

year as heretofore, by the Interests to prevent the election of the man they fear. But their tricks are better understood now. Even the man who needs business accommodation at his bank will not be so easy to handle as he was twelve years ago.

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#### **Sullivan's Chance.**

To paraphrase an old joke for serious uses, if Roger C. Sullivan would leave the Democrats and join the Republicans it would improve the character of both parties.

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#### **I Came; I Talked; I Nominated.**

The Independence party has held its convention and named a ticket. Experience has shown this to be a hazardous thing to do for a party hopelessly in the minority, and composed of free men who believe intensely in their principles; for the temptation is great to vote for some candidate who has a chance of winning and who stands for a few of their principles, rather than the candidate who stands for them all but is certain to lose. With a privately owned, automatic, count-twenty-and-cheer party, however, the danger of defection is undoubtedly decreased.

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#### **Kansas City to Vote on a Charter.**

The people of Kansas City, Mo., will on August 4, at a special election held coincident with the primaries, vote on the adoption of a new city charter. In it provision is made for reference to the people, of grants to public utility corporations. Petition for such reference must be signed by twenty per cent of the total vote cast at the last preceding election. Recall of officials is provided for in a section that will be voted on separately from the body of the charter. A petition for recall must be signed by thirty per cent of voters "qualified to vote for a successor to the incumbent"—a seemingly doubtful proviso. The petitions are subject to official censorship, without recourse. The first section on taxation indicates a strong tendency to real reform. Provision is made to wholly avoid, or reduce the rate, on any particular class of property. This section makes possible honest taxes—by all odds the most important matter in public affairs. Its use, however, is probably dependent on the adoption of an amendment to the State constitution which will be voted upon in November. The proposed amendment gives like power to all local governments in Missouri. If rightly used, control of local taxation will bring more prosperity

to our harassed people than any amount of "trust-busting" and corporation regulation.

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#### **Taxation of Corporations.**

Lawson Purdy, President of the New York tax department, takes a sound position when he opposes special taxation of corporations simply because they are corporations. "There seems no good reason," he says, "for any taxes on business corporations in excess of the taxes imposed on individuals doing the same class of business. If the opportunity to incorporate is open to every one for the payment of a small fee, there is no special privilege involved, and all are equally at liberty to avail themselves of the continuous existence and freedom from personal liability obtained by corporate organization. The invention of the corporation provides conveniently for the co-operation of many people in an enterprise, all of whom cannot participate in the management." While it may be doubted that the corporation is the best form for enabling men to co-operate in business—since joint stock partnerships with exemption from personal liability beyond the capital contributed and published, would serve all legitimate corporate purposes—yet Mr. Purdy's point that there should be no extraordinary taxation of unprivileged corporations, leaves no room for doubt. Public revenues should be derived from the value of extraordinary privileges, such as are unavoidable. They should never be derived from useful occupations that have no special privileges, whether conducted as corporations or not. This is sound doctrine as to public revenues, and it is sound doctrine with reference to the desirability of equalizing opportunity by divesting extraordinary privileges of their extraordinary profits.

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#### **THE FIASCO AND ITS LESSONS.**

Thousands of monopoly haters were disappointed and grieved by the unanimous decision of the United States Circuit Court in the Standard Oil rebate case. Of course, in one sense the reversal of Judge Landis's decision is deplorable. It is calculated to give plutocracy fresh hope and confidence, and to beget an intolerable amount of cant on the wisdom and strength of the "higher" courts. But we cannot join in the denunciation of Judges Grosscup, Baker and Seaman, and we freely recognize that the opinion, aside from certain disputed points affecting the record of the case, is able, sound and strong.