LETTERS TO OREGONIAN SCAN ISSUES BEFORE PEOPLE

Variety of Subjects Are Taken Up and Treated Interestingly—Single Tax Generally Condemned by Taxpayers Who See Deception and Danger in Move.

CONFISCATION IN SINGLE TAX

Innovation Held to Be Dangerous and Unjust.

PORTLAND, Or., Nov. 1.—(To the Editor.)—Much has been written and said during the last three months regarding the so-called "single tax" question, but a great deal more has been left unsaid for selfish reasons by the supporters of the measures and by carelessness on the part of those opposed to the same. All that has been said both pro and con has not settled anything. It has only put the voters to thinking for themselves and the result will be all right and good beyond all doubt, for the electorate of Oregon is competent to properly decide the question to the best interest of the state and perfectly fair and just to all. Oregon juries do not railroad innocent people to prison or death, neither will Oregon voters favor confiscating the property of one class of people in the interest of another class who are already more prosperous than the class singled out to be victimized. If the people who are engaged in business and those successfully retired from business, such as bankers, merchants, manufacturers, street improvement contractors, capitalists, etc., cannot afford to pay their just share of the taxes, then why should the farmer, lot-owner, home-owner or land-owner be expected to pay all of the taxes, when we all well know that they handle but very little ready money as a class? I know all of the fine-spun logic and sophistry that has been handed out so far in explanation by those selfishly interested in the support of the measure, which would make them and their backers a real privileged class and tax dodgers of the 33d degree. So do the voters know and they are completely tired of it and are not asking for any additional installment of the same line of unsound reasoning.

The trouble with the country now is that there are already too mony privileged classes, so why should the voters of Oregon go to the trouble to create a lot more, such as department stores and other merchants, capitalists and trusts of all kinds? Broad tax exemptions such as proposed would be a fine thing for them probably, but is there any good practical reason for making them immune from taxation and at the same time allowing them full power the same as an actual taxpayer, in deciding how the tax money shall be expended? The taxpayers would be in a hopeless and helpless minority, while the tax spenders or rather "squanderers" would be in a dangerous majority in all communities. It is perfectly right and proper that the poor be entitled to their full representation, regardless of whether they are taxpayers or not, as that is a condition that cannot be avoided, but not so as to any other class, no difference how much the matter is urged.

The classes that are asking to be exempted from taxation ought to be ashamed of themselves on the face of the proposition. They think to lay low and keep quiet in this campaign and have the matter slip through on prejudice and sensational appeals to the thoughtless voter, but let me inform those misguided merchants, etc., that the thoughtless voter is going to be a scarce article on November 5 and their selfish hopes will be dashed to pieces quickly, as the poor man does not have to vote for single tax in any of its corrupt forms to get a great deal of the relief that he needs and wants, because he can vote for the exemption law, No. 352 on the ballot, and also vote against both of the two undesirable single tax bills, numbered respectively 365 no and 379 no, which two amendments would unnecessarily release millions of dollars of wealth from taxation, without the least good reason for doing so. Election did not come soon enough and single tax is already beaten and its supporters know it, but will not admit it.

WILLIAM A. LEONARD.

FARMER FEARS THE SINGLE TAX

Belief Advanced That Adoption Would End Prosperity.

EUGENE, Or., Oct. 31.—(To the Editor.)—Most farmers resent statements recently received by mail saying single tax would benefit farmers. Such arguments are very misleading. There is a suspicion that these statements originate with very rich men, who wish to escape taxation on untold millions. Skyscrapers, breweries, great stocks of merchandise, all manufactories and many other forms of wealth would go free, while the farmers' burdens would be increased. Common sense shows us, without any juggled figures, that the amount of money to be raised will be the same. If we release large investments in certain lines the remaining capital must pay higher taxes. The land is all the capital that remains. If single-taxers expects help from increased taxation in certain lines and from franchises, why do they not work for those things to help the common people instead of first inserting a joker to benefit millionaires?

Vast numbers of farmers have a hard time as it is. They are already discriminated against. Who ever heard of farmers who could work on the eight-hour day plan? Their land would soon go for taxes and single tax will hasten the day when vast numbers of farms will be sold for taxes, as nobody will want land and the rate of taxation will go higher and higher. All self-respecting farmers who can do so will quit the business when the time comes that they are required to pay in taxes anywhere near the rental value of their land. Single tax will prove to be the heaviest blow ever struck at the prosperity of farmers in Oregon. Farmers go to Canada because they can get homesteads, cheap land, not on account of single tax, which is already creating intense dissatisfaction and is depressing values. It is most unjust class legislation.

JONATHAN JOHNSON.

FOR A LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Creation of New Post Urged as Having Many Advantages.

