

## HOW IT WORKS ELSEWHERE.

### Letters Telling what People Think of Township Organization where it is in Operation in Missouri.

One of the most important matters to be voted on in Scott county is township organization. This law has been on the statute books for twenty years, yet the great mass of people of the county never heard of it.

Why? Don't you know that if there was anything in this law for the men in the saddle we would have had it in force long ago?

Of course you do. Besides the Kicker there are seven newspapers in the county—most of which have mentioned, or attempted to discuss township organization. Yet these papers pretend to educate the people and put themselves up as molders of public opinion.

Because the Kicker DOES try to inform the people on what is going on, this paper is the target of every set of exploiters that feeds off the ignorance of the masses.

If township organization were a state-wide issue, the press bureaus of the cities would furnish the necessary dope to be handed out to the people—just as they are furnishing it against the single tax and Socialism. But it is a local affair and the interests that rule the county refuse to stir it in the hope that you will forget it.

However, the Kicker is still here and, in order to get first-hand information on the operation of township organization in counties where it is in force, I addressed the following to 15 county clerks in Missouri where they have township organization:

"Will you please inform me how the people are satisfied with township organization in your county? We voted on it here in November and want information for my readers."

Now, I know that county seat officials are not favorable to township organization because it reduces their power and places it with the people. But I concluded to submit it to the county clerks and see what they would say. I received five replies which I print in the order received:

#### CHARITON COUNTY.

Keytesville, Mo., Sept. 16.  
My Dear Sir—Just to give you an idea of what the people of this county think of township organization. In 1907 the Supreme court declared township organization unconstitutional. During 1907 we voted on the proposition and township organization was again adopted by a vote of about 11 to 1. From this I would not hesitate to say that a majority of the people of this county are in favor of township organization.

I am yours very truly,  
C. C. Parks, Co. Clerk.

#### CASS COUNTY.

Harrisonville, Mo., Sept. 16.  
Dear Sir—In answer to your letter of the 15th will say, we have been under township organization here for so long we know nothing else, but personally I favor County organization. From the experience I have had since coming into this office I believe it better for all concerned. However, the people of the county are largely in favor of township organization I believe. We are going to vote in November to abolish it, I believe it will be beaten by a large majority. We have voted here two or three times to do away with it, and the people in the county have always voted to hold it almost solid. Sometimes the majority has run as high as 7 to 1. Under township organization we can get no state aid for rock road benefits, and that is why we are agitating it now and making our fight on that ground; but they come back at us and say the better way is to get relief through the legislature. So far as the cost is concerned I cannot figure much difference. As I said before, we are going to vote to abolish it and there is some dissatisfaction, but the prevailing opinion is that it is all right, and I am frank to say I think we will be badly beaten.

Respectfully,  
Geo. P. Kimberlin, Co. Clerk.

#### DAVIES COUNTY.

Gallatin, Mo., Sept. 17.  
Our people will not do without township organization. Get a better assessment and close collections, and more people can hold offices.

Yours truly,  
HOWARD PAGE,  
Deputy County Clerk.

#### HARRISON COUNTY.

Bethany, Mo., Sept. 30.  
Dear Sir: In regard to adoption of township organization, I am convinced, after many years observation, that the advantages to be gained by it are not to be compared with its drawbacks, hindrances and extra expense in county business. The one only thing commendable, in my opinion, is a possible closer collection of taxes and more convenient to taxpayers. The assessments are not so good. As well satisfied of this. The trustees of various townships do not observe the law governing deposits and therefore no interest is secured. The road business under the 1909 law all comes to county court in petition. The County Highway Engineer has supervision of the road-over-

seers. The county clerk is therefore not relieved of the road troubles. The lack of uniformity in road matters hinders the Good Roads proposition. As you may observe from the Law, there are a half dozen methods given, and as many more suggested. It is conceded, however, that the Country People favor the proposition and generally vote that way, as it gives more offices. In short in my opinion it is a nuisance.

Very Respectfully Yours,  
W. F. Towns, County Clerk.

#### PUTNAM COUNTY.

Unionville, Mo., Oct. 1.  
Dear Sir: The people of Putnam County are well satisfied with township organization. The question was re-submitted in 1908, and Township organization carried three to one.

Yours Respectfully,  
J. T. Morgan, County Clerk.

You will notice that three of the five endorse the measure unqualifiedly. The county clerk of Harrison county considers it "a nuisance," but concedes that the COUNTRY PEOPLE favor the proposition. And by the "country people" he evidently means all who do not live at the county seat—or very near it. The county clerk of Cass county admits that he is personally opposed to it, but that "the prevailing opinion is that it is all right." I have talked with several citizens of Scott county who have lived under township organization, and all approve of it.

