

THE EFFECTIVE BALLOT

Being the Third Instalment of Mr. Wakefield's Discussion of This Needed Reform

Editor Independent: To properly understand the effective ballot, let us suppose we had—as we will have—automatic voting machines that record and display in sight of each voter the full vote of every candidate up to the time he reaches the polls.

Suppose a populist voter at the polls late in the afternoon and he sees there can be no hope of electing any one on his own ticket, but that republicans and democrats are running very close, what will he do? If rankly partisan, he will under present system disfranchise himself by voting an already beaten ticket, but under the effective ballot he "can stand up and be counted" for his principles without danger of disfranchisement, by making the populist candidates his first choices and the democratic ones his second choices, his second choices in such case being as effectual as if it had been his first, yet the poll will show the full number of populist voters who went to the polls.

Let us suppose such voting machines in use in 1904 at the presidential election and the candidates are: Roosevelt, plutoocratic republican; Tom Johnson, radical democrat; Watson, people's party, and Cleveland, bolting plutocratic democrat; and the voter sees (the consolidated result of vote in all other states and precincts being telegraphed and displayed on bulletin boards hourly or oftener) that Roosevelt and Johnson are neck and neck and the others nowhere, what would an honest, intelligent voter do? He knows that Watson and Johnson have substantially the same principles and are equally honest; that Cleveland is only running to help Roosevelt, that Watson cannot be elected, but that Johnson probably can be, and he votes for Johnson, either as his first or second choice, either being effective.

This is precisely what the effective ballot enables the voter to do in the absence of such voting machines and hourly record on bulletin boards.

Fusion is an attempt to reach this same end by a clumsy, difficult, less effective method.

Fusion has prevented republicans from controlling some state governments by a minority plurality and enabled the majority of the people to elect state officers, county and city officers, judges, etc., hence the deadly hatred of plutocracy for fusion and the criminal election law of Kansas that prevented fusion and gave the republicans control of the state through a minority plurality. Had the populists, when in full control in Kansas, enacted the effective ballot, as the writer of this earnestly urged them to do, republicans could have regained the state only through a majority of the total vote, and then would have had only their proportion of legislators, senators, etc., a proportion that could never have become large enough to give them control, even though they had the state officers.

As will be seen by those who have read thus far, in counting the vote where but one candidate is to be elected, all but the two highest in first choice ballots are eliminated from the count to start on, and while their number of first choice ballots is recorded and published for the people's information, their second choices are transferred to that one of the two highest candidates for which they were given and counted for such candidate exactly as they would be if given to him as first choice ballots.

In England, France, Germany and Sweden this same result is reached by a second election between the two highest candidates when no candidate has a majority of total vote at first election. Is it not a shame that we let these "effete monarchies of Europe" so far surpass us in registering the people's will?

RELATIONS TO THE REFERENDUM
The effective ballot is not intended to take the place of the initiative and the referendum (direct voting) but to do what direct voting cannot do—that is, give the people control of their representatives and executive officers, the ones who must frame and submit laws to be voted on at the referendum. Twelve years experience in the Swiss cantons that have adopted the effective ballot shows that so perfectly is the collective will represented by it that scarcely any demand is made for the referendum.

The average American congress or legislature cannot be relied upon to frame and submit laws in an honest manner—in a way that will stand in the courts. If these representatives really represented the people they would not wait for the initiative to urge them to action and would not purposely submit laws through which

the courts could run a train of cars, as they so often enact laws now.

The late lamentable republican legislature of Kansas, under great pressure from the people and against a strenuous fight by the railways and other corporations, passed resolutions to submit two constitutional amendments to vote of the people—"to take effect when published in the statute," but the statute has been published and they are not in it, nor are the people.

The effective ballot is the only perfect system of proportional representation, and proportional representation is the only truly democratic system—the only one in which all the people are represented. Any group or shade of thought having votes enough for an electoral quota can elect one member at least, with a possibility of two or more through other than first choice ballots. The high water mark of populism was eight representatives in congress, when if chosen in proportion to the percentage of populist votes it would have been forty-one. Socialists and prohibitionists have never had a congressman, though casting votes enough to entitle them to several each. It is estimated that under the effective ballot single taxers would elect at least twenty congressmen, but none as it is.

In our opinion the greatest value of the new system of voting would lie in its destruction of political machines and bosses, neither of which could exist under it, and partisan prejudice, the bane of good government, would speedily fade away.

Another most important feature is that practically all voters would exercise their right of franchise when assured that they could do so effectively. Little wonder that only half or two-thirds of a full vote is polled in off years and but three-fourths for presidential ones, when about one-half the voters know they must waste their ballots on a hopeless candidate or cast it for one that does not represent their principles at all, or only partially.

The effective ballot will be found especially useful in primary elections and nominating conventions, and yet more so in legislative halls.

