

HIGH TAXES CAUSE OF DENVER CHANGE

Abandonment of Commission Form Comes After Four Years' Trial by City.

MAYOR NOW HOLDS POWER

Voters Show They Regard Recent Method as Extravagant and the Cause of Big Expense, With Little to Show for It.

BY H. B. CURTISS.
DENVER, Colo., May 27.—(Special.)—Commission form of municipal government has proved a failure in Denver. A commonwealth of 225,000 people, after a trial of three years of the commission form, has abandoned it, by a large majority of votes and gone back to the more centralized Mayor form of municipal rule.

Although many elements enter into the cause of reversion, the primary and fundamental one is the Denver taxpayers believe they get more for their dollar's worth of taxes under the Mayor form than under the commission form. The voters have come to regard municipal government as a business proposition, an economic problem rather than one of politics or sentiment. It has cost more to run the city under commission form than it did under the Mayor form when practically all the modern permanent civic improvements Denver possesses were constructed and most of them paid for.

Few Improvements Made.
During the three years of commission government there have been practically no permanent improvements made. Taxes have increased but the cost of running the city seemed to keep proportionate step with the tax gatherer, leaving no money for making new improvements or carrying out those already planned.

The commission form, or "headless" government as it is called in Denver, made for extravagance, for duplication of work, inefficiency and useless office-holders. There was no graft. The commissioners of Denver were honest but of mediocre ability. Even had there been a commissioner of unusual executive ability it is doubtful if, under the commission form, he would have been able to impose his views on the other commissioners and benefited the city other than in his own department.

There were five different departments, each with its own head, possessing rights equal to the other commissioners. One of these commissioners was nominated "Mayor" by courtesy, but his powers were as limited as those of the other commissioners and his duties as "Mayor" were largely clerical and social.

Each commissioner endeavored to get as much as he could for his department in the annual budget and showed little or no regard for the needs of the other departments. It was a case of five hungry men around a pot pie, each trying to see who could eat the most.

Taxes increased year by year. The pie grew larger each year but so did the hunger of the men. There was no money for permanent improvements; there was no money to buy new kitchen utensils. Practically everything was going for the increased cost of running the city.

People Believe Speer Honest.
Certain psychological reasons assisted in bringing about the reversion to Mayor form. The principal candidate for Mayor was ex-Mayor Robert Speer. He was of the "boss" type and a "machine" man, but a man of almost National reputation because of his executive ability and as a student of municipal affairs. He had capably filled the Mayor's chair for eight years and during that time he placed Denver on the map and made it one of the great attractive centers of the United States.

Despite the fact that one yellow journal of Denver waged a campaign of vilification against him in the recent election, in which the term "grafter" was among the mildest of those applied, Denver voters restored Speer to office. The people believe him honest.

New Mayor's Record Good.

The things Speer accomplished for Denver is one big reason for Denver's reversion to Mayor form. Speer's government, while small, compared to the large civic improvements in New York, they mean as much to the Denverite as Riverside Drive does to the New Yorker. To name some of the things he accomplished is necessary to understand Denver's appreciation of his administration the great municipal auditorium and the public baths were built, many of the city parks created, others enlarged; the first playgrounds and bathing beaches established, the boulevard system planned and practically completed; a municipal orchestra formed, giving the people free concerts in the parks in Summer and in the auditorium in Winter; the civic center purchased and great plans for beautifying the city begun; the city decorated by the municipality during holidays and large conventions.

They all cost money, but most of them were paid for during those years. Taxes increased, but the taxpayers felt they were getting something for their money—the improvements increased the value of their property.

Then came another civic revolution. Denver has been controlled for a number of years by a set of men who paid little or no taxes, and who largely earned their livelihood by "reform" through the influence of these men and several newspapers, the people of Denver about four years ago administered what was thought a stinging rebuke to Mr. Speer by electing one of these reformers, Henry Arnold, to the office of Mayor. Arnold carried every precinct except one in the city when he was elected. Ten months later he lost every precinct in the city by a larger majority than he had previously carried there. Denver had declared the Mayor form of government a failure and gone into the column of cities being run by the commission form of government.

Since then the pendulum has slowly been swinging backward. Taxpayers found the commission form inefficient and extravagant. They remembered "Bob" Speer and the things he had done for Denver. They remembered the men who had "made good" on the job.

