED BY W. G. EGGLESTON.—THE PEOPLE OF OREGON STILL IN THE SADDLE.

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The campaign for better things has been much strengthened by the victories of the progressive republicans in other states.

In Oregon the "machine" element, with all its standpats, has been, and is, struggling to come back in the ring. Every Big Business has been full of business. A legislative ticket for the city, of 15 men, was carefully selected in the offices of the Portland Railway Light and Power company, and nominated by a convention of old line politicians and lawyers of the Big Interest Beast from all over the county of Multnomah, of which Portland is the chief part. Other conventions did the same in other parts of the state.

The question is, can the machine come back in Oregon? It can if its opponents, the People, are "doped" and not otherwise. The Big Interest Beast is reaching out for the supreme court of the state, four out of five of its members retiring. It is reaching out for the governor, the legis-

lature, and especially the upper house. Its lawyers have gathered together and condemned the proposed tax amendments and the proposed provision for the election of the legislature by proportional representation. Portland elects 13 members of the lower house at large. A democrat has never been known to be elected. To give proportional representation would be to break the back of the machine, for if it could not keep out the minority party, it could not have a big block of votes to trade. Out of the 60 members of the lower house a block of 13 to start with, together with blocks of three to six from other counties made the Beast master unless it went to sleep, or the people were aroused and concentrated their energies on one thing, as they did when direct legislation by the people went through.

Therefore, the Beast is trying to come back. However, some of its old servants have turned on it, and are telling of its habits and methods of capturing game.

One of these men is U. S. Senator Jonathan Bourne, who is fighting the Beast after having fed it for years. He is a man who knows its tracks. Another is Henry E. McGinn. The latter exposed the present plans of campaign in vigorous speeches, that makes the Beast and all its henchmen squirm and rave.

A big mass meeting was called to tell of all the misdeeds of Henry in times gone by. The writer asked him what he was going to do about it.

"If that bunch undertakes to tell of all my misdeeds when I ran with them and the machine," said the big jurist, "it will take them all night, and we will all go to the penitentiary in the morning!"

Needless to say the "bunch" neglected to say anything that would take them to the pen. And therefore, their fulminations against the progressives fell flat.

The republican party is divided into assembly and anti-assembly factions, the latter being the progressives and in line with the insurgent wing. The assembly is the new name for the old political convention. The primary law of Oregon is the real thing, there being no convention necessary, nominations being made direct by the people of each party.

The Machine Beast has tried to come back with a convention, just the same. So much for politics.

The official pamphlet of Oregon, with 32 measures in it and arguments pro and con concerning many of them, is now going out to the voters. It cost all told in round numbers about \$25,000. to reach 120,000 citizens.

In it are three tax amendments. Two proposed by the legislature at the request of the Grange. One proposed by organized labor. The three together will sweep away the constitutional restrictions now preventing local option in taxation. They will not provide for the Single Tax, nor for land value taxation. They will simply clear the ground.

The third tax amendment cinches the others, and would prevent some abuses that the Grange amendments do not provide for. It would give county rule in local taxation and make it impossible for the legislature to pass a tax law without the consent of the people. It is suspected that a scheme is being incubated to have the next legislature pass a bill exempting from taxation logged off lands, and possibly all timber lands, pass it under the emergency clause (which latter prevents the application of the referendum) and thereby establish a landed aristocracy of corporations that would not die easy. The tax measure proposed by organized labor would stop that.

The campaign for these measures is being carried on quietly. W. S. U'Ren, W. G. Eggleston and the undersigned are on the list as placing before the people a pamphlet on "Peoples Power and Public Taxation." The first edition of 20,000 has been exhausted. The second of 70,000 at this writing is running through the presses. The able pen and thoroughly trained mind of W. G. Eggleston is to be credited for its writing and compilation. The last edition is replete with facts and figures of a most sweeping and fundamental nature. Several cartoons and a number of illustrations of vacant tracts, lots, factories, office buildings, etc., with appropriate data as to value, taxation and utility, assist the reader to form conclusions.

Portland has a municipal water system.

It has spent millions, derived from water users to extend mains past speculative tracts, and thereby made millions for a few land owners, for without city water, lots do not sell well. Three years ago the people by a small majority, stopped this graft. Now it is proposed to come back with it, and the people are asked to endorse the old system. In this pamphlet is shown the picture of a vacant tract of 445 acres within the city limits, which it will cost \$106,800. to provide with water mains, and thereby increase its value \$267,000. Inside and outside the city limits are thousands of acres of speculative tracts needing water. The people using water will pay for extending mains to these tracts if this measure now before the people of Portland so decrees.

The people of Oregon have always been hard to get out to meetings. Progressive steps in the past have not been accompanied by great gatherings. The Peoples' Power League has passed its measures with widely circulated literature. Its four measures on the ballot now are along the line of more power for the people and less power for privilege.

Of the 32 measures on the ballot, nine pertain to the formation of new counties, one of which will take that matter out of the general elections in the future and place it with the local sections interested.

Six measures are proposed by the legislature, two of which pertain to taxation, and are called the Grange Amendments. The other measures were not wanted on the ballot by any body of citizens. One of them is the infamous constitutional convention bill, which if the people endorse it will, in all probability, force on the state a retroactive constitution without the people having anything to say about it, as was done in Delaware in 1896.

There are not more than 12 of the entire 32 measures requiring any careful consideration. An average legislature would vote on the remaining 20 in a very few hours. The citizen has from a month to a year to consider them all. Some were filed as late as July 5th. The state pamphlet will be in every man's hands five weeks before the election. He can easily come to an intelligent conclusion. The

careless and ignorant fall both ways about evenly on important questions, leaving the intelligent to decide. The backward looking papers are urging that the citizens vote No on everthing. They will be balanced by the citizens voting Yes on everything.

Throughout the state the Granges are considering the most important. At a recent meeting of one local Grange, four were discussed in two hours. Four more will be considered at its next meeting. The people may make some mistakes. Many farmers are dreadfully afraid of the Single Tax, but also very much dissatisfied with the present tax laws. This much must be borne in mind, however, that if the people do "bark their own shins," they have a right to do so, and by doing so will stumble into the right path. If led astray they can return "on the back track" at pleasure, and every lick for economic progress struck in any part of the world, is a help to Oregon.

Recently, F. E. Coulter, the intrepid and able leader of economic agitation in Canada, has returned to Oregon for a few months, and if given a little encouragement, will start fires along the trail that will beat any forest conflagration on record.

The people of Oregon are in the saddle and they have only to stay in it to ride to victory and liberty.—A. D. CRIDGE, Portland, Oregon.

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#### WINNIPEG.

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REV. HERBERT S. BIGELOW SPEAKING TO CROWDED HOUSES—A DEPUTATION OF FREE TRADERS TO WAIT UPON SIR WILFRED LAURIER—INCREASING PUBLIC INTEREST.

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Herbert S. Bigelow has been here. At a time of year when a large number of city folk are away for their holidays, when indoor meetings pass into the limbo of neglect, when churches are but half full, when theatre managements admit their attendance to be "hardly at flood tide," Herbert S. Bigelow has been speaking to crowded houses; preaching the gospel of democracy. He has been so appreciated by some of his hearers—among them some of