

## NEWS—DOMESTIC.

## RHODE ISLAND.

H. J. CHASE HARD AT WORK—NEWSPAPER REPORTS OF THE WORK—NUMBERS OF REPUBLICAN REPRESENTATIVES ELECTED FAVORABLE TO PENDING AMENDMENT—REV. CHARLES HARDON OF NEW HAMPSHIRE SPEAKING IN RHODE ISLAND.

October has seen much work done for tax reform in Rhode Island. On the first day of that month Mr. H. J. Chase removed from Newport to Providence for the purpose of giving his entire time to the cause. The first two weeks he devoted to interviewing some sixty of the leading manufacturers of the State, men who had already endorsed local option in taxation. The remainder of the month he spent in personal interviews with some fifty of the Republican candidates for the legislature.

The result of this work appeared in the evening newspapers of the State on October 30th, the Saturday before election, as follows:

The following statement was issued today by the Rhode Island Tax Reform Association.

The following inquiry put to candidates for the general assembly, by manufacturers, representative of many others, explains itself:

“Dear Sir: We the undersigned together with some of your influential constituents, have endorsed home rule in taxation.

“We respectfully inquire whether you, if elected to the general assembly, will vote to amend section 3, of chapter 36, of the general laws, so as to read substantially as follows:

“Sec. 3. The towns may raise by a tax on real or personal estate or on both, or on improvements or on land, or on both personal estate and land, such sums of money as shall be necessary to pay town debts, or to defray the charges and expenses of the town hereinafter set forth; and may include the town's proportion of any state tax and pay the same out of the town treasury: Provided, the same be

voted at a legal meeting of the electors of the town.’

Here the signatures of 53 manufacturers or corporations.

“The state platform of the Democrats favor ‘Home rule for cities and towns on matters of local concern, including taxation.

“This plank commits all honest Democratic candidates—which means nearly all of them—to compliance with the wishes of the hundreds of business men who, thoroughly dissatisfied with present methods, have asked for local option in taxation.

“Of the whole number of Republican candidates for the legislature, about half have been given an opportunity to express their views. Among those not interviewed are the five members of the joint committee on taxes. A majority of the Republican candidates from the cities and large manufacturing towns, as well as some from the smaller towns, have given their opinions. The following are willing to be quoted as in favor of the principle of the pending amendment to section 3, of chapter 36 of the general laws:

Newport—Horace N. Hassard, Robert Kerr.

Central Falls—Dr. J. E. V. Mathieu, Fred H. Jones, Sylvester B. Hiscox.

Pawtucket—Carl Wendel, Daniel W. Bullock.

East Providence—J. W. Sampson, Benjamin Martin.

Johnston—H. B. Scott.

Warwick—Oliver A. Langevin.

Burrillville—M. H. Lacey.

Cumberland—John Livsey, Dr. Alex. Marshall.

Lincoln—Caleb Parkinson.

Middletown—Joel Peckham, F. T. Peckham (Citizen's), Joshua Coggeshall (Citizen's).

Portsmouth—Benjamin C. Sherman.

Barrington—Ebenezer Tiffany.

The following admitted that from their present knowledge they could see no good reason why the proposed amendment ought not to pass:

Barrington—F. A. Ballou.

Woonsocket—J. C. Wheelock, A. J. Bennett.

North Smithfield—Edward R. Estey.  
Burrilville—Albert H. Sayles.

“Seven others expressed themselves as not being hostile to the amendment, but did not wish their names to be given. No one declared outright against the amendment, the probable or at least possible opposition of two or three being inferable solely from the manner in which they discussed the subject. Only one or two candidates declined to say enough to give some indication of their position upon this vitally important question.”

Of the twenty-five Republican candidates whose names are given above, twenty-two were elected. Fifteen Democrats also were elected.

Of the 93 Republicans elected nearly forty, coming mainly from the country towns, were not interviewed at all. These rural members-elect, or their constituents now are being made acquainted with the principle aimed at by local option in taxation through lectures given before the local granges of the State. Rev. Charles Hardon, of Contoocook, New Hampshire, himself a granger in good standing, has for the past three weeks given his time to this good work. He uses two charts, the one enumerating national resources and the other the products of labor, and explains why the former should be taxed and the latter exempted. His address is followed by a general discussion which is very interesting and enlightening. The method adopted by Mr. Hardon is original with him and produces a much more decided impression on an audience than would a lecture without any appeal to the eye.

The Joint Special Committee on Taxes, which is to make its report to the legislature on or before February 15th attended The International Tax Convention held at Louisville about October 1st

The committee has as yet given no public hearings, but is expected to do so at an early date.

The Rhode Island Tax Reform Association has just established a Lecture Service and has issued a circular of which a copy will be forwarded to the Single Tax REVIEW.

LUCIUS F. C. GARVIN.

LONSDALE, R. I.

## H. J. CHASE'S WORK IN RHODE ISLAND.

(For the Review.)

The following are some of the impressions gained while engaged in the work described in Dr. Garvin's communication:

1. Confirmation of the fact that some men will sign a petition without fully knowing or taking much pains to find out what it really is. Without doubt the one circulated in this State last year was clearly explained to everybody to whom it was presented; but some may not have given sufficient attention, or may have allowed the matter to pass from their minds almost immediately. That there is much dissatisfaction with present methods of taxation goes without saying; but that it has not yet reached what may be called the boiling point is, I think, equally true. If it had, the work that we are now doing would be largely unnecessary

2. The fact that the Amendment was referred to a Commission has disposed a considerable number of the signers of last year's petition to "wait and see"—that is, to rest on their oars for the present. But the effect of this reference was altogether the most evident when it came to interviewing the candidates for the legislature. It afforded a convenient, plausible and if honestly urged, an undoubtedly valid excuse for declining to make known their position, and a number did not hesitate to avail themselves of this fact. They declared that they did not think it would be proper for them to express any opinion prior to the report of the Commission. Others said that they had not given the subject sufficient attention to come to any conclusion. Of two candidates interviewed on the same day, one said that he felt under no obligation to his constituents to promise or even intimate what his course would be with regard to any question that might come before the Legislature, that in all cases he would do what he thought was the right thing to do. The other wished to hear first from his constituents. If they wanted this amendment he would vote for it, whatever his own opinion might be as to its merits; if they didn't want it, he would vote against it. Here you have the extremes of attitude encountered.