

motors would ever be, in the least part, realized. As it is we deplore the spending of so much of our money uselessly and foolishly, money which we need for our country's development along natural lines that make for a truer national greatness and permanency.

We also protest against military training in our schools and colleges, on the grounds that it tends to take our boys from the farms, where they are so greatly needed, draws them away from the pursuits of peace, initiates them into the ways of vice, and instills into their minds a sham glory and a false patriotism.

It is encouraging to note, on the other hand, the forces that are making for peace. Every agricultural paper published in our land is dead against war, and the preparations for war, or rather alive against it. Labor unions denounce it. The laborer and the farmer, who generally have done the fighting in the past, have struck, not for a higher wage, but for a holier calling; struck, never to go back to the infamous slaughter; struck, under a higher Leader than any earthly potentate.

The young men of our Society, the Society of Friends, would sooner go to prison, (they did of old—they are doing it in Australia to-day) than shoulder a gun and march out to shoot down a fellow being. By our Society all men are brothers, with a common Father, whose love flows equally to all. We take the Sermon on the Mount, and ask what its Divine Author meant when he said "Love your enemies."

This militiamania epidemic will pass, like many another plague and pestilence. Those beautiful and substantial armouries in a few years, will be turned into fire-halls and school houses, for in this Canada of ours, right must prevail, the Prince of Peace shall rule.

May all good people work and pray to hasten on that glorious day.

Signed on behalf of the Friends at Coldstream, Ontario.

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The Science of Political Corruption.

[At the present stage of the fight, which "The Farmer's Advocate" and its able correspondent, Peter McArthur, have been waging in the interests of the people, the following article, by Peter McArthur (with the necessary alterations to apply to Canada), and which appeared some little time ago in "The Forum," is of interest and value.]

For some years past the magazines and newspapers have been publishing scathing exposures of political corruption, and yet the public does not seem to be convinced. If the decent people of the country really believed the stories that are told, with such a wealth of damning evidence, they would "Ere this . . . have fatted all the region's kites" with those who are corrupting the electorate and subverting the will of the voters. The trouble seems to be that the significance of the exposures does not get home to them. It does not occur to the honest voter in Toronto that he may be in any way responsible for the political conditions in Montreal, or to the voter in Vancouver that he is to blame for corruption in Quebec.

The trouble has been that the exposures have all been local and the principles involved obscured by accounts of personal graft, deals, and the pernicious activities of rapacious corporations. For this reason it may not be unprofitable to attempt a broad review of the principles of political corruption as they are at present applied. Students of pathology tell us that even the most loathsome diseases have an orderly development that is just as interesting to the student as the normal functions of the body. A study of political corruption reveals the fact that however much local conditions may vary a few simple principles are involved, and perhaps if these were properly understood it would be easier to find and apply remedies. These principles are almost axiomatic in their simplicity, and for that reason they are seldom considered worth dwelling on by writers who are excited by the specific cases to which they are giving attention. All who are engaged in practical politics understand them and apply them in their work; but it is surprising to find how ignorant the average voter is of the means by which his political activities are rendered absurd or made to have the opposite effect from that intended. One does not need to probe very deeply to find that the vast majority of the voters of the country are honest; they also know that the vast majority of their neighbors are honest and are consequently bewildered to find how helpless they are in trying to effect reforms. They know they are cheated and defeated at every election, and yet they do not see that the responsibility rests at their own doors. It never seems to dawn on them that the honest partisan is the greatest asset of the political corruptionist. It is because the majority can be handled without being bought that it is so easy to swing an election. The greater the number

of honest partisans the easier it is for the corruptionist to attain his ends.

The great danger of making sweeping statements about buying elections is that they defeat themselves by their vagueness. They suggest a wholesale corruption of the electorate which even the most superficial observer knows to be untrue. The trouble is not that the privileged classes buy so many votes, but that we make it necessary for them to buy so few. By our faith in parties either old or new we make it ridiculously easy for those who wish to control the legislative machinery of the country to attain their ends. I doubt if there has been an honest election of any importance in either the United States or Canada in the past twenty-five years, and yet I have been assured by skilled and experienced politicians that, taking the country over,—

First: not one voter in fifty sells his vote in a general election;

Second: not one voter in twenty is approached by bribers, or sees any real evidence that money is being wrongly used.