The adoption of township organization will give every township local self-government, and absolute control over its own affairs. It will smash the brutal power that is now centralized at the county seat. You will be assessed by your neighbor, who is familiar with property values in your township, and you will pay your taxes to your township collector, also a neighbor. You will select your own road bosses from among your neighbors to build roads, instead of being selected by politicians to build up a political machine.

About the only argument that is heard against township organization comes from the supporters of the official set. They say it will create more offices. Possibly it will. But you would not be willing to abolish the public schools because it requires directors to run them, would you?

While township organization will create a few small offices, it will also abolish some mighty big ones—and the cost to the people will be no more since all get their pay in the way of commission or fees. Instead of one county collector getting, say, \$4,000 a year we'll have eight township collectors getting about \$500 a year each, and so on.

The county offices of collector and assessor will be abolished. But the main blessing of township organization is that it will wipe out much of the power of the centralized government at the county seat. It will put the lid on \$15,000 wells, \$5,000 sheriff's residences, \$100,000 court houses, and so on, without consulting the people who must foot the bills.

Should our people adopt township organization this fall, then, on the last Tuesday in March, 1913, an election will be held in each township for the election of township officers—one trustee, who shall be ex-officio treasurer of the township; a township collector; a clerk who shall be ex-officio township assessor; a constable, two members of the board and two justices of the peace. The same members may be elected members of the board and justices of the peace. The same person may also be elected constable and collector. The three members of the board will perform the same functions for the township as the county court now performs for the county.

The township may loan money, erect public buildings and do such other things as the county now does. In other words, it gives the people "home rule." The assessor will be one of your neighbors familiar with conditions and property values, so that he can get a more equal and just assessment. If an error occurs you want have to go to the county seat and hire a lawyer to get it corrected. You can fix it at home. Neither will you have to go to the county seat to pay your taxes.

You will have complete control over your road affairs, just as you now have over your school affairs. You will elect your own road boss—and bridges that cost over \$100 will be let to the lowest bidder. In other words, the people of each township will govern that township—and not a little oligarchy at the county seat.

In case a township should fail to elect officers, then any twelve householders of the township may call a meeting by posting notices and the meeting can appoint the officers. In case this is not done the county court may appoint. If the officers so appointed refuse to serve, then the township may be annexed to any adjoining township. Any person chosen or appointed to fill any township office, except justice of the peace,

who refuses to serve, shall forfeit \$5 for the use of the contingent fund.

Under this law the county treasurer becomes ex-officio county collector, and he must turn over to the township treasurer annually all school, road or other money belonging to each township, and the township treasurer can pay out money only as directed by the township board—just as the county treasurer now pays out money on the order of the county court.

Township organization will not interfere with any school district or the boundary lines, nor would it interfere with the unexpired term of any justice of the peace. The counties of Dunklin, Butler and Stoddard also vote on township organization in November. After adopting township organization, upon a petition signed by 100 voters, the matter may be re-submitted and the people can do away with it if not satisfied.

Twenty-one Missouri counties already have it.

#### NO ANSWER YET.

Two weeks have elapsed, and yet no answer to the re-publication of that open letter to the prosecuting attorney—unless an item that appeared in the official organ, published by W. C. Lambert, W. H. Stubblefield and R. L. Stubblefield may be construed as an answer. It reads:

"The issue in the Prosecuting Attorney's race is simply this: Shall a worthy man, with a clean, capable record in office, be made the victim of a plot to destroy him because of personal spleen and hate? There is nothing against John McWilliams either personally or officially. Shall he be singled out for a 'goat' upon whom shall be visited the hate and 'grouch' of persons he has in no wise injured?"

Assuming this to be intended as an answer, I will ask: Is it a "plot to destroy him" and an evidence of "personal spleen and hate" to ask of a public official questions concerning public affairs that are facts of record? Has it reached that point in Scott county? If not, then why is there no answer to that letter?

As for his having been singled out as "the goat," I called attention to that when the libel suit was filed. To a man up a tree it would seem that he should point an accusing finger at his alleged friends.

Surely the donkey is a true representative of Democracy—especially of the Scott county brand. In every issue of their organs they brand the Socialists as free lovers, infidels, anarchists and traitors, and then while because Socialists do not flock to the support of their candidates for such offices as the Socialists have none.

