

not possible for the real friends of President Taft to think of him in this connection along the discriminating lines of the Journal of the Knights of Labor for August, which also condemns this dishonest appropriation for his junket expenses, "trifling in amount," it explains, "but abominable in principle"? The Journal says: "We respect President Taft very highly, but we despise this constant pilfering of the treasury in the interest of powerful men."

* *

The Grand Junction Charter.

An examination of the full text of the Grand Junction charter (p. 776) to be voted on at referendum on the 14th, confirms our impressions from the outline, as to the superiority of this plan of municipal government. It seems to be as far advanced in the direction of home rule and people's rule as the Constitution of Colorado permits.

+

The election clauses are especially interesting, because they put into full operation, for the first time in this country—although it is familiar to Australia (pp. 610, 678)—the preferential system of voting. Preliminary nominations are made by individual petitioners on separate sheets to the number of twenty-five, only one candidate to be named on each sheet. This secures the printing of this candidate's name on the official ballot. But it does not prevent the writing by a voter when voting, in a place provided for it on the official ballot, of any other name. In making up the official ballot, the City Clerk classifies the candidates according to the office for which they are nominated, those for Commissioner of Public Affairs being grouped together under the title of that office, those for Commissioner of Highways being similarly grouped, and so on, spaces being left for writing in one additional name in each group. Opposite the candidates' names are three columns for indicating respectively "first choice," "second choice," etc.; and the voter may make a cross in each column opposite one name for each office, thereby signifying the order of his choice of candidates for those offices respectively. Three choices being allowed, a voter for Commissioner of Public Affairs, for illustration, may vote for John Doe as his first choice, for James Foe as his second, and for Richard Roe as his third. In canvassing the votes the following instructions, in substance, are to be observed: (1) Enter on tally sheet the total number of votes cast; (2) enter on tally sheet the total of first, second and third choice

votes for each candidate, no vote for any candidate on any ballot to be counted more than once; (3) send tally sheet to City Clerk as required by law; (4) the person receiving—

more than one-half of the total number of ballots cast at such election as the first choice of the electors for any office shall be elected to that office; provided, that if no candidate shall receive such a majority of the first choice votes for such office, then and in that event, the name of the candidate printed on the ballot having the smallest number of first choice votes, and all names written on the ballot having a less number of votes than such last named candidate shall be excluded from the count, and votes for such candidate or persons so excluded shall not thereafter be counted. A canvass shall then be made of the second choice votes received by the remaining candidates for said office; said second choice votes shall then be added to the first choice votes received by each remaining candidate for such office, and the candidate receiving the largest number of said first and second choice votes, if such votes constitute a majority of all ballots cast at such election, shall be elected thereto; and provided, further, that if no such candidate shall receive such a majority after adding the first and second choice votes, then and in that event, the name of the candidate then having the smallest number of first and second choice votes shall be excluded from the count, and no votes for such candidate so excluded shall thereafter be counted. A canvass shall then be made of the third choice votes received by the remaining candidates for such office; said third choice votes shall then be added to the first and second choice votes received by each remaining candidate for such office, and such remaining candidate receiving the highest number of first, second and third choice votes shall be elected thereto. When the name of but one person remains as a candidate for any office, such person shall be elected thereto regardless of the number of votes received. A tie between two or more candidates is to be decided in favor of the one having the greatest number of first choice votes. If all are equal in that respect, then the greatest number of second choice votes determines the result. If this will not decide, then the tie shall be determined by lot, under the direction of the canvassing board. Whenever the word "majority" is used in this section, it shall mean more than one-half of the total number of ballots cast at such election.

We have no hesitation in characterizing those provisions as the best yet adopted for destroying political machines and securing a true expression of the popular purpose. Although an outgrowth of the Galveston plan, upon which the Des Moines plan was a great improvement and the Berkeley plan a greater one, the Grand Junction plan, while adopting the best in the others, is a clear improvement upon them all. It preserves the efficiency of commission government which originated in Galveston, and the popular checks

of direct legislation and recall which were added by Des Moines; and for the Berkeley plan of second elections—a clear advance upon the other two—it substitutes the better plan of preferential voting.

