

that similar meetings will be inaugurated in other cities and towns.

The altered complexion of the Assembly, 51 of whose 138 members are committed by their platform to the support of local option in taxation, as well as the constitutional initiative, warrants the expectation that the former measure will receive more consideration than it did last winter. If, as appears probable at this writing, local option has been adopted in Oregon, it no longer can be objected to by Rhode Islanders on the ground that it is a "foreign innovation." Our Joint Special Committee on the Tax Laws, can't seem to get hold of anything that is going on in Western Canada, but it may be possible to draw its attention to Oregon.

The first sign of "insurgency" that appeared in Rhode Island was towards the end of the campaign, when it became evident that there was foundation for the report that Senator Aldrich had designated Henry F. Lippitt as his successor. Things do not seem to be moving so smoothly for the G. O. P. since the demise of Boss Brayton, and the outlook for the happening of something worth while is all the more hopeful. Several times in her history, Rhode Island has been the leader, or among the leaders, in movements of importance, and another of those times may be nearer than we imagine.—H. J. CHASE, Providence, R. I.

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#### FROM EX-GOVERNOR GARVIN.

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For two and a half years an agitation, much of the time active, has been going on in this State. It has been a period of seed time rather than of harvest. Indeed, I believe that in any State it is necessary to prepare the ground before one can expect, or even seriously to attempt, to reap the fruit.

We have acted upon the theory that the educational work, kept up all the time, should be directed to the principle of deriving public revenue solely from land values; but when the time comes to ask for legislation, the exact form of the law to be enacted depends upon circumstances, upon the conditions existing at the time.

For that reason, the bill presented each year in the legislature has not been a general Act exempting from taxation personal estate and improvements, but a local option measure granting, to any municipality so desiring the power to concentrate taxation upon land values.

At the recent election, as I wrote to the last issue of the *SINGLE TAX REVIEW*, it was hoped that the question of home rule in taxation might be made a leading issue in voting for members of the legislature. In order to render the pledging of candidates to that policy effective, it was necessary to have the active support of organized labor. The design was to put two questions to candidates, namely, the initiative and referendum for constitutional amendments, and local option in taxation. The labor members of the campaign committee said they would support the first one alone, or both, provided a third question were added pledging to a minimum wage of two dollars for city laborers.

The Tax Reformers decided that the first question alone was preferable to the three, for the reasons that the three would invite partial answers from candidates and that legislators pledged to direct legislation would be liberal representatives of public sentiment in other respects.

The Democratic platform included both of our planks. Of the 138 members of the legislature 51 are Democrats, some of them men of much ability.

In my last letter to the *REVIEW*, I said that we were expecting Mr. John Z. White. It was thought best, however, that he should go to Colorado to work for the Direct Legislation amendment to the State Constitution. It is evident that his efforts there were not lost, since the amendment was carried by a good majority.

It had been our expectation that Mr. White would come to Rhode Island on the first of last July and remain for a year. Now it is anxiously desired here that he should enter upon his work in this State at once and continue it until after the next election. A year's work beginning now, will be worth much more than a year beginning and ending in midsummer. During that period the planting which has

been going on here steadily for nearly two years, should show a return in the form of effective legislation, and it may be in actual experimentation. As I have before said, with two-fifths of our State tax assessed upon the towns and cities and included in their local budgets, a municipal application of the Single Tax in Rhode Island would be the best as yet in operation. It would be superior to that of Vancouver, where there is a considerable tax upon the floor space of both mercantile and manufacturing establishments.

Our Sunday evening People's Forum, held in Tax Reform Hall, has continued to be very successful. On November 13th, Mr. John Z. White was one of the speakers, and on November 20th, Mr. Frank Stephens occupied the time for half an hour. The latter gentleman had already spoken twice before coming to the Forum, one of his addresses being at the evening service of the Beneficent Congregational Church, a leading Religious Society of Providence.

The State Tax Commission appointed nearly two years ago, has again been charged with making a report to the legislature at the coming January session. The Rhode Island Tax Reform Association has asked for a public hearing before the Report is drawn up.—LUCIUS F. C. GARVIN, Lonsdale, R. I.

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#### MISSOURI.

Election is over and Missouri remains wet, thanks to the initiative and referendum vote which had its first genuine try-out since its adoption last year. It has been such an educational and object lesson that the people will never surrender it. It is here to stay and will finally bring about true democratic ideals, and with the recall the people will see the machines scattered into so many scrap heaps and the power in their own hands.

One thing remains for us to secure in the working out of direct legislation, and that is the separation of elections from the vote on the referendum measures. This means the clearer understanding and consideration of these measures. In this election many of the amendments, and some of them good ones, were defeated. The

conflicting claims of rival candidates and warring political factions shut off the debate on the amendments, and thus they suffered. We are now making efforts to have the state legislature separate these amendments from the official elections.

The League meets regularly every two weeks, and there will be some interesting programmes during the coming winter. Our City Charter is being revised, and according to reports some lively times are expected when it is submitted, for we fear that they are not ready to give us what we want.

The great American Federation of Labor meets here, as you are probably aware, from the 14th of November to the 28th, and I do not think we can expect much in the way of pure economic reforms. They will probably continue to fight windmills with wooden lances and hobby horses, and methods of raising wages which cost about two dollars for every dollar increase in the rewards of labor, if it is figured out correctly. The Federation is scarcely likely to advocate any genuine economic remedy for the ills of the working masses.

Our last league meeting was very interesting, and we hope for many important developments during the coming winter.—H. SYCAMORE, St. Louis, Mo.

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#### IN KANSAS CITY, MO.

The New Era Club has been formed in Kansas City, Mo., and though not a Single Tax organization, has adopted a forward programme as is indicated by the following declaration:

We hold that undeserved poverty, crime, enforced idleness and our various social evils are unnatural and are the results of man's injustice and not God's will, consequently they can be cured by an intelligent application of the simple principles of justice.

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#### IN EVERETT, WASH.

A club of twenty-two men and women have organized a Single Tax Club in Everett, Wash., and a state league is soon to be formed. Walter M. Thornton is the active propagandist in that city.