

such as I recently enjoyed, should be almost enough to cure the most stubborn case of impatience. For everywhere one sees the chips flying. I spoke from one to five times a day, and my mission was a success if I gave a fraction of the encouragement that I received.

My first stop was at Cumberland, Md., where Phillip Smith has been for years an effective witness to the truth which came to him one day in a snow-bound camp in California. He says he wishes everyone might be snowed in for three weeks with nothing else to read but Progress and Poverty. Cumberland, too, is the home of David J. Lewis, a man who works at the Single Tax, and who as candidate for Congress two years ago, reduced to 500 a party majority of 2,000. Lewis is in the fight again this year with good prospect of election. On the second night of my stay in Cumberland, the first primary election occurred under a new charter modeled after the Galveston plan.

At Haworth, New Jersey, Charles O'C. Hennessey was the moving spirit at a most representative assembly of citizens who were as enthusiastic as a convention of Populists.

At Newark, I discussed a model city charter, speaking under the auspices of the Newark School Board. Thomas Walker is a man who describes himself as "just a mechanic," but who always has a copy of The Public in his pocket and can make a single tax argument as well as a watch. Walker is a member of a most active and progressive Improvement Association, the president of which followed me with an earnest endorsement of the initiative and referendum, and urged that the association use its utmost influence with the charter commission which is soon to report on a new charter for Newark.

I had committed the sin of having lived forty years without going to Boston. In three or four days one can see many impressive things in Boston and Cambridge, but what impressed me most was the personality of Professor L. J. Johnson, professor of civil engineering at Harvard. I suppose he knows a lot about his subject. The Harvard stadium is one of his monuments. But I was surprised to find a Harvard professor who knew so much about economics. It was explained to me that most of the applied science men of Harvard are single taxers, but this is not true of the economists and philosophers. You see, the applied science men have to think straight. There are consequences. The bridge will fall down if their deductions are faulty.

E. T. Clark of Melrose would take first prize, were I judge, for the most successful advertiser and manager of a meeting I ever met. Clark got a Melrose councilman to take Professor Johnson and me from Boston to Melrose in his automobile, had a reception for us in the Mayor's office, had moving pictures and popular music, and a house full of people. It was a remarkable showing of what enthusiasm and industry and tact can do. The subject was the "Building of a City," and even Clark was surprised that the single tax sentiment should have won from his large audience its greatest applause.

But there were no disappointments anywhere. S.

H. Howes of Southboro told me that he believed Southboro would go for the Single Tax now if it were possible, under the Massachusetts law to make a local application of it. In the Beneficent Church in Providence, in which Senator Aldrich has a pew, I spoke to a good government club of a hundred men as intelligent and progressive and fearlessly democratic as any audience I ever faced. New Bedford gave me an audience before the Civic League of business men, whose interest in the subject of taxation opened wide the door to our message.

The house is not built. But how the chips are flying! Our ideas are no longer "queer." The world is coming our way.

HERBERT S. BIGELOW.

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CHARTER-MAKING AT MODESTO, CAL.

Modesto, Cal., May 26, 1910.

As The Public is watching and giving earnest support to the progress of municipal democracy, I believe it will interest its readers to learn what is being accomplished in small communities in the matter of charter-making and the establishment of municipal democracies, the more so as owing to the size of these communities, these accomplishments are not likely to be noticed by the Eastern and metropolitan press.

The city of Modesto is situated in the county of Stanislaus, State of California, in the great San Joaquin valley. While the town has existed for several decades, it is only recently with the introduction of irrigation that the population has reached its present number, 6,000.

The city is being administered under a legislature-made charter, which has long ago outgrown its usefulness. Hence, about a year ago an agitation commenced for the enactment of a new charter, under the provisions of the Municipal Government act, providing that cities whose population exceeds 3,500 may elect a board of 15 freeholders to draw a charter, which if adopted by the people may be submitted to the Legislature for its approval or rejection. This does not give cities complete home-rule, as it gives the Legislature the right to reject the charter adopted by the people, and it is to be hoped that the Legislature will amend the Constitution so as to do away with the necessity of legislative ratification.

In this agitation for a new charter both papers, The Morning Herald (Rep.) and The Evening News (dem. Dem.) worked hand in hand, publishing many articles written by the members of their staffs and by special contributors on the commission form of Government. The trustees ordered a special election, and 15 freeholders were elected in April, 1910, to draw a charter. Mr. E. I. Fisher of the News staff and Mr. De Yoe of the Herald staff, who had been indefatigable in the fight for a new charter, are among those elected.

Since their election the freeholders have been at work on the proposed charter. Many propositions have been advocated and proposed for adoption by this board of freeholders, among others, the preferential system of voting (Grand Junction plan), and the

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,