PORTLAND, Or., Oct. 31.—(To the Editor.)—One of the pending referendum measures that deserves the support of every voter who is interested in improving the character of our state government, is the proposed amendment to section 8 of article V, of the constitution of Oregon, creating the office of Lieutenant-Governor. Under the present arrangement, the Secretary of State becomes Governor whenever a vacancy occurs or the chief executive is unable to perform his duties, and at the same time continues to act as Secretary of State, thereby filling two important offices simultaneously, drawing two large salaries and having two votes upon all state boards and commissions. This arrangement places too great a burden upon one man and also clothes him with too much authority, however capable or trustworthy he may be. Besides this, the plan whereby one man may draw two large salaries is altogether unbusinesslike and not in keeping with the spirit of American government.

The proposed amendment provides a plain and businesslike method of succession to the Governorship by creating the office of Lieutenant-Governor, who is also to be presiding officer of the State Senate and whose compensation is to be $5 a day when the Legislature is actually in session; no other fees or emoluments are provided, so the creation of the office will impose no burden upon the taxpayers. The Lieutenant-Governor is to be elected by the people and is to fill the office of Governor and draw the salary thereto attached whenever a vacancy exists or the Governor is unable to discharge the duties of his office. The line of succession then passes to the president pro tem of the Senate and then to the speaker of the House. In no event does the Secretary of State become Governor or have any greater power than he ordinarily enjoys. One of the most powerful arguments in favor of the proposed amendment is the provision that the Lieutenant-Governor shall be presiding officer of the State Senate, thus eliminating the biennial struggle for the Senate organization.

The proposed amendment was carefully framed by the last Legislature and passed that body by an unanimous vote of both houses. The public good demands its adoption by the people.

C. N. M'ARTHUR.

REGULATION OF UNION PICKETS

Plea Is Made That Intimidation of Workmen Should End.

PORTLAND, Oct. 31.—(To the Editor.)—In reference to Initiative Bill 368-369: This is a measure aimed at the pernicious practice of some organizations of intimidating workmen who work for whom they please and under conditions which suit them. Threats against life and limb are often connected with "peaceful picketing," and even property is not safe from destruction at the hands of pickets. Hence it seems that it is about time some measure of protection be accorded those who pay their portion of the taxes of the community, and also those who wish to make an honest living for themselves and family.

I ask the workingman, is it fair for any organization to say "You cannot work here unless you pay us tribute"; and again, is it fair that you should be hounded even when working where the employer does not permit them to exact this tribute?

I ask the employer, is it fair that your employes be followed, slandered, abused or pay tribute?

At the present time women and girls who are working to earn their living honestly, are being followed on the streets of this city and to their homes, and accosted in a foul manner, and threatened with violence by "peaceful pickets," who severed their connections with their employers several weeks ago, and who now, like the dog in the manger, seek to prevent others the fruits of the position which they left and gave notice they did not want.

Men, what do you think of such verbal and physical assaults on our women?

If you have a right to demand protection, vote 368 Yes.

If you think that the above-mentioned is fair as one man to another, then vote 369 No. Yours very truly,

PAUL H. KOEHLER.

NEED OF HOTEL REGULATION

Bill Providing Inspection Is Defended by Traveling Man.

PORTLAND, Nov. 1.—(To the Editor.)—In The Oregonian's list of recommendations as to measures to be voted on at the coming election Tuesday, November 5, you advise voting "No" on "creating office of Hotel Inspector," giving as your reason misuse of the initiative. This measure without any doubt could be taken care of by the Legislature, but owing to the "Oregon system" is allowed through a requisite number of petitioners to be voted on by the people at large.

Should this be sufficient reason that the voter should vote no?

This is a worthy measure and all means possible should be taken to protect the traveling public from fire danger or ills resulting from uncleanliness, etc.

The writer is a traveling salesman and finds it impossible to stop every day in a brick structure where there is some chance of a person getting out in case of fire. In the smaller towns no night clerk is employed, no fire escapes, ropes, gong or a sign which would direct a guest to safety. Each guest is left to his own salvation. It is a common occurence to pick up The Oregonian and read of someone burning up in a hotel or rooming-house fire.

The State of Washington has a hotel inspection law and an inspector and which has done admirably good work. Why not Oregon? Let us get on the band wagon and vote for a measure which will protect lives and forget the misuse of the initiative.

C. I. SERSANOUS.

TEST OF THE OREGON SYSTEM

Vote on Majority Amendment Regarded as Significant.

PORTLAND, Oct. 30.—(To the Editor.)—I am delighted at a chance to set forth my views in The Oregonian regarding the majority amendment. All friends of the Oregon system who understand it will emphatically oppose this bill, yet I am very glad it is on the ballot. If it carries, most all the objections offered against the initiative and referendum—chiefly that the people are not capable of governing—become an established fact. In other words, if the bill passes, the system will be dead, having died by its own hand and by the law of "the survival of the fittest," and if the bill passes not, the system has stood the test.