+

Among the public safeguards which the Grand Junction plan proposes against maladministration are the recall, the initiative, the referendum, and the following wholesome limitation upon contractual powers:

The City Council shall have no power to make any contract of any kind or nature whatsoever, or to make any lease of city property, the operation of which will extend beyond the time of the installation of the new commissioners elected at any general municipal election; nor shall it have any power to sell, abandon, grant, or otherwise dispose of any title or right of the city to any real estate, franchise, right-of-way, street, avenue, alley, or other public property, all such powers being reserved to the people, and to be exercised only by the qualified voters at a general or special municipal election.

The liquor business in all its branches and ramifications, from manufacture to giving away, is strictly forbidden. Paving contracts are not allowed. The provisions for preventing city ownership by franchise corporations are in many respects unique and altogether good, except for one blemish which could not have been avoided. We allude to the provision respecting franchise referendums which confines the voting to tax payers. By "tax payers" is meant, of course, those who pay at the tax office. But these as a rule are tax collectors rather than tax payers—tax collectors who pay over only a small part of the taxes they collect. The real tax payers of a community are not its landlords and such, but its tenants and such; yet this provision would allow all landlords to vote, and disfranchise tenants as a class. However, that blemish upon an otherwise superior municipal charter is chargeable to the Colorado constitution and not to the Grand Junction charter-makers, the objectionable clause in the charter being a literal quotation from the constitution of the State. The charter election of the 14th at Grand Junction is of far more than local interest. Should this charter be then adopted it will furnish an object lesson in the harmonization of efficient with democratic government of cities, which cannot be ignored wherever charters are made.

+ +

President Taft and Woman Suffrage.

President Taft is now reported as favoring suffrage for women, but——. His "but" is that he

doesn't think the time for it has arrived. Like the "socialists of the chair" of whom we used to hear, he believes in it but doesn't believe in putting it into practice. His "but" is one of the mental reservations Mr. Taft made a year ago, when he furnished campaign material for himself to some of the woman suffragists who were soothed with his soothing words and enthused with his candidatorial ambiguities. Mr. Taft's reasons for his "but" are characteristic of the man. Aristocrat as he is, he doesn't think the women of the factories, for instance, and the wives of the men of the factories, should be allowed to vote, so long as a few women of the drawing rooms do not desire to. "When the women of the United States are *agreed* that they want the right to vote"—these are the words in which he is reported,—"*the President hopes they will get it;*" but he finds that they are not agreed on it, and therefore he doesn't even hope. He is quoted, however, as standing for unlimited golf links without a "but."

+ +

Progressive Farmers.

At their State convention in August, the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union of America, for the State of Illinois, adopted some very sensible resolutions. Besides placing the organization upon the firm rock of "equal rights for all and special privileges for none," they declared for direct legislation, public ownership of public utilities, and local option in taxation; and back of their latter demand they indicated a keen appreciation of the vital importance of equitable taxation, which farmers heretofore have been slow even to see. "Every struggle for liberty and the advancement of the human race," one of the resolutions reads, "has had its origin in revolt against the laying of excessive and unjust tax burdens on the people;" and "nearly every form of privilege and monopoly exists by reason of the abuse of the taxing power; our whole system of taxation, State and national, is so framed as to place the burden of taxes on those least able to bear it; the rich either dodge their taxes or shift them to the shoulders of the poor through laws devised for that purpose." That this organization, at least as represented by its Illinois branch, has a broad grasp also of the labor question, appears from the concluding words of its declaration: "We advocate and defend the right of workers in every branch of industrial activity to organize for the purpose of securing increased wages and shorter hours of labor, and we favor such measures of legislation as will enable them to secure complete industrial and economic freedom."