

Many Cities Falling in Line.

Boise and Lewiston have such charters in Idaho. In Lewiston franchises are limited to twenty-five years, after which time the city may acquire the property. In Boise, no special elections are held.

The South Dakota law follows the Galveston plan.

The Kansas law is applicable to cities of the first class. Cities in the States of Massachusetts, Maine, Tennessee, Virginia and Oregon have fallen in line. The commission idea is here to stay, and simply because it is meeting with unmistakable success.

The idea has awakened more civic spirit in Cedar Rapids than was ever before known there. This new idea is making a new Cedar Rapids. Men and women consult the members on a hundred things, seemingly trivial as a single proposition, yet important in the civil development as a whole. These matters, great and small, receive prompt attention—so prompt, indeed, that men of years of experience under the old plan are really dazed by the suddenness of action at times.

The commission appointed to investigate the departments of Lynn, Massachusetts, has very recently made its report. The commission states that it is of the opinion that it is impossible to get the best results under the present form of city government. It recommends that action be taken to obtain a new charter and a new form of government based on the Des Moines or Haverhill (Mass.) plan, consisting of a board of five members elected by the people.

Committees in Portland and Tacoma, Washington, indorse the commission plan.

Governor Stubbs of Kansas announced recently that he would urge the next legislature to amend the enabling law for cities of the first and second class so that they can, if they choose, adopt either the Des Moines or the Galveston plan of commission rule.

At the present time, cities of California are endeavoring to have new charters adopted by the people and ready for ratification by the legislature. The popular clamor seems to be for a centralization of power in order to govern more economically.

Value of the New Idea.

Here is the value of the commission plan of government.

It shows us that the movement for reform extends across the continent, marks the general dissatisfaction with the results of the existing system of municipal administration, and opens the way for simplified, economical administration.

More expensive? No, by no means.

In Cedar Rapids, after one year's experience, it is seen the salary list is much larger than under the old plan, this being still further increased by the fact that more clerks are employed than for-

merly. In return for this, however, the city's business is kept written up, and is checked up and indexed like the business of a bank, and is always ready for inspection.

The commission started in with the plan of paying cash for everything purchased and adhered to it. More paving, curbing, and sidewalks have been built this past year than ever before; the streets and parks are said to have been kept in better condition; the municipal water plant has been improved and extended and a new fire station is being erected. Notwithstanding the increased amount of improvements being carried on, it is stated that the end of the year will find a surplus in the city treasury.

You and I want to see the commission idea win more successes. We want to simplify our city government. We want better service.

Don't you think this plan will do it?

The growing popularity and success of the idea seems to leave no doubt in my mind.

The one great need for permanent and genuine municipal reform is a quickened civic spirit among business men and more substantial citizens. But it may also be admitted that so complicated a machinery of municipal government as has existed, with its divisions of power among numerous departments and petty places of divided or doubtful responsibility, has played a part in repelling the active interest of business men and turning the city government over to ward leaders and their professional following.

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THE FELS FUND OF AMERICA.

An Address Delivered by Daniel Kiefer at a Dinner Given at Hamilton, Ohio, May 20, in Honor of John Z. White.

Shakespeare's remarks about "A tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune," may be applied to the Single Tax movement.

That opportunity is now here. I know that this is not the first time that Single Taxers have been told something of this kind. Those of you older in the movement than myself, can remember how it was thought that Cleveland's tariff message of 1887 was the opportunity. The Single Taxer who has not learned better by this time need throw no stones at the farmer who still believes that the Single Tax will place all taxes on farmers, nor at the workingman who still thinks that Protection protects him.

Then the Delaware campaign was considered the great opportunity. This, too, was before my time, for then I was still hopelessly asleep. It proved not to be so, chiefly because circumstances rendered it necessary to make this campaign an attack along the line of the greatest resistance, instead of the least.

Then followed the opportunities which the campaigns for home rule in taxation presented in Washington and Colorado. The fatal weakness in both cases was that the opportunity came as the result of a temporary and accidental control of the legislature by reform forces. This made success depend entirely upon the result of a single election in each State. Failure to carry these elections, coupled with loss of control of the legislatures, put an end to the opportunities.