If the people can't see that under such law no bill, good or bad, would have any chance to pass; if they conclude that all that can't reason out the merits and demerits of a bill and come to a conclusion should be thrown against such bill; if they can't see that the number that are induced to vote against or for a bill when they are in doubt, now effects an injustice to the extent of the number of such idiotic votes, then the quicker our system poisons itself to death the better it will be for Oregon.

A vote that is not cast can't justly count either way, and any one that votes either way when they have no choice can't reason straight. How do they know they are not voting against their own interest?

C. A. REICHAN.

PUBLIC CONTROL OF HIGHWAYS.

Advice on County Road Bill Offered by Mr. Colvig.

ALBANY, Or., Oct. 31.—(To the Editor.)—Constitutional amendment No. 360 Yes, is the only measure now pending that can be safely acted upon without delay. It does not require any interpretation of the courts. It is plain home rule. It gives the people of the counties absolute control over the building of their public highways. If it is adopted it will bring millions of money to be expended in permanent roads. This money will employ all men and teams who need work. It will draw money from the East on the sale of the bonds, and the good roads resulting will bring people here to locate, and in the years to come to help us pay the bonds.

Mr. Sam Hill, the leading good road builder of America, approves this measure, and says of it over his own signature:

"I have made a careful examination of the proposed bills . . . and I believe that No. 360 is entitled to the support of the people, and they will not make any mistake in adopting it."

Should the people intrust themselves with the control of their own road building? If you think so vote "360 Yes."

WM. M. COLVIG.

BLUE SKY LAW IS CONDEMNED

Belief Put Forward That Measure Is Unwieldy and Expensive.

GRANTS PASS, Or., Nov. 1.—(To the Editor.)—The proposed bill on the official ballot designated "the blue sky law," and to be voted on at the state election next Tuesday, should be defeated by a big majority vote. It is a misnomer of vicious intent. It is an absolute fraud, and should be branded as such by every lover of justice and fair play. It imposes most serious burdens on the very men who are trying, by the expenditure of brains and bullion, to build up and put into practical use the latent and most wonderful resources of the great state of Oregon. The taxes and expenses that will be necessary to carry on the work of the corporation commission that this bill will install will fall very heavily on men of enterprise, while at the same time the bill will furnish fat jobs to drones and "hangers on" at Salem. It will create graft and not curb it. I venture the opinion that fully 90 per cent of the people of this state are in favor of a legitimate and stringent law that would protect innocent purchasers of securities of incorporated companies, but the proposed bill is top heavy, expensive and invalid. It will not only deter new capital from coming to Oregon, but it will cause much that is already invested here to be withdrawn.

This is no theory, it's an absolute fact. The proposed bill contains nearly 5000 words, while the "blue sky" law of the great state of California contains only 206 words. The proposed Oregon law will require $25,000 per year to carry it into effect, while the California law will require not one-tenth of this sum to put it into force. The state of California has 70,000 incorporations, while Oregon has only about 11,000. The proposed bill creates the office of "Corporation Commissioner," to be filled, not by the vote of the people of the state, but by the appointment of the Governor. This Corporation Commissioner may appoint one or 100 assistants and deputies if he chooses to do so. The deputies are to receive $15 per day and all expenses when making examinations of corporations; there is absolutely no limit as to how many examinations may be made in any given time. One or 100 different examinations may be made of one single corporation in any one year; indeed, section 11 gives the Corporation Commissioner "general supervision and control" of every incorporated company in this state, so that if he deemed it advisable he could keep one or even more of his deputies in the office of every incorporated company in this state every day in the year. Notice the word "control." If I understand the English language, this gives him the power to direct the affairs of every incorporated company in this state, though he may not own a single dollar's worth of stock of incorporation.

The proposed bill prohibits any incorporation in this state from selling any of its stock for less than its face or par value. This provision, of course, precludes the possibility of marketing stock of any kind that has not reached the dividend-paying stage. Many great enterprises in their earliest history had to sell their shares away below par, and which in after years paid many millions in dividends. Every publishing, railroad, telegraph, telephone, mining, navigation, irrigation, merchandising, saw and flour milling, brokerage and building company, and indeed every incorporated company except banking concerns, is to be under the "supervision and control" of the proposed "Corporation Commissioner," who is allowed to expend $25,000 the first and $20,000 for each and every subsequent year for carrying out the provisions of this vicious measure. The official cognomen is "Blue Sky," but it's common name is "Graft." Its number on the ballot is 334 yes and 335 no. Let every voter who has the best interest of the state of Oregon vote against this bill.

C. L. MANGUM.

WHY WOMEN SHOULD HAVE VOTE

Salem Voter Gives Reasons for Supporting Equal Suffrage.