"Bob" Speer, who had done practically nothing since his retirement as Mayor except sit in a quiet office up-town, study civic government and plan, also remembered. He was awaiting the psychological moment.

He had drawn an amendment to the city charter restoring the Mayor form of government to Denver, and conferring on the office of Mayor more power than he had ever had in his "boss" days. Then he came forth from retirement, presented himself and that document, and the people of Denver accepted him and it. A novel situation, indeed. Within four years a great commonwealth had shaken off the so-called shackles of a "boss" and then replaced them tighter than ever.

PROMINENT FIGURES IN TRIAL OF DR. WAITE, CONVICTED OF MURDER IN NEW YORK.



WAITE IS GUILTY

Prisoner Abandons Hope and Seems Resigned to Fate.

SENTENCE TO BE JUNE 1

Trial Concludes With Evidence of State's Alienists, Who Declare Confessed Murder Sane; Court Ignores "Moral Imbecility."

(Continued From First Page.)

to the Clerk of the Court and had been taken to the Tombh he was allowed to exercise. He marched up and down a corridor whistling "La Paloma." Warren W. Waite, of Grand Rapids, the dentist's father, and Frank and Clyde Waite, his brothers, were in the courtroom when the verdict was returned. Frank Waite led his father from the room without having spoken to the convicted man.

Clara Peck Waite, the dentist's wife, whom he admitted he might have killed had she inherited her father's fortune, heard the verdict in one of the rooms adjoining the courtroom.

"God's will be done," was her only comment.

Percy Peck, son of the murdered man, heard the verdict without giving evidence of any emotion. It was reported tonight that Peck had said to Assistant District Attorney George N. Brothers, the prosecutor, when the trial began:

"I realize the importance of keeping any apparent desire for vengeance out of my mind. I want to ask you this one favor: Give me a seat in the courtroom, from the beginning of the trial to the end, where I can keep my eye on that man and so, moment by moment, watch the hope fading from his face."

Verdict Generally Expected.

Few persons in the courtroom, if any, doubted that the verdict would be guilty after Dr. Waite went on the witness stand and told, with every appearance of calm indifference, the details of his crime, declaring his main motive for them was to obtain money. The opinion of his alienists—that he was a "moral imbecile"—was swept aside by the assertions of the state's alienists that he was sane and knew the nature and consequences of his crime, and by the charge of Justice Shearn that "moral imbecility" had no place in the law.

Clara Peck, who was married to Grand Rapids last September. He expected \$50,000 in a lump sum from his father-in-law as a wedding present, but received instead \$200 a month. She and her husband took an apartment in Riverside drive, this city. Waite received his gift of \$200 a month from Miss Peck and induced her to let him invest \$40,000 of her fortune. Waite admitted that he sent \$10,000 of it to his brother in Grand Rapids and used the remainder to speculate in stocks.

Mrs. Peck First to Die.

Mrs. Hanna E. Peck, his mother-in-law, came here to visit the Waites on January 10, 1915, and died of pneumonia in her room. She died January 30 and her body was taken to Grand Rapids, where it was cremated.

John B. Peck came to visit the Waites after his wife died, and Waite vainly sprayed his throat and impregnated his right eye with disease, finally resulting in poison, with the result that Mr. Peck died March 12 last.

Notable in Dr. Waite's Trial.

The appearance of Mrs. Clara Louise Peck Waite, as a witness for the prosecution.

Mrs. Waite testified concerning her father's visit from Grand Rapids to New York and said that Waite suggested that Dr. Albertus A. Moore be called to see her father.

Poison in Food Told Of.

The witness told of an occurrence at dinner three days before Mr. Peck's death, when Waite served her father lunch,ysters, and later he remarked that he felt unusually drowsy. She said her father's condition grew gradually worse, and she called in Dr. Moore several times.

Mrs. Waite said her husband went on "calls" at all times of the day and night. The night before her father died, she said, Waite gave him an enema, and Peck complained that it made him ill. Next morning her father was dead.

Mrs. Waite said that Waite slept on the sofa in the parlor the night before her father died and awakened her to tell her of his death. After the body was removed to Grand Rapids, Waite was anxious to know whether an autopsy had been ordered, said the witness. There had been nothing to indicate that an autopsy would be held, but Waite asked her to telephone the undertaker and Percy Peck to ask if there was to be an autopsy.

