

It is now more than twenty-five years since I enlisted for the war against land monopoly. During that time it has fallen to my lot to participate in many campaigns of one kind and another. It is but fair to say that after none of them have I felt less inclined to criticise any policy of those in charge. The generalship was excellent, the team work of our committee splendid, and those of us in the ranks were inspired by it. I am not depressed by the result, but elated; and I ask God to bless every man, woman and child that helped us—which includes all who voted with us. We have buried the dead, sounded the bugle for another charge, and look to the future with renewed hope.

OLIVER T. ERICKSON.*



PROGRESSIVE NEW HAMPSHIRE.

East Jaffrey, N. H.

On the first Wednesday of next June a Constitutional Convention will be held in New Hampshire, delegates having been already chosen. The Convention will be a very large body—413 delegates. The last convention was held in 1902; conventions being of more frequent occurrence than in other States, owing to the fact that there are no other means of submitting amendments to the Constitution than by a convention.



The principal questions before the Convention of 1912 will be the size of the Senate and the House, the composition of senatorial districts, the permission of the classification of property for taxation, woman suffrage, and the Initiative and Referendum.

The Senate is at present composed of 24 members, chosen from districts divided on a property basis. This method of division results in great inequality, there having been cast in one district in the city of Manchester at the last election 1,849 votes, and in another in the same city, 5,782, each district being represented by one senator. This system has resulted disastrously to progressive measures in the legislature in many instances, the majority of the Senate being reactionary in tendencies.

The House is composed of about 390 members, varying somewhat from session to session, towns of less than 600 population being entitled to representation only part of the time. This body, although so large as to be unwieldy, has usually been quite progressive, and truly representative of the people, due doubtless to the close connection between its members and the voters. A proposition to reduce the membership of the House was submitted by the last convention, but failed of adoption, owing to a fear on the part of the smaller towns that they would lose their representation. An effort will doubtless be made in the coming convention to cut down the number of representatives.

*Mr. Erickson, formerly a public spirited and leading citizen of Minneapolis, has for years been precisely such a citizen of Seattle, where he is now a member of the Council, elected at large by the largest vote of all its nine members. He has been an active promoter of Henry George's doctrines since 1887, and for ten years prior to Henry George's death was one of Mr. George's valued coadjutors and trusted friends.—Editors of The Public.

The increasing burdens of taxation here as elsewhere have compelled the recognition of the fact that some classes of property are less capable of bearing those burdens than others. The town in New Hampshire is the unit of assessment, and until 1911 there was no power in the State which could compel the assessors to assess property at its full value as required by law. Consequently much property was under-valued. But the last legislature created a Tax Commission, with power to compel full valuation. This Commission is at present bringing great pressure to bear upon all the assessors to assess all property at its real value; at the same time it is recommending an amendment to the Constitution allowing the classification of property, so as not to subject property like bonds and standing timber to a destructive tax.



The Convention of 1902 submitted an amendment granting the suffrage to women, which failed of enactment. Since then the sentiment in favor of this act of justice has grown greatly, and its advocates are full of hope that the next convention will submit again an amendment which will be adopted by the people. The State Woman Suffrage Association, the Concord Equal Suffrage Association and the Men's Equal Suffrage League are very active.



But the most important and far-reaching amendment to be considered by the Convention will be one providing for the Initiative and Referendum, with provisions for the submission of Constitutional amendments both by the Initiative and by legislative reference. For if such an amendment should be adopted, all these other questions could be submitted to the people whenever it seemed best, without the cumbersome and expensive expedient of a convention.

The New Hampshire Direct Legislation League was organized about a year ago, the president, Judge George W. Clyde, having submitted an amendment providing for the Initiative and Referendum when a member of the Convention of ten years ago. The League has prosecuted its educational work as widely as its limited means would afford, with the result that in the coming Convention will be found a large number of men ready to vote for the submission of the necessary amendment.

The Progressive Republican movement in the State has been of great assistance in turning the attention of the people toward the Initiative and Referendum, although many of those same Progressives fail as yet to realize the necessity for the adoption of these aids to true representative government. The greatest foe of the Initiative and Referendum here, as elsewhere, is ignorance of what they really mean, and this difficulty the Direct Legislation League will seek to overcome by affording to every delegate all the information possible on the question.

