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GEO. FOWLDS.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

POLITICAL PROGRESS IN MICHIGAN.

Detroit, Jan. 6.

Gov. Chase S. Osborn, of Michigan, who starts out with the announcement that he will not seek a re-nomination, recommends in his message to the legislature now in session at Lansing, legislation that is making the conservatives and reactionaries howl with rage.

He was supposed to be "safe and sane," and back of him in the fight for his election were most of the Big Business elements of the State. He was especially favored by the Upper Peninsula, where in fact he has long resided, as a fit person to put in the Governor's chair to head off any attempt of the Grange element or organized Labor to place a specific tax on iron or copper ore. Yet in his first message he recommends:

A tax on royalties.

Raising all revenue for State purposes from a tax on corporations.

The Recall.

Taking away from the legislature all power to thwart the Referendum.

A graduated income tax on credits, in place of assessing them.

A State insurance fund for laborers injured in their occupations.

That saloons be limited to one to each 1,000 of population, and the abolition of "government by saloon and rule by brewery."

The repeal of most of the laws establishing such boards as horseshoers, barbers, salt inspection, oil inspection.

Abolition of taxes on mortgages, to be replaced by a small fee for recording, which banks as well as individuals must pay.

Abolition of prison contract system.

The Governor also told the legislators that the State Militia is "topheavy with gold lace and adjutant generals"; that local option is good, for out of it can come improved conditions; that a State bureau should be created to purchase supplies for all State institutions; that a man who neglects his duty of voting should be disqualified for a certain length of time; that the legislators should give up junkets and work one more day a week, instead of adjourning every Friday until Monday night, and that it would be a good thing if the Governor was elected for four years, coupled with the power of Recall.

Of course a considerable number of these recommendations are in the nature of palliatives, while others might not be effective in doing away with the economic ills at which they are aimed; yet never before has a Michigan governor made so many recommendations of a radical nature in his message to the legislature.

While praising the new State Constitution as formulated by honest minded men, he says the Constitutional convention was "dominated by corporation lawyers" who had no faith in the people and did all they could to make it hard if not impossible for

the ordinary citizen to have any voice in the government.

This message occupies nine columns of ordinary newspaper print, and is bristling with recommendations for economy in the transaction of the State's business, and equity in the collection of taxes; and as Gov. Osborn has started out by demanding the resignation of the members of the State board of pardons, which has recently released some notorious cold-blooded murderers, and threatens to investigate every State board, most of them tainted with politics, it looks as if several million eyes will be on Michigan during the next two years.

It now remains to be seen whether he can induce the legislative solons of the State to legislate his reforms into the statute books.

JUDSON GRENELL.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

OWNERSHIP.

Chicago.

To be the owner of anything, that thing must be a product of industry.

No persons own land—never did nor ever will. They simply have a legal privilege to hold it for use or speculation. No man ever did or ever can make land, therefore it cannot be owned.

A company is organized to build a railroad. The first thing they do is to secure the right of way, a legal privilege. Then they grade, build bridges, lay tracks, build stations, cars, locomotives, etc. These are labor products and can be owned.

Or, a farmer wants to raise grain, fruit, vegetables or stock. He first gets title to some land, a legal privilege; then he sows, reaps, etc., and the products are property, because produced by labor. Nothing but products of industry are really property.

A company is organized to mine iron ore. They must first find ground that contains iron. But that ground is not property. The same with coal, or any other mineral.

When anyone says "I own this land," he does not state the fact; it is only a legal privilege he has.

When governments tax products of industry, they really contribute to holders of legal privilege.

When will people comprehend the senselessness of continuing to tax rightful property for the purpose of aiding holders of legal privilege?

Abolish all taxes, and require each holder of legal privilege to pay a percentage on its value. Then no one can afford to hold the privilege out of use.

When this is done, no one will ever be out of employment, for land is plentiful but not now put to its best use.

When it is put to its best use, opportunity for employment will be abundant for everyone; and then poverty will never be feared any more.

Poverty is the cause of vice, crime, murder, suicide, war—ten times more than all other causes combined.

E. W. ELDRIDGE.

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Make money; and the whole nation will conspire to call you a gentleman.—George Bernard Shaw.