Since then conditions have changed in many States. It is no longer necessary in some of them to have the slightest influence with the legislature to submit our proposition to a popular vote a dozen times in succession if necessary, and the number of States wherein this condition prevails will doubtless be materially increased in a very few years.

Oregon, Oklahoma and Missouri have the Initiative and Referendum. Single Taxers in those States can make the Single Tax an issue at any time they see fit. It is not necessary in order to do so to elect anybody to office. It can be done without asking Republicans to vote for a Democratic candidate, or Democrats for a Republican. Neither is it necessary to ask voters of either party to vote for a third party man. The signatures of eight per cent of the voters will do the job. Then if the result at the polls should be unsatisfactory, the same voters can have the question re-submitted at the next election, and at as many succeeding elections as may be necessary to secure the right result.

You all know that a measure more nearly approaching the Single Tax than anything ever submitted by any legislature, was voted on in Oregon last year. You know that as far as the reception that measure received by the voters was concerned, it might just as well have been straight out Single Tax, since most of them understood it to be so. You all know that more than a third of the voters voted in favor of this measure, thinking they were voting for the Single Tax. It is needless to add that most of those who voted against it did so because they knew nothing either about the proposition submitted or the Single Tax. During this campaign the Oregon workers were handicapped by lack of funds. Had it not been for this, they could have carried on a better campaign of education, the question would have been better understood, and the favorable vote would have been much larger. But nothing can prevent a re-submission, and resubmitted it certainly will be. The only question is whether the next vote on the measure shall be taken in 1910 or 1912, and that will be decided by the Oregon Single Taxers, not by the legislature of Oregon; and fortunately there will not be the same difficulty about funds during the next campaign.

You have all heard of the generous offer of Joseph Fels. You know that he has agreed to give \$25,000 a year to the Single Tax cause in

the United States on the sole condition that all the other Single Taxers in the country combined give as much as he will give by himself. This is the opportunity which should bring success to the movement. It removes the great handicap to our efforts. It makes success in the near future more than a possibility, not only in Oregon, but in Rhode Island, Missouri and Oklahoma as well.

Your guest of the evening can and will no doubt tell us of the great work accomplished in Missouri. He himself had no small part in securing the favorable vote of the people—embedding the Initiative and Referendum in their Constitution. He will tell you of the powerful work done by those later "U'Rens", Dr. Wm. P. Hill and Mr. S. L. Moser, who within the past few weeks saw to it that their General Assembly put through the enabling act rendering the Initiative and Referendum operative and regulating their operation; and, as is always the case, in spite of the opposition of powerful interests. Dr. Hill wrote me that he had despaired of getting this measure passed, but that Mr. Moser had managed to pull it through. The generalship of these two of our Single Taxers calls for the loudest acclaim from all of us, and the assurance to them that they will be supported in their next steps. The ability of these two men is additionally evidenced in their defeat of a proposed Constitutional convention, the purpose of which was—what the Oregon friends are also facing—the determination of the powerful interests to remake a Constitution that shall be valuable to them for its omission of any reference to direct legislation. Dr. Hill and Mr. Moser, learning that the Republican majority had caucused in favor of a Constitutional convention, wrote Gov. Hadley that they accepted the challenge to a test of strength with the Republican party in Missouri, and that they were not afraid of the issue. The Cincinnati Enquirer of Sunday last carried a brief mention of an interview with Governor Hadley, in which it would seem the Governor was—so to speak—ready to "eat out of the people's hands." He said that while he did not vote for the Initiative and Referendum, now that the people have adopted it he will personally see to its complete enforcement.

I feel so elated at the opportunities now presented in Missouri that I am wondering which of our States and their leaders—Oregon under U'Ren, Rhode Island under Gov. Garvin, or Missouri under Dr. Hill and Mr. Moser—will be the first to invite the attention of the world to the Single Tax in operation.

It is because of this situation, and my part in the Joseph Fels Fund effort, that I have availed myself of this opportunity to speak to you. I want to secure from all directions, for the Fels Fund Commission, the approval of the view they almost as a unit hold, that the use of the Fels Fund should be confined to such efforts as offer

some reasonable hope of practical results. The Commission believes that this fund should not be dissipated by being used to aid fantastic propaganda schemes, such as are being almost daily proposed. Indeed, it believes that it should not be largely used at any place where the movement has not gotten beyond the propaganda stage.