We hope the readers of The Independent will give this question careful thought and then write their views of it to the paper. I will answer any further questions by letter or through the paper, and reply to any valid objections.

It is the reform which makes all others possible.

W. H. T. WAKEFIELD.
Mound City, Kas.

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MISSOURI POPULISTS

Mr. Gooch Has a Word to Say About the Future—Wants Straight Party Action

Editor Independent: Am in receipt of sample copy of your very interesting paper. Am glad to note that you recognize the time has come of opportunity for not only all populists, but all who favor the perpetuation of American institutions, to come together on common grounds, battling for a common interest—which can be done by placing populists in the foreground and on the ground floor where they justly belong.

Every day, every hour, that we try to follow the leadership of the old parties we are but extending or holding back the dawn of liberty. You can no more marshal the forces of reform under the banner of the democratic party than you can under the republican.

Now as to Mr. Bryan and those of his followers, they have had their say; we went to them once, many believing it was best for all concerned. They not only failed as they have for sixty years to do anything, but turned their backs on us and treated us with vile contempt. If the democrats of Nebraska are not guilty of this charge, you have something different from the

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Here all roads that do not lead to the democratic camp have been wired up. They are right in for the people ruling, but you are to understand they are the people referred to; and if they have a man in their party outside of Bryan that stands for anything worthy of mention as true patriot and statesman, I would like you to cite him.

I have never turned back. Going back is all right if you have left anything of sufficient value to go back for. However, the future and not the past is our goal. There are more men ready for a new deal now by far than ever before and nothing but a new deal along such economic lines that the masses can see or grasp at this time would seem safe.

I am not a platform builder, though having been at several bees of that nature—Omaha for one. You understand a majority is a big help, and to get that the masses must see their way through.

Government must issue all money and control same. Public ownership of public utilities can with proper effort be made a winner. The laboring classes are ready for this much. When we have gained this, the way is open for other reforms and not before this. The money changers and trust magnates fully understand their party is to keep this vital point in the background and has been thus for centuries; hence, the attack must be made on the stronghold of the enemy.

We can no longer quibble in this matter. Remove all doubts by a straight fight and the toiling millions that have almost lost hope will rally as never before around the standard of liberty and equality.

C. M. GOOCH.

Bearcreek, Mo.

SOUTH DAKOTA POPULISTS

A Hitchcock Populist on a Political Strike States His Position—Will Have None of Socialism

Editor Independent: I have received three sample copies of The Independent and notice in the 18th a call for a conference by Mr. Edgerton. That is the right step to take, whether Mr. Butler approves or not—one thing is certain, Mr. Parker will.

I am a mid-road populist on a political strike until we can have a straight ticket. I might have voted with the socialists, but I don't believe in deceiving a party by supporting it when I have no intention of joining it. I don't believe in two-faced politics.

I have read of the government and laws God gave the children of Israel; the individual owned the land and all of the means of production; the people collectively built and owned the temple and supported the army, but the records do not show that they ever had a national debt; they carried on the government for over 900 years and then went down, not because of financial panic, but because they refused to obey the laws provided for their protection.

God knows the selfishness of the

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To Whom It May Concern:

Notice is hereby given that on the fourth day of November A. D. 1901, Charles Hammond bought at tax sale from the treasurer of Lancaster County, Nebraska, the lands as described below, all situated in Lancaster County, Nebraska, for the delinquent taxes of 1900 and all prior taxes and taxed to the names of the persons hereinbefore set forth and that the time for redemption will expire on November 5th, 1903.

Southeast quarter of southwest quarter of section 11, township 7, range 5, taxed to P. Gristlinger.

Northeast quarter of section 2, township 11, range 5, taxed to Robert Inhster.

Southeast quarter of section 1, township 12, range 5, taxed to H. De Butts.

Northwest quarter of northeast quarter of section 17, township 8, range 7, taxed to J. W. Mussetter.

Southwest quarter northwest quarter of section 36, township 10, range 7, taxed to Lute C. Young.

West half northwest quarter of section 22, township 7, range 8, taxed to Warren B. Pickett.

Dated at Lincoln, Nebraska, this 1st day of July, A. D. 1903.

CHARLES HAMMOND.

human race better than any one else and if He cannot keep us within reasonable limits it is futile for the socialists to attempt what He would not give His own chosen people. What is the wisdom of man is foolishness with God, He says.

Personally, I believe the democratic party that nominated Bryan is the same that supported Cleveland three times; it was merely a change of engineers. Mr. Bryan has been running the engine for the last seven years, but it seems plain to me that the old crew will soon take possession again. Then where will Mr. Bryan go?

If the people's party is not ready for the bolters they will probably form a new party of their own. Political history teaches us how useless it is to bolt. We must build; a house divided against itself cannot stand.

What need is there of further lessons; will we never learn enough of fusion and division? If we don't stop this nonsense we never will advance a step.

A POPULIST.

Hitchcock, S. D.