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Candidates for the Judiciary

Dicta Editorial Board

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(4) The evidence would be disposed of far more quickly.

(5) A complete record of every word given in evidence would remain on record until the case was finally disposed of—a vital safeguard against miscarriage of justice.

(6) A heavy weight of legal experience at bench and bar has long favored the reform.

CANDIDATES FOR THE JUDICIARY

(A California Constitutional Amendment)

The full text of the amendment of the California constitution which was adopted in the recent November election, and reported in the December number of this *Journal*, is available in the December (1934) number of the Los Angeles Bar Bulletin. In our report there was omission of an important feature of the amendment, namely, that the judges of the appellate and supreme courts are subject to the provisions of the amendment from the time of its adoption.

The result is that appellate and supreme court judges will no longer be chosen by the accustomed method of popular nomination and election. These judges will, on completion of present terms, have the privilege of having their names placed on the ballot without competition, and a majority vote in favor of retaining them in office will give them an additional term. This will afford operation and experience under the new plan from the beginning.

Application of the plan to the superior court judges depends first on adoption of an enabling act to prescribe the conditions under which the people of any county may vote on the question of adopting the new system. The amendment intended for the relief of Los Angeles County, which was defeated at the election, provided that a vote of two-thirds of the members of the board of supervisors would result in submission of the proposal to adopt the appointing plan. It seems unreasonable to require so large a majority for the mere purpose of affording opportunity for a popular expression. The cost of placing the question on the ballot is trivial and a majority vote of the supervisors should be considered sufficient for the initial step.

VOTES RECEIVED BY FOUR AMENDMENTS

The following are official figures on the four initiated amendments affecting the administration of justice which were approved by the voters:

Selection of judges—yes, 810,320; no, 734,857.

Making attorney general chief law enforcement officer—yes, 1,063,290; no, 449,075.

Permitting judges to comment on evidence—yes, 1,087,932; no, 406,287.

Pleading guilty before committing magistrate—yes, 1,173,838; no, 317,090.