Cremation Is Suggested.

Mrs. Waite asserted that on the night when she and Waite arrived in Grand Rapids, Waite suggested that he would go to Detroit with Peck's body and have it cremated, "so as to relieve her mind."

Mrs. Waite also said her husband was present when her father's will was

SALE PRICE IS SET

Court Fixes \$18,000,000 Minimum for Western Pacific.

BIG BONDHOLDERS VICTORS

Judge Doolittle Decides That Low Figure Shall Be Named Inasmuch as Money Is to Be Used for Betterments.

(Continued From First Page.)

SAN FRANCISCO, May 27.—United States District Judge Maurice T. Doolittle today fixed \$18,000,000 as the "upset" price for the sale of the Western Pacific Railway, in the foreclosure suit brought by the Equitable Trust Company, of New York.

In fixing the minimum price at \$18,000,000, the court said that its judgment was based on the only concrete facts before it as to the present carrying capacity of the road which is now about \$1,000,000 annually, above taxes, maintenance and operating expenses.

Contestants Widely Variant.

The decision of Judge Doolittle brings to an end a protracted contest between the various interests concerned with the future of the Western Pacific Railway. The majority bondholders, represented by the Equitable Trust Company, of New York, and the reorganization committee, asked that the sale price of the road be fixed at not more than \$15,000,000. The minority bondholders, represented by the Savings Union Bank and Trust Company, of San Francisco, asked that the price be fixed at \$20,000,000.

Money to Go Into Road.

In his decision, Judge Doolittle said: "If this sum (\$18,000,000) were to be lent solely on the properties of the road, it would be a most unwise investment. It is fixed the sale price at considerably more than \$15,000,000."

Death to Be Investigated

Inquest Over Albert Arndt, Killed by Auto, to Be Tomorrow.

DRAIN EXERCISES PLANNED

High School Commencement Starts With Sermon Tonight.

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Portland's Largest and Grandest Theater NOW OPEN

11 A. M. to 11:30 P. M. Exclusive motion picture classics exploring the photo-dramatic art.

M. ELLIOTT'S SUPERB ORCHESTRA. Matinees 10c. Evenings and Sundays, 15c; boxes, 25c.

Harold Carter is class salutatorian and Gladys Joslyn valedictorian. Other members are: Stuart L. Horner, Jewell Delk, Harold Samuel Carter, Joseph P. Hendrick and Gladys M. Wilcox.

The class play, "The Junior," will be given on Monday night.

Assets \$9,900,000.00.

Ten-Payment Life Policy

TEN-YEAR SETTLEMENT Matured in the

Old Line Bankers Life Insurance Company of Lincoln, Nebraska.

Name Emil P. Hubka Residence Beatrice, Neb. Amount of policy \$1000.00 Total premiums paid company 400.00

SETTLEMENT Total cash paid Mr. Hubka \$430.46 And 10 Years' Insurance for Nothing.

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more. But this money is furnished to go into the road, thus increasing the value of the securities, so that the new bondholders will have as security the present value of the road plus the value put into it by the use of the borrowed \$18,000,000."

The fixing of a sale price favorable to the majority bondholders means that the reorganization of the road and the construction of feeders, without which the road has been unable to earn sufficient income to pay interest on its \$50,000,000 of first mortgage bonds, will be undertaken as soon as possible.

The decree of sale, signed late today by Judge Maurice T. Doolittle, called for the public auctioning of the Western Pacific Railway at the main station in Oakland, Cal., on June 28. The successful bidder will be required to give bonds of \$1,000,000 cash or \$2,000,000 in securities.

Bandon Election Is June 21.
MARSFIELD, Or., May 27.—(Special.)—Bandon will hold its annual election June 21 and the nominating caucus on May 31. The offices to be filled this year include those of Mayor, three Councilmen and Recorder. Mayor George Topping is said to be desirous of retiring, but there has been a request for his retention in office, owing to his able management of the city affairs during his incumbency.

Union County Pioneers to Gather.
LA GRANDE, Or., May 23.—(Special.)—Union County's Pioneer Association has chosen La Grande as the next meeting place, and the session will be held July 2, following the close of the annual chautauqua, for which event about 100 families will be camped. Ex-Governor Geer, of Portland, will probably be the chief speaker of the day.