

sary, the man is produced and the loan is made, of course on security entirely inadequate in any real business transaction. With some natures this method is best. Not a word has been said about a vote, but the agent knows that he has bought one. The victim, when he comes to reflect on it, knows it also, and the more honorable he is the less inclined he feels to vote against the interests of one who has so obliged him. Sometimes the agent bluntly proposes to "lend" the money himself, the nature of the agreement reached depending entirely on the character of the victim as developed under pressure. These transactions are not usually large; the small politician generally has no great credit, and cannot owe and does not handle large sums; but the agent, if he chooses, can readily pay him a few hundred dollars, charge twice the sum to his company, and pocket the difference.

When by such methods the agent has received pledges from at least three of the debatable men he considers himself reasonably sure of the contract. Knowing his own situation, he is sure that his rival cannot have made any such progress as would justify him in large advances, and he feels certain that what has been done, backed by social influence and perhaps occasional "tips," will keep his men straight and win the contract. He endeavors, however, to get the fourth debatable man so as to make eight votes secure and to guard against the ever-present danger that one of his men may "fall down" or "squeeze" him in the belief that his single vote is essential. An experienced manipulator prefers to buy outright votes enough to win. Then he can consult freely as to the highest figures at which he may place his bid without compromising his friends. This the shrewd agent always looks out for, having often to restrain rapacious members who would have him raise his price that he may get more to divide with them. When corruption is discovered it is usually brought to light through recklessness in this particular.

While this work has been going on an entirely different "campaign," based on reason and argument, has been carried along with the incorruptible members of the board and with the public, whose good opinion and influence are most strongly desired to strengthen and sustain the corrupt men. The incorruptible members of a public body include those who are conscientious and those who are simply strong, the latter usually men of wealth and standing who do not need money and would promptly resent any approaches of an improper nature. Such men are moved either by reason or by prejudice, perhaps as often by one as by the other; but they can be corrupted. No improper proposal is ever made to any official who does not himself make the way easy, and the weak are always well prepared, either by the methods that I have described or by their own instincts, before actual corruption is attempted. The "campaign of education" for the public is often carried on by a subordinate of the agent who knows nothing whatever of his chief's corrupt operations—frequently by some man of special local information and influence. Sometimes reckless agents, sure of their "buddle" votes, entirely disregard public opinion; but the most successful bribers are those who have the greatest skill in combining effective bribery with all possible attention to proprieties. The present condition of State and municipal government has developed a species of man possessing these qualities to such a high degree that nearly all bribery passes undetected. The old and gross forms of corruption would be exposed at once. The manipulation of legislatures differs from the manipulation of smaller bodies only in the complication involved in the larger number of men concerned, the effects of conflicting or interfering bills, party politics, and a hundred similar conditions.

As to the classes of men most easily accessible to corrupt influences, agents invariably agree. Easily first are leaders of workingmen's or farmers' political movements. In estimating an elected body, the members elected on such tickets are placed on the directly purchasable list without much inquiry. Next come the editors of country newspapers and newspapers in small cities; then country lawyers and that class of city lawyers who usually seek such positions, though lawyers and editors as a rule prefer to gloss over the transaction by the

pretence of professional services which deceives no one concerned. Religious profession rarely makes much difference with politicians, although it tends to render them more cautious and leads them to insist on indirect methods of approach when both parties perfectly understand the end to be reached and are equally anxious to attain it. Nothing is more common with such men, when receiving money for "services" than the expression, "Now you understand perfectly that this has nothing to do with my vote"; and if they receive a better offer from another quarter and the outraged agent reproaches them with deserting him, they quote his own language against him! "The religious sharps" say the agents, "won't stay bought." Perhaps they have mushy intellects which really deceive their owners in such matters, but the few clergymen who drift into practical politics can almost always be bought by indirect methods. Farmers are likely to fall an easy prey to unaccustomed social attentions, and are exceedingly susceptible to a form of influence of which I can only hint in these pages, but which is constantly employed with success.

The only remedy for municipal corruption is to elect no man to office who is not free from debt. Moral reputation is a flimsy security for conduct; financial competence is a very good security indeed. A man out of debt and with a bank account, even a small one, is not likely to be corrupted. Corruption involves slavery to the corrupter, and all men love freedom. The most venal man living prefers at the last moment to vote as he pleases. The private circumstances of nominees should therefore be a matter of public discussion. When State and municipal legislatures are composed entirely of men whose income habitually exceeds their expenses the problem of corruption is very nearly solved. Until then we may look for bribery wherever water-works, gas-works, or electrical plants are to be established, in the granting of street franchises, in the adoption of school text-books, in the regulation of licenses, and, in fact, in most circumstances where legislative or State action affects large private interests. The remedies which seem to me likely to be most effective are wide publicity of the conditions that invite corruption and careful scrutiny of the financial condition of candidates. The main point is to remove temptation, on the one hand, by selecting officials from the class of men that are financially independent, and, on the other, by giving them the fewest possible opportunities to exercise official discretion in a manner to effect private interests.

#### EDITORIAL NOTES.

An important political meeting was held at Orangeville, Ont., a few days ago, at which several members of the Dominion Government made addresses. Mr. John F. Wood, Controller of Inland Revenue, was one of the speakers, and in discussing the tariff, according to a report in the Empire, said:

There is a false impression with reference to the Conservative party and the National Policy. This false impression is an injustice to both. The National Policy was not adopted from choice. The United States had a high tariff wall. Canada at that time had a low wall. The Government had done everything to get the United States to lower their wall, and, failing in that, had found it necessary to raise a higher wall of their own. It was then that Sir John Macdonald found it necessary to move that historic resolution of 1876. It has never been intended that the National Policy should be perpetuated.

Regarding this speech the Empire said:

Hon. Mr. Wood has not, we may hope, addressed his last audience in Western Ontario; and his practical speech is a clear and sensible enunciation of Canada's position on the commercial questions of the day.