It believes that the Chicago Public and the Single Tax Review should receive help because the movement needs them both. But this does not mean that it would be wise to help in this way every publication, no matter how worthy, that may be advocating our principles. To try to do that would probably not leave enough for efficient work in the directions the importance of which I have tried to show you.

The Commission is finding it hard to refuse the appeals that are, as I have said, coming to it for aid from many sources. Appeals for help in local propaganda work from places where it must be many years before the situations in Oregon, Rhode Island, Missouri, and even Oklahoma can be duplicated, should certainly not come to the Fels Fund Commission.

This does not imply that either the Commission or its chairman believe that local Single Taxers in such places should relax their efforts in endeavoring to convert their neighbors, but they should not ask for the aid in doing this that properly belongs where it can bring comparatively immediate concrete results.

The Commission values every encouraging word along these lines. One received within the past few days from a New York Single Taxer (to me personally, unknown) is so forceful in its brief statement that I quote it to you. The writer says: "I hope your Commission will conclude to concentrate rather than diffuse your efforts. What is wanted is an experiment station where results can be watched. Oregon or Rhode Island carried for the cause, and showing good results, will be worth many newspapers and press bureaus." Similar expressions are coming from various sources and localities—all voiced in the simple phrases: "Don't scatter", "Direct yourselves and your resources to the real experiment stations", "We have passed the propaganda stage", etc.

While not myself willing to altogether subscribe to this last thought, I do feel that all who are desirous of exerting energy in that direction should see the wisdom of waiting until the greater opportunities are sufficiently provided for and pushed forward.

Let the Single Taxers respond to the extent of their ability to the appeals for the Fels Fund; so too, every sympathetic heart that longs for a better order of things. No subscription is too small to be welcomed by the Commission. And a "long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether", will bring the Single Tax into operation in the United States within a very few years.

OLD TOM HARDER REMARKS THAT—

A Monologue That Wanders.

For The Public.

"That big buildin' over to the west—the fine lookin' one? That's the County Infirmary. They used to call it the poorhouse; but that was some time ago when paupers was scarce an' the poorest of us had as good a chance to make a livin' as the richest. The poorhouse wasn't so high-toned as the infirmary, but it was comfortable-like for the poor fellers that couldn't make a livin' on account o' sickness an' old age an' lack o' relations to look after 'em. Them was the only kind o' paupers we had then. The kind that goes beggin' to Congress for protection an' subsidies come in later.

"Yes! It's a fact that along in them times there was so much work to be done in layin' out farms an' buildin' houses an' fences, an' so much independent prosperity stalkin' round, that most of us wouldn't stop to boss the poorhouse an' we had to send way off east for a boss. We liked to hustle round an' plant things an' see 'em grow, too well to coop ourselves up among the paupers. Most of the sick an' the feeble an' the old was taken care of by their relatives, but there were a few that didn't have any, so we put up a little buildin' on the farm an' sent 'em there to board.

"That other big buildin' over to the east is the Insane Asylum. That's the best evidence o' prosperity we've got. When we was young an' busy puttin' in the foundations o' the county, laying out roads an' makin' farms, we didn't have time to go crazy, so we had no use for asylums.

"Prosperity wasn't so big an' strenuous then an' didn't make half so much noise as it does now. The percentage o' taxes for charitable things was a good deal less strenuous too. Land was cheap, an' everybody had enough to eat an' wear an' a place to sleep. Nobody had to chase around lookin' for a chance to work. If nobody wanted to hire us, we went out an' made a livin' raisin' corn an' wheat an' hogs. When we needed help we swapped work with our neighbors. Everybody worked, an' I don't remember anybody goin' around the country tryin' to make a livin' lecturin' about elevatin' the lower classes. We didn't have any lower classes. The richest man in the county worked right beside his hired man, an' the hired man didn't look up to him an' he didn't look down on the hired man. They jest naterally moseyed along to see which of 'em could do the best job, an' the feller that beat crowed over the other one.

"We didn't lock the doors o' nights then. Everybody was so busy workin' they didn't have time to steal. Yes! It's a fact that workin' in them times was more profitable than stealin'.

"I remember the first man that found out that he could make a livin' without workin'. His