Week after week the Socialists are branded by them as undesirable citizens, yet they have never been able to land one in their jail. The jail dwellers are all Democrats and Republicans, who get what they vote for.

#### THAT LIBEL "SOOT."

Well, all youens who want to witness the execution of the Kicker come to Benton on Thursday, October 24. That is the day on which that famous "soot" against the Kicker is docketed.

Of course I can't say that the "soot" will be pulled off. "The party" seems to have become suddenly attacked with "cold feet" and will try to have it put off until after the election, according to their Morley organ. But I don't exactly understand what excuse they will have to offer—unless it is that their attorney, Frank Kelly, is too busy chasing after the job of circuit judge, and just can't stop running. Surely, the Democratic party is degenerating awfully. To me it seems a fearful drop from a man like Judge Farris to Frank Kelly.

But come to court and see what happens. If you are a Socialist, or if you are not regarded as "safe and sane," I'll guarantee that you will not be annoyed by being picked up on the jury.

Besides the county court attend to that. Of the 24 men chosen as petit jurors for the October term there is not a Socialist among them. While quite all of them are regarded as good men, yet nearly all of them are known to be in Socialism and again the Kicker. In conclusion I want to say a word to the official set. When this case is called I want you to take your seats within the rail—just as you did last April. The jurors will be of your partisans, and I want you to sit right in front of them—as you did last April—and show them by your actions the interest you have in the case, and you want to giggle and laugh and even applaud when Messrs. Kelly and Collins tell what a h-l of a fellow Phil Hafner is. And this, too, without the least evidence to back up their yawning.

As to the sheriff, I need not remind him of his duty in picking up talemens in case jurors are excused or disqualified. He proved last April that he is competent to attend to that.

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#### THE HOME-OWNING FARMER.

I want a word with what the politicians call "the back-bone of the nation." I want the attention of the home-owning farmer, and if I say anything that is not absolutely true, I want him to sit down and write me a letter telling me where I am wrong.

It is the home-owning farmer that the papers and the politicians are "jollifying" and trying to satisfy. They don't care a hoot about the tenants. They have'em stripped clean—and they are now after YOU, Mr. Home-owner.

Have you noticed the reports in the papers about the bumper crop you raised this year? Of course you have. The government report tells us that the greatest crop ever produced in the nation is that of 1912.

In a recent issue of the Globe-Democrat appeared a cartoon of a farmer throwing a cat into the stream. To the cat's tail was tied a stone labeled "High Cost of Living." The cartoon was intended to represent the disappearance of the high cost of living because of the bumper crop.

Now think. Have shoes, clothing, sugar, oil, railroad rates, interest, rents etc., come down?

Not at all. Then what has fallen in price to cause such a cartoon to appear? Why, nothing except the products of the farm. And these will remain down so long as they are in the hands of the producers. As soon as the bulk of the crop is in the hands of speculators, up goes the price.

Only a few months ago we paid two dollars per bushel for potatoes. In the potato raising communities today the farmers are receiving 25 cents per bushel—and less. Watch the price go up after a few months.

Why is this so? One reason is that there is anarchy in production—NO SYSTEM. It used to be so among the manufacturers, but they have learned from experience. But you don't. They used to produce and produce until there was finally a "glut in the market." Then followed a period called a panic. We were hard-up and hungry because we had produced too much of everything. And the laborers had to tramp and starve until surplus was worked off. Then "prosperity" set in anew. During the depression many of the weaker concerns were swallowed up by the stronger ones, which has now resulted in monopoly.

The manufacturers have remedied things. They are now very systematically organized and produce only enough to supply immediate consumption. This prevents an over-stocked market, keeps the price—and also keeps a large percent of workmen—and for a job, thereby keeping down wages.

Now, let's return to farming. I said, there is anarchy in production. Generally speaking, you have no system. If wheat happens to be high this year, all of you plant wheat this fall—and the next year there is overproduction of wheat. You support a national and state agricultural department that would be a good thing if conducted in your interest. But its purpose is to keep the speculators advised as to the size and condition of your crops so they can gamble on it more safely.

It don't help you to have the government report say you have produced too many bushels of this or that. But it gives the speculator a valuable tip on how much to pay. And you—the "backbone of the nation," have to take it. You are certainly the back-bone of their still game—whether of the nation or not. Without you they couldn't play.

But all of this is of little moment when we come to consider the real cause of hardships and gradual disappearance of the home-owning farmer. He is as surely downed as was the shoemaker, the saddler, the wagon-maker and all of the tradesmen when the machine got after them.

