

to referendum the 17th. This franchise agreement was ratified by the Cleveland Railway company at its annual meeting on the 26th. At this meeting the Forest City faction elected one director—Thomas P. Schmidt—in the place of S. T. Everett, who represented the Forest City last year.

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Illinois Schools Blighted by Landlordism.

"The tenant system of farming, the buying up by wealthy men of great tracts of land and leasing them in small lots to the former owners, is raising havoc with the country schools of Illinois," was asserted by Francis G. Blair, State Superintendent of Education, at the monthly meeting of the Chicago Head Assistants on the 15th, according to the Chicago Record-Herald's report. Mr. Blair said, according to this report, he had found conditions so deplorable that after he had drafted, with much labor, a report on educational conditions in Illinois for a Boston educator he refused to send it because it would bring disgrace on the State. Mr. Blair claimed that the wealthy men evaded the payment of just taxes, and that consequently rural school districts had not enough money to hire competent teachers. He said that there were at least 500 schoolrooms in the State that might just as well be closed, on account of the incompetency of the teachers. In one case, he said, he had found a girl teaching in a country school for \$10 a month. He declared that pupils of a teacher worth no more than that could hope to receive little benefit from her instruction. Mr. Blair's statements were corroborated by Henry C. Cox, a district school superintendent of Chicago, according to the Tribune's report. "The farmers of Illinois are the slaves of the landlords," he declared. "A man who owns thousands of acres will insist on paying \$25 a month for a teacher when the better judgment of every farmer tells him no able instructor can be secured for such a pittance. The curse of the country schools is the fact that the farmers cannot be their own masters when it is a question of determining the amount of taxes to be levied. The country schools never will reach a high plane until the farmers own their farms and hire their own teachers."

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Independent Cuba.

The first year of Cuba's independence closed on the 28th (vol. xii, pp. 130, 253, 325). The only instance of armed resistance to authority was the little uprising of the rural guards in Santa Clara province last winter (vol. xii, p. 300). Congressional elections are to be held in July. In the general election conducted under the administration of Gov. Magoon (vol. xi, p. 802) the whole Congress, representing eighty-two districts, was elected, and then lots were drawn to determine which congressmen should remain in for four

years and which for the short term of two years. The places of these forty-one outgoing congressmen are to be filled in the July elections.

NEWS NOTES

—Moses Harman, editor of Lucifer and later of Eugenics, died on the 30th at Los Angeles, in his 80th year.

—Dr. William Symington Brown, an oldtime physician and single tax man, died at his home in Stoneham, Mass., on January 6.

—José Santos Zelaya, the recent President of Nicaragua, who took refuge in Mexico (vol. xii, p. 1255; vol. xiii, p. 10) in December, sails on the 4th from Vera Cruz for Belgium.

—The first hotel aviation station in the world is to be built on the top of the Blackstone hotel in Chicago, now under process of erection. The station will be called "Drome No. 1" (p. 86).

—A draft of proposed reforms in the Prussian suffrage (p. 61) has been signed by Emperor William as King of Prussia. The bill will probably soon be introduced in the Prussian Diet.

—At the regular meeting of the New York Liberal Club on the 9th, at the Club Rooms, 19 East 26th St., Lincoln Steffens will uphold the thesis: "There Is Good in Good People," after which there will be discussion.

—The new Imperial Legislative Council of India, through which the natives are to obtain a larger share in the administration of the government of India, met for the first time in Calcutta on the 25th (vol. xii, p. 1252).

—By a terrific explosion in the coal mine of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at Primero, Colo., on the 31st, somewhere from eighty to one hundred and fifty miners were killed. Most of the dead miners were Slavs and Hungarians.

—A Pan-American bank is said to be receiving the approval of the Federal State department. The money interests reported as being behind it are the banking houses of J. P. Morgan & Co., Kuhn, Loeb & Co., the First National bank and the National City bank of New York.

—The Friday evening meetings of the Chicago Single Tax Club have been shifted from the club's headquarters at 508 Schiller Bldg., to Hall 302 in the same building. Women guests are welcome. On the evening of the 4th John Weller is to speak on "Race Suicide and Economics."

—Hearing that a neighbor had built an aeroplane, a justice of the peace at Cedar Grove, N. J., a Mr. Kammelhor, has posted the following notice, according to the news dispatches: "All aviators are hereby warned not to fly their machines over this property under penalty of imprisonment."

—In analyzing the municipal waterworks system of Springfield, Ill., before the Springfield Chamber of Commerce on the 26th, Willis J. Spaulding, the superintendent of waterworks, whose efficiency in ferreting out coal graft in connection with the system has already been noted in these columns (vol. xii, p.