

the citizenship of the country as a mob, no matter what he may think. By the way, what does he think on that point? Are the voters on election day a mob in his mind, and is he only playing the game and concealing his contempt when he addresses them coaxingly?

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The California Referendums.

Not only on woman suffrage but on twenty-two other questions of Constitutional change is California to vote at the referendum election on the 10th of October. On all those questions, woman suffrage included, the Sacramento Bee advises the voting citizens of California to vote Yes. This advice is worth a volume of argument; for the Sacramento Bee is one of the few newspapers of California—of the whole Union for the matter of that—which has won and deserves public confidence. It is thoughtful, wise, disinterested, clean, courageous, and democratic. But the Bee does not avoid argument. In this matter as in all others it candidly gives its readers the reasons for its faith.

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Of the 23 proposed amendments to the California Constitution, the Bee says that they were—adopted by an honest, able legislature bent on reform, and devoted to the public welfare as distinguished from the rule of corporations, bosses, monopoly and privilege.

It adds that Governor Johnson favors all these amendments and “predicts their acceptance by the people without exception.”

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Among the amendments are many of only local interest. Some of these give the legislature power in its own discretion to regulate inspection of merchandise and weights and measures, liability of employers for injuries to workmen, tenures of office and merit rules, the placing of all public utilities under the jurisdiction of the Railroad Commission, and the establishment of petty courts; others require the legislature to take a recess of thirty days after being in session a month, give rights of eminent domain to logging railroads and place them under the jurisdiction of the Railroad Commission, take away the power of appellate courts to set aside criminal convictions on technical grounds not causing a miscarriage of justice, fix four years after adoption as the minimum period for retaining school books, increase the number of Railroad Commissioners from three to five, give free transportation to Railroad Commissioners and their employes and peace

officers, require appointment of Supreme Court clerk by the judges instead of his election, make certain judges (now exempt) subject to impeachment, exempt war soldiers and sailors from taxation on property to the amount of \$1,000, and regulate railroad rates so as to strengthen the power of the Railroad Commission. The remainder of the amendments are of universal interest. Among these is one giving local self-government to counties. Another facilitates the local making and amending of city charters, another gives cities greater control over public utilities, still another advances their power to elect local officials by majority instead of plurality vote, and one gives the recall to San Francisco as a consolidated city and county government. There is also the woman suffrage amendment, which we discussed last week; and in addition there are amendments proposing the Recall (including judges), and the Initiative and Referendum.

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Commenting upon this series of progressive amendments, of which those at least that we have distinguished as of general interest are democratic, the Sacramento Bee says:

It is the duty of voters to study the proposed changes in the Constitution on their merits. And each elector will soon receive by mail an official blanket sheet containing all the amendments in full, with arguments for and against each, thus enabling him to vote understandingly. But merely to read all this matter is no small task, and it is to be feared that only a very small proportion of the electors will even attempt it. Some of the Amendments are exceedingly long, and the arguments likewise. The Bee has given careful scrutiny and consideration to all the Amendments, and while some of them are not entirely free from objection, there is none as to which the benefits to be expected do not, in the opinion of this paper, much outweigh the possible disadvantages. Accordingly it is enabled to recommend them all for popular approval. This is said with particular relation to those Amendments whose purpose and effect do not appear on their face, and as to which voters may have neither time nor patience for proper investigation; hence are compelled to rely upon some advisory source. . . . It seems to The Bee that no mistake can be made by voting for all of the Amendments, without exception. And in view of the great importance and exceeding value to the State of many of these proposed changes in the Constitution, every progressive and public spirited voter, without regard to party, should make a point of going to the polls on October 10th and stamping on his ballot the X of his approval. The reactionaries, and the evil and corrupt elements of the State generally, will be mustered out to the polls in the effort to defeat many, if not all, of these Amendments. Let the good citizens do their duty by going to the polls early, and voting in accordance with their convictions.