Yes there was a bumper crop raised this year. But how much of it did YOU raise—write your chimney? This increase of production on the farm is largely due to the bonanza farms of the west—and similar farms that are now springing up all over the nation—the factory farm. These farms ranging in extent from 1,000 to 20,000 acres and use power plows that turn 20 acres per day. They can produce wheat at a cost of 35 cents per bushel. How are you going to compete with that? Just about like the shoe-maker competed with the factory.

The more progressive farmers are beginning to see this and in many counties of Missouri the seed of co-operation is being sown by establishing the county farm expert who, so far as possible, applies scientific methods. Cape Girardeau county is first to try the experiment in Southeast Missouri and the reports from there indicate that the experiment is giving satisfaction.

The banks, trust companies and other corporations go right on declaring increased dividends. Their organs tell only of prosperity and good times. But how about the "horny handed sons of toil"? At which end of the horn do their dividends come out? But there is nothing like giving them a plenty of what they vote for.

Usually the man who would rather be right than president soon acquires a reputation of being poor, but honest.

#### THE LAND QUESTION.

There are always those who honestly want to patch up the present unjust land laws. The thing that sounds best to some is to limit the ownership of land—some say 160 acres others say 640 acres and so on. The idea is akin to that other foolish idea known as "regulating the trust." An impossibility. So long as private monopolies are permitted to exist they will regulate YOU. The cure for private monopoly is public monopoly.

Many years ago Senator Vest caused congress to pass a law permitting the sale of government land and limiting the amount that anyone could buy to 320 acres. This was heralded as a great law in favor of the man who wanted a home. Nobody said anything about the lumber trust being behind the law.

Prior to that time it was necessary to homestead the land. But the new law that this great apostle of Democracy pulled off put a price on the land—and the land speculators had the price. And although the law limited the purchase of an individual to 320 acres there is always a way around capitalist law where the gap is purposely left down, and they who were behind this law had all the land worth having "spotted" and bought it at \$1.25 an acre—although the timber was worth ten times the price paid.

Socialism will let anyone own 160 acres of land who wants to use it. But it will not let you own 160 acres of land, or any other amount, for the purpose of exploitation. Under Socialism the land will be FOR THOSE WHO USE IT, and the land laws will be framed by the users of land and not by those who live from letting others use it.

Under Socialism there will be neither landlord nor tenant in the sense that we now have them. The primary title to all land is now in the state—the people. Under present conditions the land lord is only a tenant of the state. He is the "middle man" between the state and the tiller of the soil, and is entirely useless—a parasite.

But, unless you have studied this question, you can't see it that way. You have been taught that the landlord "develops the country" and is a great public benefactor. The Socialist says he is a parasite and worse than useless. He plays no useful part in the scheme of development or production.

Nor do you understand that he is the tenant of the state. But he is. If he denies this, ask him to refuse to pay his rent to the state next fall and see how quick the state will let the land out to others who will pay the rent—just as he does. However, what the landlord pays to the state is not called rent—but TAXES! And when he fails to pay, the state takes back its land.

I call attention to this to prove that the prior and real title to land is now in the state—the people. If the people want your land for any public use they take it. Hence the only thing necessary to make it possible for every worker to obtain a home is to change the landlord-made laws that they borrowed from England. And the workers can never accomplish this by voting the same ticket as the landlord.

#### COL. ROOSEVELT SHOT.

While standing in an automobile just before going to the auditorium to make a speech in Milwaukee Monday evening, Col. Roosevelt was shot by an assassin named John Schrank, of New York. The shot was fired at close range and a bundle of manuscript in the colonel's pocket is said to have saved his life. The bullet was aimed at the heart.

The wound is not considered dangerous and the colonel went on to the auditorium and delivered his speech without having the wound attended to. After the speaking the doctors probed for the bullet, but could not locate it. An x-ray examination revealed the bullet in the chest wall.

Schrank was locked up and "sweated," but the police failed to get much definite information about him. He is evidently a religious fanatic and claims that President McKinley appeared to him in a vision and, pointing to Roosevelt, said, "This is my murderer; avenge my death." This information was obtained from manuscripts found on Schrank's person.

According to the police Schrank said: "Any man looking for a third term ought to be shot." It appears that Schrank is an educated man and has been following Roosevelt over the country for weeks to get an opportunity to shoot him.

#### THE NEW WAY.

The improved method of killing people is a great success. Nearly every paper you pick up tells of how the automobile mows down those on foot. In Cape county Wm. Ross, of Jackson, got a new auto and invited a friend to accompany him to the Cape.

