

Oregon had four full moons all the time, the value of the moonshine would appear in the speculative prices of land. For a speculator will capitalize anything, from a public road to the handiwork of the Creator.

The Portland newspaper sets forth the advantages of Oregon over Canada, and no one can deny the truth of the exhibit: "opportunity for diversity of crops," which the speculator has capitalized; "nearness to market," one of the speculator's assets; "monthly returns from dairy and poultry yard," which the Oregon speculator has capitalized—but don't forget that you can get better eggs and richer milk at a Canadian hotel or on a Canadian Pacific dining car than you can get in any hotel in Seattle, Portland or San Francisco; "winters so open that farmers don't have to be idle," and the open winters are capitalized by Oregon and Washington speculators. You won't find these advantages itemized in the price of land, but they are there.

So, while it is true, as the Portland paper says, that "when the attractions of Canada and of the Pacific northwest States are measured and weighed, there is not much doubt as to the result." No, not a bit of it. The net result is that when the farmer from the East comes to the Pacific Northwest to embrace those attractions, he has to pay cash for them; and when he has paid his cash and begins to use his labor and his land as Nature intended that they shall be used, his taxes keep rising like the tide that ruffled Mrs. Partington.

More than that, with part of his cash he has bought a system of taxation under which the speculator is encouraged, rewarded, for holding land out of use, waiting for another farmer to come and pay the speculator the increased value given to it by increasing population and industry. If the farmer puts \$2 worth of labor into and upon his land for every \$1 of value given to the land by the community, he pays \$3 in taxes for every \$1 paid by the speculator who owns adjoining land. That, so the speculator tells the farmer and the public, benefits the farmer, and any other system would ruin the farmer.

All over Washington and Oregon are booster clubs—"commercial clubs" they call themselves—painting pretty pictures for Eastern farmers to look at and take the next train for the northwest Pacific coast. And those clubs are managed by men who have a fit when anyone proposes to exempt farm buildings, fruit trees, stock and other personal property from taxation and raise all taxes by a single tax on land values. Yes, to be sure they want more settlers, because more settlers mean higher land values, higher community-made land values. But they don't want a single tax on community-made land values, for that would ruin "the farmers" in two ways: First, "it would make land so dear that no one could afford to buy it"; second, "it would make land so cheap that no one would live on it."

If those two reasons are not enough, they have others just as good. Meanwhile, the several headquarters of the "Northwest Development League" should be located at those places where the railroads cross the line from the States into Canada, for a face-to-face shove backwards may have more effect than a long-distance pull back. Anyway, we are going to try some of that single tax in Oregon—just to

see if it won't pull more settlers than the sweet booster literature of the booster clubs. Besides, it will pull a few tax burdens off the wealth producers already here.

W. G. EGGLESTON.

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A REFERENDUM NOVELTY.

Minneapolis, May 21.

We have just passed through a unique and instructive Referendum election. Minneapolis has what are known as "patrol limits"—a district in the business section of the city, in which the liquor traffic is licensed. At the time the "patrol limits" were established, eight blocks of distinctively residence territory were included by a political trick, and within those 8 blocks there have been at times as many as 15 saloons. There are ten saloons there now. Finally the President of our city council, A. W. Selover, determined to drive the saloons out. He introduced a resolution forbidding renewal of licenses for these saloons. But the council refused to pass the resolution. To relieve themselves of responsibility, however, they decided to submit the question of the removal of the saloons to the people of the affected district. Accordingly, they ordered a special election, which was held on May 16. It was without the authority or control of any election law, and many prophesied that it could not be held without disorder, while others predicted that the vote cast would not be representative. Both sets of prophets were mistaken. The election was conducted in an orderly manner, and the interest manifested was remarkable. At the last general election there had been cast about 1,900 votes in the district in question; at this election there were about 1,600; and notwithstanding that the brewers spent large sums of money and were thoroly organized, the people decided by a decisive majority that the saloons must go. As soon as the result of the election was known, the council was called in special session and promptly passed the Selover resolution unanimously.

One of the strongest forces for order was the presence of a large number of women at the polling places—a thing entirely unheard of in this city. The city attorney had decided that under the resolution, all women who registered at the last election to vote for school and library officers were entitled to vote at this election, and women very generally voted.

The election demonstrated that when voters are upon their honor they can be trusted; that good government and moral issues need the active support of women, and that the result of the election will greatly promote the cause of Direct Legislation in this State.

S. A. STOCKWELL.

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THE RECALL IN TACOMA.

Seattle, May 8, 1911.