SALEM, Or., Oct. 31.—(To the Editor.)—I shall support the suffrage amendment because it is just, because the intelligent women want it, because all women need it, because it would make the women more intelligent, better companions for intelligent men, better citizens, better wives, better mothers, better sisters, better sweethearts, better teachers and better and safer companions for the children and the youth of the state. I shall vote to give women the ballot, because they have political opinions and have the same inherent right as the men to express them, and make them effective. The ballot is the American instrument for giving political opinions effective expression. Were there but a hundred women in the state who wished the ballot, I would vote to let them have it, for the time will come when those who least appreciate the suffrage now will be as anxious as any to exercise it, and will thank the voters who gave them the privilege.

I once had a calf that was kept in a four-square rail pen until it grew large enough to have the run of the pasture. When I laid down one corner of the pen, it refused to come out. Then I removed the pen entirely, but still the frightened little creature would not budge, and it took all my strength to remove it from its old environment. After it got used to its new quarters, it gamboled and frolicked and enjoyed itself like any normal calf. This experience will, no doubt, be paralleled by the women who now oppose the suffrage. I shall vote for equal suffrage because all of the states surrounding us have it, and our women are just as intelligent, just as good and just as handsome as any of them.

JOHN W. JORY.

FLAT SALARY SYSTEM IS URGED.

Suggested Change Discussed By State Printing Expert.

SALEM, Oct. 30.—(To the Editor.)—The state printing problem, now before the voters, is summed up as follows:

Unspeakable abuse in state printing recognized for 10 years with attempts in every Legislature during that time to correct it.

Every attempt to date defeated by the beneficiaries of the abuse.

Flat salary law enacted by Legislature of 1911 after bitter struggle to defeat it led by business associate of State Printer. Exponents of measure desired enforcement at once, but were compelled to submit to amendment delaying operation until January 1, 1915, whereupon they volunteered assistance to put it into operation as soon as possible by the initiative.

Initiative to put legislative act into effect December 1, 1912, placed on ballot.

Vigorous fight begun against both initiative bill and legislative act by State Printer involving expenditure of thousands of dollars. Law branded by him as a scheme of union printers to gain control of state printing.

Initiative indorsed by State Grange in annual convention at Roseburg. Subsequently investigated at request of State Printing expert by local Salem Grange with result that local Grange withdrew indorsement. Action of Salem Grange followed by Marion and Linn County Pomona Granges and a meeting of masters of local Granges of Multnomah County. There are some 150 local Granges and some 14 Pomona Granges in the state, only three or four of which have taken action against the measure.

Public statement to voters by Governor West, four Senators and five Representatives of the Legislature that passed the law urging support of the initiative act. (No. 328).

Act gives State Printer $4000 a year. He can make $8000 to $10,000 a year under present law over and above all wear and tear, interest, risk and expense whatsoever, and himself never darken the door of the state printing department.

The undersigned was appointed to the position of expert without solicitation and especially charged by the Governor to expose this abuse and work for its elimination. He has discharged his duty as he saw it for which he is maligned by the State Printer as everything vile and despicable.

The numbers of this measure on the ballot are 328 Yes, 329 No. Voters are urged to reflect thoughtfully and vote their convictions.

R. A. HARRIS,
State Printing Expert.

DO NOT PUT AWAY THE NOOSE

Capital Punishment Necessary to Protection of Society.

DALLAS, Or., Oct. 30.—(To the Editor.)—The initiative measure to abolish capital punishment which is to be voted upon next Tuesday, is of paramount importance to the people of this commonwealth. It involves the safeguarding of the citadel of public morals, the protection of the lives of innocent and helpless human beings. Its consideration ought not to be a question of sentiment, the emotions should not be permitted to bias judgment; the whole question should be viewed strictly from the practical standpoint of efficient government—the greatest good to the greatest number.

The life of the homicide is not forfeited to the law out of a spirit of revenge, but for protection to the lives of other people. Such a law is a deterrent to the morbid-minded criminal; it often prevents the murderous spark from bursting into flame, and holds in check the hand that would slay.

The homicide is a greater scourge to society than a deadly epidemic. Penitentiary walls may kennel him for a time, but the menace of his desperate and murderous outbreak is always imminent. With his life protected by a mistaken sentimentalism the lives of others become endangered a hundred fold; he rages "red in tooth and claw" while his helpless, hapless victims perish by the score. The person who feloniously takes the life of another forfeits all just claims to protection by society. By what token should society throw its protecting mantle around him? I anticipate the answer; but we are confronted by a condition—not a theory.

Society stands upon human foundations and is governed by human standards of right and wrong, its great schoolmaster is experience; its education is coextensive with man's progress throughout the ages, and a knowledge of the law of nature that the unfit must perish. The law, as it is, gives the homicide every legal protection consistent with the safety and well-being of the social organism. To safeguard the life of a person is right, but to put a premium on murder is monstrous.

J. T. FORD.

A HARDSHIP ON LAND OWNERS.