To those to whom the workings of the New England town meeting have been familiar for years, of which the Initiative and Referendum are but a wider application and in modern form, an understanding of their principles should not be difficult.

While thoughtfully conservative, the citizens of the "Old Granite State" are not slow to adopt methods which give promise of bettering political conditions; so the advocates of the Initiative and Referendum look forward confidently to the Convention, feeling sure that the wisdom of the adoption of these improvements to our system of government will appeal to the best judgment of the delegates.

GEORGE H. DUNCAN.



CAUSES OF POVERTY IN CHINA.

Christian Hospital, Nanking, China, February 25.

In her review of Edward Alsworth Ross's "The Changing Chinese," which appeared in the Public of January 19, on page 67, the reviewer, Miss Grace Isabel Colbron, thus summarizes Professor Ross's handling of the causes of poverty in China, with comment thereon:

In one respect, however, this clear-sighted economist fails to explain the terrible poverty of the Chinese masses. He claims that it is not due to the system of land tenure, as most Chinese farmers own their own little plot of land rent free. But in a later chapter he tells of the aversion of the "upper classes" to work of all kinds, tells of the pitiful attempts of even the hard-worked coolie to pretend he is a gentleman of leisure when he has earned a few pence more than usual; he tells of the long finger nails which are the badge of freedom from labor. Now, where a large class refuses to work in any way, refuses to render service to the community, and yet it is this very class that lives in luxury—may not this be an explanation of the heart-rending poverty of unold uncounted millions? This, and not altogether a too great pressure of population against the producing power of the soil, as Professor Ross seems to imply? How does one class live in luxury except from the labor of the others?

The true answer to the last question, as the reviewer evidently surmised, is, Through landlordism. The "upper classes" referred to as hating work, are officials and landlords. Half the farmers are tenants, and poverty in China is chiefly due to two causes, landlordism and the miseries of famines.

W. E. MACKLIN.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

A GROWING TENDENCY.

Port Arthur, Texas.

The following editorial from a recent number of the Beaumont (Texas) Enterprise is significant:

When you render your property for taxes this year just put about twenty-five per cent more value to the land and deduct it from the improvements. The total being the same, there can be no complaint from the board of equalization, and in all probability the board will be glad to see the change. By rendering the land at high value the owners of improved property can set the example for increasing the value of the vacant property and thereby eventually bring about a reduction in the tax required of improved property.

That editorial represents a tendency to soften taxes on improvements in an informal way, the discouraging effect of such taxes having come to be better recognized through the teachings of Single-tax advocates these many years.

In this city, Port Arthur, 20 miles from Beau-

mont, the assessors themselves appraise improvements for taxation at 50% of their real value, land at 100% and merchants' stocks at 75%, this being also a recognition of Single-tax principles.

It is quite possible that a request for further examples of such practices would elicit information going to show quite a movement around the country along these informal lines.

O. OWEN.



CURRENCY AND INTEREST RATES.

Atlantic, Iowa.

There is a very general opinion that a low rate of interest would be a benefit to the common people. Along with this, generally goes the idea that a larger volume of currency would lower the rate. It does lower the rate temporarily. But if this lower rate does not cause the surplus currency to flow to points where the rate is higher, it tends to distribute it through the country and hence to increase the number of buyers in general and at the same time to decrease the number who wish to sell or who are forced to do so. Hence a general rise in prices. The rise in prices calls for more money for the same business, and the rising prices cause more business. So the new demand for money causes the rate of interest to swing back higher than before, but only temporarily. Writers for The Public persistently ignore the truth above stated.

HENRY HEATON.

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of The Public for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Tuesday, March 26, 1912.

La Follette versus Roosevelt.

At the North Dakota primaries on the 19th first indications were had of the triangular contest in the Republican party over the Presidential nomination which is now at white heat. The candidates were President Taft, ex-President Roosevelt and Senator La Follette. La Follette was nominated by a majority over both the others. Following is the vote as reported by the Associated Press on the 22d, with returns for 350 voting precincts out of 1,800 missing and not expected until the official count:

La Follette	28,620
Roosevelt	19,101
Taft	1,543



In response to the questions of a newspaper interviewer and as reported on the 21st, Senator La Follette said of this primary:

The returns so far reported from North Dakota are confirmatory of the impressions formed in a