Returning he wanted to show his friend how the thing could fly. Soon he met an auto coming toward him. Being a green hand he attempted to pass on the wrong side. Beside the road were children returning from school, who had stopped under a hickory nut tree to gather nuts. Ross lost his head and into the children crashed the machine—running over a little girl, breaking her leg and otherwise seriously injuring her.

Such things happen every day—all because everybody is in a rush and wants to "get there." But how about the farmer and his machine—the thrasher engine? The law limits his speed to a few miles an hour—just creep along. If he meets anybody he must stop and send somebody ahead to help guide the team by. You see, this law was passed before the auto came in, and there was danger of meeting the boss in his carriage. Great precautions were taken that he might not be hurt.

But now the boss drives the machine and, of course, to hell with the foot passenger or the farmer's wife who may be taking butter and eggs to market in a buggy. But the farmer ought not to kick. He votes for it.

We may soon hear that the single tax is again religion. Anything that threatens the profits of the exploiting class is in danger of being denounced as un-Christian. The plutes are great saints, you know. You can almost see them sprout wings.

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#### LET'S GET AT THE TRUTH.

It is by reasoning and hearing both sides of a question that we can get at the truth. Do you want the truth? If you do then don't refuse to hear those opposed to your views. The other fellow may be right and you may be wrong.

How did you get your views? Why, you were taught to you. You get your ideas from the ministers, the schools, the press and the platform orators.

When you came into this world you were a mental blank. Whatever you are is the result of your training and your environments. If you had been born and reared in India you would likely be a worshiper of Buddha and believe in idolatry. If you had been brought up in Turkey you would likely be a worshiper of Mohammed and see no wrong in polygamy. If you were a native of China you would likely be a follower of Confucius. If you were a native of Russia you would likely believe in the teachings of the Greek Catholic church which recognizes the Russian Czar as the pope or holy father. But, having been brought up in this country where the constitution guarantees that you may worship whom or what ever you please, it would be hard for me to guess just what you believe. Some believe one thing while others believe another—depending almost wholly on their early training.

However, so far as they believe in anything, the great majority of our people believe in Christianity. True, there are many branches of this faith—some 600, I believe—and all claim to be the "true and only." No doubt the great majority are honest and sincere in their belief, and all of them recognize the bible as the word of God.

Now, the Kicker is not concerned in what you may or may not believe. Yet, if you are a Christian, you must believe that the bible is an inspired book, and contains the word of God. Either it is all inspired—or none of it is.

I think you will agree with me that it wouldn't do to accept a part of it and throw the rest out as junk. And I believe it is agreed that the word of God is eternal—does not change.

Therefore, if God, through Moses, said that the land shall not be sold forever, then what authority is there for the warranty deed in a Christian nation?

If God, through Moses, said "take thou no usury, then by what authority do Christians pass laws in fixing a legal rate of interest?

Oh, yes; I hear them explaining. They twisted usury to mean excessive interest. But where, in the bible or anywhere else, will you find the dividing line between just and excessive interest? Usury means "for the use of," no matter if it is only one per cent it is usury.

"Thou shalt not kill" is a commandment given us about the same time as those mentioned above. If this is the word of God, then from whence came the authority for legal murder, called hanging or electrocution, or the wholesale murder called war?

Ask your minister about these things and don't let him wave you aside by a jeer or a sneer. It is his duty to give you light on such matters. I once asked a Catholic priest to explain the land and interest proposition but he shifted and twisted and said something about this being from the old testament and obsolete. He seemed anxious to change the subject and I did not insist—not being a well posted theologian.

"The ten commandments are also from the old testament. In fact, nearly all that is taught us by the churches is from the old testament. The teachings of Christ are almost wholly ignored.

The money changers that Christ drove from the temple were exactly the same breed as the money changers (the bankers) are today. Yet you will find bankers of today not only occupying the front pews of the churches, but even in the pulpit!

"The land shall not be sold forever; for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me."—Lev. 25-23

"And in all the land of your possessions (not ownership) ye shall grant a redemption for the land."—Lev. 25-24

"And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen into decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him—yea though he be a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with thee."—Lev. 25-35

"Take thou no usury of him, OR INCREASE; but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee."—Lev. 25-36

"Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals on INCREASE."—Lev. 25-37

"Go to now, ye rich men; weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you."—James 5—1.

"Behold, the hire of the laborers, which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; And the cries of them which have reaped are entering into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."—James 5—4.

Have your minister preach a sermon from the above scriptural quotations and see what he makes of them.

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