

election of each commissioner directly to his office, advocated by the writer in a series of articles in *The News*, by the editor of the paper, and by many others. It is not certain whether these suggestions will be acted upon, but it may be safely stated that the charter adopted will be a model of charter-making.

It will do away with all elective officers, except the commissioners (5). Under the present charter all officers and officials (including the city clerk and marshal) are elected. All this will be done away with. The charter will contain the initiative, referendum and recall—these correctives of misrepresentative government.

The writer has been advocating the exemption of improvements from taxation and the insertion of an exemption clause in the proposed charter. At the instance of the president of the board, Mr. Sol. Elias, the writer recently submitted to that body a written argument in favor of this reform, dealing with evils resulting from taxing improvements and penalizing thrift and industry, and the benefits resulting from the abolition of this system of taxation, giving the recent experience of Vancouver, B. C., as related in *The Public*. The constitutionality of the exemption was also insisted upon, as some of the members doubted whether such an exemption could be legally adopted.

The discussion of this matter will come up before the board at their next meeting, and it is expected that they will give the matter due and favorable consideration. Whether it will be adopted or not, cannot be predicted at this time, but the matter having been brought to the attention of the people, they will adopt it as soon as they understand the salutary effects of the reform.

At any rate, Modesto will soon enter the group of those cities which having investigated the causes of municipal misrule, have come to the conclusion that such misrule is not due to the failure of democracy as applied to municipal government, but to the "failure to apply democratic principles to municipal government," as Mr. Deming puts it, and have set about devising charters establishing true municipal democracies.

LEON YANCKWICH.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

A NEW SPIRIT IN THE CHURCHES.

Bowman, N. D.

I was much interested in reading in a recent *Public* what Asher George Beecher would have written in his diary (p. 440) had he kept one, on Sunday, April 24th. I am one of the preachers who spoke on the subject of tuberculosis on that day and I desire to quote from my sermon on that occasion:

Now, in undertaking to stamp out this disease (tuberculosis) the Anti-Tuberculosis Association has encountered a great difficulty. It has made the discovery that one of the chief sources of this disease is economic. In other words, while this disease is not confined to any class or section of the country, yet it is mainly the poor man's disease. Where poverty is the hardest, there this disease has its greatest hold and takes its largest toll of

life. For it is among the poor of our large cities that light, air and good food are at a premium.

Thus, you see, that before this disease can be fully eradicated, poverty must be abolished.

This means that we will be compelled to think along that line, that we shall be compelled to stop and ask ourselves such questions as these:

Why are some men so overloaded with wealth that they find it hard work to devise means to give it away, while thousands of the workers can scarcely make both ends meet because of low wages and the high cost of living?

Why, in the great centers of industry, are the workers, for the most part, always poor and the idlers often rich?

Why, in a productive country, the most productive in the world, and among the most industrious people upon whom the sun shines, should there ever be any poverty at all?

Why, when the Creator made the land for all his children, and it is of necessity the source from which all men must live, why should it be subject to private ownership and monopoly?

These, I say, are some of the questions we must answer before we can solve this problem, and I welcome this agitation on the part of the Anti-Tuberculosis Association because it will help to call our attention to them.

I do not care to take up your space to quote further, but I called the attention of my audience to the fact of child labor and the employment of women in factories and pointed out how these were conducive to the spread of tuberculosis. And much more along the same line. My text on this occasion was the words of Jesus: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." I spoke to a crowded house and stirred up no hornets' nests, for my people are accustomed to hear the truth.

Is Mr. Beecher wholly fair? There are hundreds of people today who are berating the church, but who have not been inside one for years. My advice to Mr. Beecher is to go to church on another such occasion.

GEORGE A. TOTTEN.

NEWS NARRATIVE

To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives:

Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article, on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before, continue until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

Week ending Tuesday, May 31, 1910.

The Taft Railway Law.

Final disposition of the Congressional railway regulation bill (p. 465), which President Taft's administration adopted, is close at hand. Speaking to one of the proposed amendments on the 26th, Senator La Follette made an exhaustive exposure of the tendency of the bill to promote railway monopoly. The amendment he supported, proposed by Senator Cummins, required approval by the Interstate Commerce Commission of increases in rates prior to their taking effect. This amendment was defeated in the Senate on the 26th,