Such Is the Effect of Single Tax, Says Investigator.

PORTLAND, Nov. 1.—(To the Editor.)—The measure of graduated single tax to be voted on is obviously unjust, because the burden of taxation is to be borne mainly by a certain class, namely land owners. It is true that improvements on land are exempted, but how many will care to make improvements on land that is losing its value to a great extent in consequence of such tax? If one does make improvements the money required has to come in a great measure, from some other source than the land, because the increased tax on the land, which will inevitably follow as a consequence of the exemption of improvements thereon, will greatly reduce the profit from the land. If one is without means to make much improvements on the land, he will still have to pay as much tax as the rich man having land of the same value.

Aside from these considerations, the measure is also unjust, because it gives to those having other kinds of property equal protection and the franchise, without an equal burden in the support of the government. It cannot be said to be even expedient. Is it expedient to discourage the cultivator of the soil by taking away so much of his profit? Is it expedient to discourage the capitalist from engaging in the lumbering business by depriving him of the control of a sufficient supply of timber to justify him to invest his capital in that business? Is it expedient to discourage the capitalist from engaging in mining by an unreasonable tax on his mine? Does the laboring man reap any benefit from a law that discourages the use of capital for developing the natural resources? The answers are obvious enough and against the measure, even to be tried as an experiment. No one will maintain that our present tax law is perfect, but improvement can be attained only on the rational and just principle of equal tax.

P. HJELSENG.

FARMER OPPOSES SINGLE TAX

Strong Reasons Given for Voting Against Plan.

HILLSBORO, Or., Oct. 28.—(To the Editor.)—As a farmer and landowner whose holdings are practically all in a high state of cultivation and with good improvements, I shall vote against single tax for the following reasons:

It is a communistic scheme with the ultimate aim of state confiscation of all property, and I have no desire to have my property confiscated.

Say what you will about the high price of products, the farmer is receiving only about one-half what the consumer pays, and after his bills are paid at the end of the season he seldom has anything left above fair wages for his time.

A Greater Oregon cannot be built up by forcing land into cultivation upon which men cannot make a decent living. Much land now in cultivation is but poorly tilled because our markets are inadequate to take care of the possible output. Consumers wishing to buy cheaper should devise and put in practice better methods of getting closer to producers rather than attempt to force production up to a point where the farmer would be a mere man with a hoe.

If cities and towns shall vote single tax it will be construed by the farmers everywhere as attempting to evade their just share of taxation, and good will now existing will be strained.

Any farmer would prefer to bear a reasonable share of taxation in preference to producing crops which he cannot dispose of.

Nor can law tinkerers inspire confidence in manufacturing enterprises through offers of exemption from taxation. This little "protective tariff" is intended to look dazzling now but enterprise looking for a legitimate profit knows well that these communists would turn and rend it as soon as its business was well established.

R. E. HARBISON.

WOMAN'S VOTE AGENT OF GOOD

She Will Prove a Power Against Corruption, Says Suffragist.

MEDFORD, Or., Nov. 2.—(To the Editor.)—Will you permit me to call your readers' attention to a point which I have not seen mentioned in the many letters from the people on the question of women's suffrage?

My reference is to the mental cause that leads most of the opponents of women's suffrage to sincerely believe they have good fundamental reasons for their opposition. I mean by "most" of the opponents those who have come out in the press, as I do not believe all of them have selfish interests which they fear suffrage to women would jeopardize.

I think the term "false modesty" would better express my thought as to the character of the mental cause. False modesty is a weakness generally thought of as peculiar to women, but is not the sterner sex also often its victim? I do not doubt the sincerity or good motives of many opponents to enfranchising our better halves, mothers and sisters, but do think that most of these particular opponents are laboring under unwarranted apprehensions that the enfranchisement will have a tendency to de-feminize or cause our women to become too masculine.

There is possibly another class of opponents well within the fold of "good intentions" but their weakness is short-sightedness. I refer to the husbands and fathers who repeat "woman's work is in the home." It is true it begins there but that is not the limit of her field. The good work of the women of the households of many of these men is neutralized by the thoughtlessness and short-sightedness in the latter's voting.

Again, many of these opponents are careful about their voting but forget that perhaps his neighbor is supporting corruption and vice and that without his wife's right to vote his own vote is tied or neutralized by that of the corrupt neighbor. Is it not better, especially if there are children in the home, to have his vote reinforced by that of his wife and also of the children, aunts and grandmothers, that those children's public environments might be better provided for and the corruptionists relegated to their proper place?

C. A. M'LEMORE.

SINGLE TAX WILL NIP FARMERS.

Arguments Submitted to Show Effect on Cost of Living.