How can any thoughtful citizen read that editorial advice to the people of California without realizing the vast difference for the better between the new way under Initiative and Referendum and the old way under delegated authority? Compare this campaign for Constitution-making in California with that in Ohio, if you wish to realize the difference. Progressivism may be defeated in California, but if defeated the reason will be that the people as a whole are not progressive; but it may be defeated in Ohio, no matter how progressive the people, merely because prostitutes of Privilege know how to get delegates and how to handle them when they get them, and also how to get slush funds and other help from "good people" with which to do it all.

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The Court of Public Opinion.

The noted Judge Grosscup of Chicago formally announced his intention last week to resign from the Federal bench at an early day. One of his reasons, apparently the decisive one, he expressed carefully in these words:

The world, politically, is trying to catch up with the world's radically changed economic conditions. The "formative" period is approaching. Next year's Presidential election will, I believe, be the last one on the old lines. And the settlement for the future will not come through the courts of law, but through the court of public opinion. I wish no office—expect never again to hold office—but I wish greater freedom than the Bench gives to do my part in this court of public opinion.

Judge Grosscup's career after resignation would have been as interesting to sociological observers as the peculiarities of a new star to astronomers, but he has decided now *not* to resign!

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"Good Men in Office."

The Boston Common is an excellent editorial antidote to the notion, still prevalent in the East but well out of the fight in the West, that all we need to make government good is to elect good men to office. This plan has been pretty well "tried out" in the West, and with no good results other than a sort of "whitened sepulcher" effect; and experience with it in the East, however, good it may seem there, doesn't look so good at this distance. Wherefore we say that the Boston Common is a good antidote in the East; it is *not* fooled by the plutocratic slogan of "good men in office." "Good men don't necessarily mean good measures," it warns its readers, for "many good men stand for very bad measures." So The Common advocates Direct Legislation, and that it

does it vigorously this quotation shows: "When the people can vote measures up or down on their merits it won't matter so much whether the men in the representative assemblies are good, bad or average—*there can be no betrayal of the public welfare without the people knowing it.* And they can quickly correct their own mistakes."

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Charles Battell Loomis.

This literary humorist who died at Hartford, Connecticut, on the 23d, leaves behind him more than an accumulation of books bearing his name as author. He was a humorist who, like Mark Twain, was also a philosopher and of the sincerely democratic variety. While amusing his readers he probed unobtrusively and tenderly for the democratic in their own minds and hearts.

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Land Value Taxation in Rhode Island.

In the line of the Oregon pamphlet comparing taxes under present taxation with probable taxes under land value taxation,* but concentrated on one city and greatly expanded in detail, is an Eastern pamphlet of some half a hundred pages prepared by John Z. White and published by the Rhode Island Tax Reform Association of Providence. This pamphlet classifies by name all the taxpayers of the city of Woonsocket, Rhode Island. In one class, 1,851 in number, are named those taxpayers who would save money by the land value tax; in a second class, 28, and a third, 30, are those whose taxes would be raised less than \$1 and \$2 each, respectively; and in the fourth, 23, and the fifth, 34, are those whose taxes would be raised from \$2 to \$3 and from \$3 to \$5 each, respectively. There is a list also of those, 29 in number, whose taxes would be raised from 1 per cent to 10 per cent each. The above facts are more especially interesting to the individual tax payers of Woonsocket, except as they are suggestive to the tax payers of all other Rhode Island towns and cities; but here are some percentages of general significance and interest:

Of the total taxes, vacant land bears.....	4.75%
Of the total taxes, improved land bears.....	24.22%
Of the total taxes, improvements bear.....	53.46%
Of the total taxes, personalty bears.....	17.55%

Those figures are worth thinking over by all industrious taxpayers who pay for making land speculation profitable to the non-industrious. Another valuable contribution to the statistics of land value taxation, this pamphlet shows in much greater

*See The Public, volume xiii, page 843, and current volume, page 844.