The people of Tacoma, realizing that for years they have had little to say regarding their city government, are reaching out for control—somewhat awkwardly it is true, but nevertheless with both vigor and determination. And the lead is being taken by the newly enfranchised women voters.

Tacoma as a city is a typical western boom town,

the creation of the Northern Pacific railroad. Its site was selected by the promoters of that railroad, who tried to make it the metropolis of Puget Sound. They might have succeeded but for their effort to take in advance, in boom prices for town lots, all the benefits of future settlement. For twenty years Tacoma was a one railroad city. The railroad and town site promoters, working in common and pretending to have the best commercial interests of the city at heart, were permitted by the people to dominate the city government. They conducted it as such interests usually conduct government, farming out vice and crime privileges, and taking for themselves the larger special privileges in franchises. Other railroads were kept out of the field, and the street railway lines passed through bankruptcy and reorganization into the hands of the Stone & Webster interests, one of the tentacles of the national water power trust. Only one public utility function was reserved by the people in this general program of exploitation—that of supplying the city with electric light and power. Under this general scheme of Big Business domination and exploitation, Tacoma, machine ruled, has been a wide-open town.

A little more than a year ago the city adopted a new charter providing for a commission form of government. Since then the people have been making constant trouble for their Big Business exploiters. Unlike Seattle, however, Tacoma appears to have had no well recognized progressive political leaders with a broad understanding of fundamental principles of government; so the efforts to bring about better conditions have to some extent nullified one another. This complication has been aggravated by a parasitic press consisting of the so-called "Perkins papers," the morning Ledger and the afternoon News, owned by Mr. Samuel Perkins, which have fought the battles of the exploiters with both consistency and vigor.

The new charter provides for a government by a commission of five, one of whom bears the title of mayor; but his executive powers are not clearly defined. The Recall power is reserved to the people. No primary election is provided for, but partisan politics is excluded. In case no candidate receives a majority at the first election, a second election is provided for at which only one or the other of the two highest candidates at the first election may be voted for.

The first election under this charter occurred about a year ago, and one A. V. Fawcett was elected mayor. Politically, Fawcett is something of a reversion to an old-fashioned type. While having little sympathy for progressive ideas or policies he is still too strong a personality to act as mere messenger boy for special interests. He is a sort of an insurgent reactionary, if I can by that term make my meaning clear. That is, he is a reactionary in political opinions, but insurgent in action, formulating policies of his own and fighting for them vigorously. Known as a reactionary, and having as mayor earlier in the city's history run an "open" town, he was supported at the first commission election by both the Big Business interests and the saloon forces. With this support, together with that of many deluded citizens, he received a majority.

But Fawcett is ambitious to be Governor. So he started in as mayor to make a record hostile to the

special interests which had made his election possible. He undertook rather vigorously to enforce municipal regulations of public service corporations. He also carried in the Commission an anti-treating ordinance. By these actions he got involved in a wrangle with the "safe and sane" members of the Commission, but was not able to get the confidence of good citizens.

The general dissatisfaction culminated in the filing of a recall petition. But in the recall election the people of Tacoma encountered the one serious defect in their system. There was no provision for a primary or any other popular method of choosing opposition recall candidates. The legislature, then in session, enacted a law especially for use in Seattle where slightly different conditions existed, providing for nomination of opposition recall candidates by petition, and the Big Business interests of Tacoma and their "goo-goo" followers nominated a Mr. Seymour by petition—a typical Big Business good citizen candidate of evasive political principles. The radicals tried to offset this nomination with a third candidate, and the selection fell upon a Socialist of the name of Barth. Had the choice between Seymour and Barth been left to popular vote, Barth would probably have been nominated, and would have probably defeated Fawcett; but there was no primary election, and at the first election all three candidates were in the race. Both Fawcett and Seymour ran ahead of Barth, and this left Barth out of the race at the second election, whereupon the Socialists refrained from voting, and Seymour defeated Fawcett.

Meanwhile the war between Fawcett and other members of the commission has resulted in the filing of recall petitions against all the commissioners. One election has been held with no choice, and a second is pending.

In these elections and campaigns there has been comparatively little discussion of fundamental issues except by the supporters of Barth who, having been defeated for mayor, became a candidate for commissioner. The progressive women have taken the lead in the public quizzing of candidates, and out of this effort the voters are coming now, for the first time, to gain some comprehension of municipal problems.

JOE SMITH.

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, May 23, 1911.

Peace Plans in Mexico.

Peace terms from President Diaz which were equivalent to a complete surrender to the revolutionists, were made public by Mr. José Yves Limantour, minister of the treasury, on the 17th, as follows:

President Diaz and Vice-President Corral will resign before June 1 and a new election will be called within six months.