PORTLAND, Oct. 31.—(To the Editor.)—The absurdity of the arguments of the Single Taxers is also shown by their statements that their scheme will induce the landless to leave the cities and go "back to the country." When they attempt to exempt all personal property and pile all taxes on land and thus reduce the price, the land buyer will have to accept the burden of these taxes. But they also contend that the exemption of personal property will bring in more factories and other industries to enjoy this exemption, thus increasing the tide to the city of young men discouraged by the greatly increased taxes, and encouraged by the higher wages in the city.

The single taxers insist that the high cost of living will be reduced by high taxes on land. Everyone knows that much the greater part of this high cost is caused by the coming to the city of an increasing number of young men from the country and by their numbers increasing the demand for and the price of rents and the demand for food, clothing, etc., and thus keeping prices high. The driving of young beginners to the towns by excessive taxes on unimproved lands and the attracting them there by exempting personal property from all taxes cannot fail to result in still higher and higher cost of living.

It is very dangerous to adopt a complete revolution in a most important function of the Government. Many men to whom the scheme looks plausible will, if the same is not turned down, find himself in desperate circumstances and not one of the advocates will be able or willing to comfort him.

E. F. RILEY.

LIGHT SOUGHT ON SINGLE TAX.

Voter, While Somewhat in Dark, Says He Will Play Safe.

CORVALLIS, Or., Oct. 31.—(To the Editor.) — Overshadowing all other questions in this election in Oregon is the question of the single tax on land. How to vote on that question I do not know. Early in the season I wrote a few letters asking for information, but although I received many letters and a number of books and pamphlets, and men even came from a distance to interview me and instruct me, still I did not receive any light. I am in the dark now. There has been nothing publicly advanced in this campaign but what I had considered and a good deal more that has not been advanced. But as yet I do not know how to vote on the question.

There are those who point to British Columbia. A man told me yesterday that Vancouver, for instance, has now 240,000 people, this large influx of population attributed to the beneficent influences of the single tax in that city. This is indeed instructive, but frankly I don't believe it. Therefore, not having received any light on this question I am going to apply a rule I invariably follow. When I don't know what to do, don't do anything. If I vote for the single tax I am certainly doing something. If I don't vote at all I cease to be entitled to the franchise. Therefore, I shall vote against the single tax.

J. H. WILSON.

FOR SINGLE BOARD OF REGENTS.

Co-ordinate Activities of Two Schools, Says F. G. Young.

EUGENE, Or., Oct. 30.—(To the Editor.)—An automatic adjustment of the support of the University and the Agricultural College is most desirable. It removes from politics and makes possible systematic planning of the activities and development of the two institutions.

But even more important than the millage-tax feature is the provision for a single board of regents. The solid basis of reason for one board for the two institutions inheres in the fact that the University and the Agricultural College are but instrumentalities of the people for doing the work of higher education needed by them. The activities of the institutions should thus be co-ordinated. The work of administering these agencies as co-ordinated parts of the system of higher education for the people of Oregon can be rightly assigned only when entrusted to a single board representing the people.

F. G. YOUNG.

REALTY OWNERS AND SINGLE TAX

Scheme Would Throw Heavy Burden on Investors in Lots.

PORTLAND, Oct. 29—(To the Editor.)—There is probably no city in America today where the people are so heavily obligated for real estate as in Portland. These people earned their money to invest in this real estate just as honestly as anyone could. They bought it under our present system of taxation and it seems to me that it is up to the honorable citizens of Portland to keep good faith with them just as much as if they had invested their money in a mortgage, stock of merchandise, manufacturing plant or in fact any other class of personal property or business. If the single taxers want to be fair, explain how the poor man or woman will be affected who is putting in $5, $10 or $50 each month for the purchase of a lot for an investment, and make it clear to him or her why it is highly moral to adopt a tax plan that will wipe out his or her equity for the benefit of the man who invests in personal property.

Lincoln issued a proclamation to pay the Southerners for their slaves. That was an honorable thing to do, but can you imagine a more dishonorable act than to take away from our small investors all they have by the scheme of single tax?

Most every man and woman in Portland owns an equity in a lot somewhere which they are purchasing purely for an investment. Please allow the single taxer to explain how these people will be affected, and do not waste any time on the capitalists and large land owners, and single tax will be easily defeated three to one. If all the small investors must lose all they have in order that the large investor may lose, I think it is high time that our schools take up the teaching of morality so the coming generation will have some idea of the right to live on this earth with others.

JOHN C. ELDRIDGE.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT SUPPORTED.

Charge Made That Leniency Does Not Advance Reform.

CORVALLIS, Or., Oct. 31.—(To the Editor.)—The bill to abolish capital punishment in Oregon ought not to carry for the following reasons: The wife murderer, the disappointed lover, the raper of little girls and of aged women and their murderers will all go practically free in Oregon if this bill carries. The Governor's policy toward felons, treating them as men in whom remains some manliness, would make it easy for even the most desperate criminal to shortly regain his freedom, in an honor camp. If not in an honor camp, their treatment in the penitentiary would be tender, probably better treatment than the world afforded.

