

Letters from the People

W. L. Wilson, Maine, Minn.—I have always voted the republican ticket till last fall I voted for Bryan and, of course, was criticised for it, but I enclose an editorial from the

Minneapolis Tribune (rep.) of April 29. I really believe if the election could be held over again today Minnesota would give Bryan a large majority.

George E. Dickson, 153 La Salle Street, Chicago.—I have read with

great interest the series of letters from democrats all over the country giving their ideas as to the causes which led to the failure of the democratic national ticket in the recent election. Many of the causes given had their weight, of course, but I believe all will agree that the use of money on election day was the principal cause for the failure. Walter Wellman within a week of the election in one of his letters shows how the "legitimate" use of money made success for the republican national ticket in Ohio and Indiana possible. This "legitimate" use of money consisted in manning the polls by paid workers, hiring carriages, etc., and it gives rise to a suggestion that all expenditures of this character ought to be prohibited by law. At a recent city election in Chicago a large amount of money was used and I am reliably informed that a sum which averaged \$400 to the precinct was delivered to the precinct captains of one of the leading political parties on the day before the election. This money was to be used in hiring "workers." The operation was as follows: A voter of impecunious appearance approaching the polls or hanging around would be approached and hired as a worker and paid \$4 for his services. A badge would be pinned on his coat and his first duty as a worker, of course, was to enter the polls and vote. He re-appeared, stood around a little while, edged off to some little distance away from the polls and finally disappeared around a corner, removed his badge and was gone. He was not upbraided for deserting his post and, of course, he had simply sold his vote for \$4. As stated above, the amount which was probably spent would have purchased 100 votes in each precinct. The actual increase in value of the stock of a public service corporation here, whose further lease of life depended on a result of this election, was more than double the amount necessary to provide the 1,400 precincts with \$400 each. I believe that if the states would each pass laws making it unlawful for any political party or individual to hire workers at the polls or to hire carriages or other means of bringing voters to the polls, it would be almost impossible for the corporate interests to control elections. Such a law would be fair to all and it would be impossible to use a large campaign fund in an election. The expense of a campaign ought to be limited to the printing and mailing of literature, traveling expenses of speakers, rent of halls, etc., and the party that could not have the services of speakers and workers who donated their time should go without. Let the legitimate expense on election day be limited to such officers of the election as are paid by the state, such as judges and clerks, and we will come nearer getting a correct expression of the peoples' preferences at election.

H. M. Newcomb, Portland, Ore.—Perhaps the most hopeful aspect of the situation is your own composure under continuous defeat. With two such courageous and resourceful leaders as yourself and Tom Johnson democracy has no cause for despondency.

from buildings and other improvements, personal property, etc.

It means that Boston would raise its whole tax in the same way that less than one-half of it is now raised, viz., by a tax upon the value of its land.

It means to provide for common needs out of ground rent—a common product—instead of out of wages—an individual product.

It means that out of its ground rent of fifty millions or more Boston would collect its whole tax of twenty millions instead of only ten millions as now.

It means the taxation of unearned incomes, instead of hard-earned incomes.

Here is another statement of the idea:

Single taxers want to shift the taxes from the house to the land; because, every time this is done it is made easier for the individual to get the house; whereas, when the tax is shifted from the land to the house, it becomes harder to get both house and land. We say: Tax the land and exempt all other wealth; because, when you tax both the opportunity to produce (land) and the thing produced (wealth) you are in the broadest sense inflicting double taxation. — Oklahoma City Oklahoman.

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