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Letters From the People

Web M. Rubey, Macon, Mo.—In your issue of the 3rd inst., you gave space to the able article of Mr. Earl John Mohn on the subject of election of senators by the people, yet the idea that a constitutional amendment authorizing the people to vote for United States senators would be a violation of any principle on which our fathers founded our government is too absurd to have needed so able refutation. The fact is that the principle of the people's rule is the same whether it finds expression in voting directly for senators, or as at present by voting for legislators who will elect senators. This thought therefore leads me to ask myself the question—there being no change in principle—will the proposed amendment be of any practical benefit? If not, it is not worth the trouble of its option. My opinion is that no practical good will come from it. It will be no remedy for the corruption in politics now complained of. My reason for so believing is that the people are not free to vote their sentiments now and they will be no freer under the proposed amendment. The same money power that has enslaved all laborers in the various industries in the past will continue, and the voter will be ordered to vote for such persons for United States senators as the employers of labor wish to have elected. No man need want better evidence of the slavery of the voters of this country than that furnished by the last election. The voters of this country have enslaved themselves by voting for a protective tariff, and nothing short of the destruction of this infamy will relieve them from their slavery, and this can not and will not be done other than by a revolution in parties. A destruction of the tariff would do away with the incentive of the money power to interfere with the voter. The money power would then have no care as to who was elected to congress, because it would have no millions depending upon congressional legislation. A protective tariff destroys all sense of right and justice. It destroys all patriotic citizenship. It breeds a total disregard for all constitutional provisions. It is inimical to every noble sentiment once possessed by the American people. A people committed to such an infamous business plan become sordidly selfish, and has but one idea in politics, and that is to vote for such as will in turn vote to put money in the voters' pocket, no matter from what poor creature it is taken. Such a theory of government is so demoralizing that religion can not exist, and corruption is therefore inevitable under it. Don't therefore, be deceived by any proposed reform short of free trade. Free trade means a return to honesty, justice, and the code of morals laid down in the Bible. Free trade means the destruction of the rule of the money power, special privileges and all monopolies. Free trade means freedom of every voter to vote as he pleases, and liberty to all citizens. Free trade, and direct taxation apportioned among the states, as our constitution now provides, are the things, and only things that will free America from the corrupt rule of the money power and restore manhood and liberty to its citizens. Laws that are morally right uplift a people, while laws that are not morally right degrade, debauch and enslave. Don't therefore depend on anything short of the knife to the root of the evil. You may ask what hope I have that this reform will ever come. I answer none whatever until the oppression becomes so great that poverty will rise in rebellion against the oppression of wealth and defy it, rather

than longer submit. As a means to this end I advised the democratic leader, Mr. Clark, that democrats have nothing to do with tariff revision, but let the republican congress have the job solely to themselves, and make the revision as odious as possible. The more oppressive it is made the sooner the people will rebel. But democrats not only refused my advice, but committed our party to the doctrine of a protective tariff, and many combined to get some local protection in the interest of a few at the expense of the many. All such should be left at home next year.

J. V. Swartz, Bloomington, Ill.—I have read the letter of Henry E. Maine, appearing in the issue of July 16, of The Commoner, in which he laments your attitude with reference to the issuance of federal licenses in "dry" territory, and takes occasion to say a few words against any attempt to prohibit the traffic in the liquor business. Language is incapable of depicting the extravagances and inconsistencies of argument which are utilized in the efforts to save the liquor business and to enable the liquor interests to continue to line their pockets at the expense of countless wives and children by appealing to all that is base and vile. But the sordid methods of the business do not admit of an appreciation of this phase of the proposition, and mainly because those engaged in it have so far placed themselves beyond the pale as only to be attracted by the glitter of the gold which proves to be the emolument of said business. Recurring to the question of constitutional rights and privileges, I might ask Mr. Maine many questions, all of which he would have to answer negatively if he would be consistent. For instance: Is government never justified in depriving individuals of property without just compensation? Is government never justified in removing the guaranties of property rights? Then again, What is to be understood by "due process of law?" And again, Which

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