The vital question is whether this sort of "punishment" will work reform. If it would, no one would complain. But it does not. Statistics show that but a small percentage of desperate criminals ever reform. That being true, why allow them to retain their miserable lives, why make the already overburdened taxpayers maintain them until they die? The percentage of life criminals who escape is large. Take the country over, get down to statistics again, and this will be found true. Then this wild man again preys upon society. Who is safe when he is at large?

Our present system affords him every opportunity to keep out of prison. Even when taken red-handed he has the right to interpose insanity as a defense, but the moment a jury convicts your criminal then is the time for society to attend its own business and allow the officers of the law to handle the criminal.

When the criminal succeeds in committing the capital crime, that moment he has earned death. Establish the fact and let the law take its course. This is not legal murder, as many have it. A legal murder is where the wrong man is hanged. There is quite a difference between hanging the wrong man and hanging the murderer of whose guilt there can be no question. By all means vote to retain capital punishment.

G. R. FARRA, M. D.

OREGON SYSTEM IS DEFECTIVE.

Changes Might Well Be Made, Says A. S. Hammond.

COQUILLE, Or., Oct. 30.—(To the Editor.)—The "Oregon system" in its present form is not only impracticable—it is impossible. To begin with, it must be remembered that "the people" includes all the fools as well as all the wise, but if there were only the wise to consider, there is no set or combination of men wise enough to make wise laws in this fashion and I will point out a few of the reasons.

Under the present initiative plan the laws are framed by one man, or one small set of men, working in secret. The people do not have an opportunity to take part in this at all. When a proposed law has been all prepared the people are allowed to say whether they think it good or bad, but they cannot change it or adopt what is good and reject what is bad. They must swallow all of a proposed law or reject all. So, no matter how wise they may be, they have no opportunity to use their wisdom. The initiative purports to put directly into the hands of the people the making of their own laws, but it does nothing of the kind. All the people are allowed to do is to eat the cake, if they like, but they have no part nor lot in choosing the ingredients nor in mixing them. That is a secret process known only to a chosen few. This is all wrong. Here is a better way: Let there be submitted to the people from time to time such concrete questions as are of general interest, such as: Shall all taxes be collected from land? Shall counties be allowed to vote bonds to build roads? Shall women vote? Then, whenever the people have expressed themselves as favoring any certain plan of action the next Legislature must proceed to carry their wishes into effect before attending to any other business. Your "300 words" limit prevents my referring to other features of the "Oregon system."

A. S. HAMMOND.

IN FAVOR OF MAJORITY RULE

Measure Is Gone Into and Indorsed by J. A. Buchanan.

PORTLAND, Nov. 1.—(To the Editor.)—Ballot numbers 310 and 332 are calculated to create majority rule under the initiative. The proposed amendment to Section 1, Article IV of the Constitution adds only one sentence to the section of the Constitution in force at this time, as follows:

"No measure submitted to the people at any election under the initiative shall take effect or become a law unless it shall be approved by a majority of all the electors voting at such election, whether voting on such measure or not."

The question involved is what shall be considered a majority vote sufficient to pass the measure, a majority of those voting on the bill itself, or a majority of all those voting at the election. Under the law as it now stands, if a majority of those voting on the bill favor it, the bill becomes a law and thus all those who do not vote on the bill at all are counted for it in order to make a majority of all electors voting.

In our State Legislature a majority of all is required. The same rule ought to apply to initiative bills because all electors are now law makers. The present law is unfair and unjust to the majority. Many laws have been enacted by a minority of the people. No matter how few votes are cast on a measure, if it has more for it than are cast against it, it becomes a law. Carry the argument to its legitimate conclusion and if only 1000 votes are cast for a measure and a less number opposed to it, it would become a law.

The majority rule amendments will not effect the initiative except to require a larger vote to pass initiative bills, and that is right. The majority should rule.

J. A. BUCHANAN.

SINGLE TAX AND CHEAPER LAND

Adoption of Plan Would See Fall in Property Values.

PORTLAND, Oct. 30.—(To the Editor.)—Can you give us some additional light on "graduated tax" on land. Suppose a person has bought a lot on Washington street and paid $250,000 for it and erected a $125,000 building on it and that building contains $125,000 worth of merchandise. Under present conditions there is a tax levied on land, building and merchandise, on $500,000. As I understand it, this new arrangement would exempt the building and merchandise and the tax would be raised on the land only. The tax rate now is 22 mills, but if half the taxable value is taken away, the same amount would have to be raised on half the value, so the tax rate would be 44 mills, would it not?

But in addition to this there would be an added "graduated" tax of 30 mills, making the total tax on that land 74 mills. Now, it occurs to me that property which is taxed over 70 per cent of its value would not have much of any value, would it? If it did not, what would the Assessor use as a basis of fixing its value? And where would the taxes come from, for the exempt property could not be made to pay? And if the Assessor arbitrarily fixed a value on land, could not an owner go into court and prove that land taxed at over 70 per cent was valueless?

Again, all the single tax men I meet insist that single tax will at least cut land values in half and probably more. I have heard it stated that suburban lands held at $800 per acre could be bought for $50 per acre, probably. Here is the pain. Take Laurelhurst, Eastmoreland and Westmoreland and the hills back of the city. Millions of dollars have been spent in improvements, grading, hard surface streets, sewers, etc., and the work bonded. If the value of the land back of the bonds is destroyed will not the city find itself held for millions of dollars worth of improvement bonds and the general taxpayers have to pay it, and if the value is pretty well gone out of land and only land can be taxed, where would we be at?

Many men who have a little surplus from their business have put it into a speculative investment, paying some down and giving notes for the rest. If the value is taken away from their investment will not their notes be sued out and many merchants and others bankrupted?

I confess to being simple and dull, but the more I ponder this whole thing the greater seem the ramifications, and I fear that many unsuspecting persons will find themselves sandbagged in the dark with a law that they believed to be a beauty when they voted for it.

I am not a stand-patter. I am a real progressive, but this is one thing I believe Oregon will show great wisdom to let alone. Let some other state have those chestnuts and not burn our hands.

E. T. JOHNSON.

EQUAL SUFFRAGE NOT PRUDENT.

Opponent Says Step Is One of Serious Importance.

PORTLAND, Oct. 29.—(To the Editor.)—Regarding the question of woman suffrage, there are many logical reasons why women should not be given the ballot, which reasons cannot at this time be given and comply with The Oregonian's suggestion to correspondents to write short articles, containing not more than 300 words. So far, I have failed to see or hear any arguments favoring woman suffrage worthy of serious consideration. I heard a man say the other day that the ballot in the hands of the average woman is about as dangerous as a razor in the hands of a small child. While this is probably putting it a little too strong, it is, nevertheless well enough to be careful, and not further handicap the state by cranky legislation. What are the conditions in Oregon at the present time, as a result of experimental legislation? Is it not about time for the people of Oregon to settle down to a sound common-sense basis of action concerning governmental affairs of our state, and cease to be the laughing stock of the Nation? In states where women are allowed to vote, conditions have been made worse by reason of their ballots. This is borne out and sustained by facts, notwithstanding statements to the contrary. The women of California will greatly swell Roosevelt's majority over Taft, and the same can truly be said of every other state in which women have the right of franchise. You will find that during a political campaign the women, as a rule, will be with the noisy element, because of their emotional nature. What would become of Taft in the present contest if the women throughout the Nation had the right to vote? I am afraid he is last as it is, but he would be beaten beyond recovery if the women were allowed to participate in the election. This article is not intended so much as an argument against woman suffrage, but is more in the nature of a signal, warning the people of danger ahead. Consider well the question of woman suffrage before casting your vote on next Tuesday.

A. J. LITTON.

WOMEN WILL HELP CONDITIONS

Given the Ballot She Will Prove Power For Right.

PORTLAND, Oct. 30.—(To the Editor.)—The citizens of the state of Oregon are about to decide by their ballots the greatest issue of the day, i. e., "Shall we men extend to our mothers, wives and sisters the right to vote?"

We are going to vote the first measure on the ballot "300 X Yes," because we are absolutely convinced that by extending the right to vote to women we can make no mistake; on the contrary, we will eliminate the possibility of establishing sweatshops in our community; will prevent the children from being commercialized by our great child labor industries, and lawless corporations, and the white slaver will find his occupation gone, because our good women are sure to inaugurate a crusade, backed up by their votes, that will forever put a stop to his damnable system.

We have no hesitation in predicting the foregoing beneficial results, and would urge every fair-minded citizen to vote "300 X Yes."

J. A. Madsen, James Maguire, Phillip R. Pollock, C. M. Rynerson, W. L. Sullivan, William MacKenzie, H. G. Parsons.

DIVISION OF COUNTIES OPPOSED.

Conviction Is Reached that Measure Is Outrageous.

PORTLAND, Nov. 1.—(To the Editor.)—Number 348 on the ballot is bad. It is the measure providing for consolidation of contiguous cities and creating new counties. It was designed and proposed by the interests which were buried under majorities of tens of thousands two years ago. Its enactment would nullify that overwhelming defeat.

It provides that in the formation of a new county only those residing within the boundaries of the proposed new county shall have a voice in the decision.

The voters of the parent county outside of those boundaries are helpless, even though they may outnumber those within the proposed new county 10 to one. Under this bill not a county in the state could escape division. No state in the Union ever passed such an outrageous measure.

E. S. ROLFE.