The vast majority are justified in believing that every election is decided on its merits, and are justified in resenting the suggestion that the party to which they give their allegiance is corrupt. As a matter of fact there are very few really bad men in public life, though there are altogether too many bad methods and deluded men. It is nonsense to charge wholesale corruption in an election whose result does not please us. The day of wholesale corruption is past. Leaving out the honest voters, I doubt if more than a small percentage of those who are eager to sell their votes in a general election ever get the chance. Their votes are not needed. The work of swinging an election where all the people are engaged is too expertly done for any money or wickedness to be wasted. Thanks to the straight party man who can always be relied upon to vote the party ticket, political corruption has been reduced to an exact science. Every dollar is placed where it will count, and the wonderful thing is how few dollars are needed. In local elections the case is somewhat different and corruption may be more rampant, but the principles involved are the same.

Without referring in any way to specific elections, let us examine briefly how our election machinery works. We have two great parties, the Liberal and the Conservative. These parties differ radically on several important points of public policy. Because of this each can claim the honest support of a great number of thinking men. Add this to the number of those who are either Liberals or Conservatives "by birth" and think it is a disgrace to go back on the party to which their fathers belonged, and we have the great mass of voters normally divided into two hostile camps that can be depended upon to vote in the same way in any election.

But besides these party voters we have a small class of voters who are either independent or indifferent or corrupt. Although the number of voters in this class is small, it is usually enough to swing the election. If its support can be secured for the Liberals, the Liberals will win. If it can be secured by the Conservatives, the Conservatives will win. The result is that those who wish to control the elections pay no attention to the straight party men. So long as they vote the straight party tickets, they are useful only inasmuch as they reduce the number of those whose votes must be secured by the campaign managers. Every campaign really centres around the class of voters who do not belong to any party. The honest independents must be won by eloquence and sound arguments, and the indifferent and venal by influence or money.

But all the independents or independents or bribe-takers are not needed to swing an election. Our partisan politics works out so beautifully that only a small portion is needed. A majority of those who are hunting bribes cannot get them, and are not to be blamed if they join the honest voters in saying that no money was used. Their corrupt votes are not required. In order to understand how this is possible we must take a closer glance at the working of our electoral machinery. Under present conditions our constituencies are marked off without any reference, except for gerrymandering purposes, to the number of Liberals or Conservatives there may be in a given constituency. The only thing considered is the needful population. The result is that we have many constituencies where the Liberals are in a vast majority and others where the Conservatives are similarly placed.

Now let us proceed with the work of eliminating unnecessary votes. Where either party has a normal majority of, say, a thousand, it would be useless to try to swing this election, for no normal constituency has that number of corrupt voters. Where there is an overwhelming Conservative or Liberal majority it is useless to try to do any swinging. To get control in Parliament it is only necessary to put a majority of one party in power. The consequence is that in a general election all the Liberal and Conservative strongholds are crossed off, and the work of swinging the election confined to widely

scattered constituencies. In these the straight Liberal and Conservative voters are crossed off and the campaign confined to the class that may be influenced. In each of these close constituencies the capture of a hundred votes will usually suffice to swing an election. No money is wasted in the party strongholds on illegitimate practices, but in the close constituencies it is possible to pay fancy prices for votes if there is a sufficient campaign fund. If only one party is provided with funds the amount required would be merely a trifle to a giant corporation or combination of corporations that wishes to secure special privileges for raiding the resources of the country. With a grateful party in power they can quickly get back their expenditures many times over. And they do not need to make the necessary arrangements with the individual members of the party in power. All they need to do is to make the proper deal with the "practical men" of the party, and the majority of the members of Parliament can be depended upon to vote along straight party lines. The little "jokers" that are slipped into the laws to pay political debts usually look very harmless until they have been interpreted by the courts. No man need go back on his party because of them. This unwavering fidelity gives the corruptionist who has secured control of the party machinery a chance to do further effective and clean work. He is never afraid to see men of tried honesty and high principles nominated for office. Instead he is apt to seek such men for his ticket, and while they are denouncing all kinds of political crookedness on the platform he and his silent cohorts go about buying the necessary votes to elect them, secure in the knowledge that they will always vote with their party when elected. Much of the grim humor one hears among practical politicians has to do with these incorruptibles who owe their positions to corruption. A case in point is that of a member of the Supreme Court of a western Province who began his career by running for Parliament. The story was told to me by one of the workers who secured his election.

"One day the candidate met me," said my informant, to whom I had been introduced by a practical politician, as he took me into his confidence and began to talk as one briber might to another, "and asked me how things were going in a certain district.

"Fine," I replied. "You will have a good majority there."

"I am not surprised," he said enthusiastically. "When I was speaking there I made the best speech that I made in the whole campaign."

The worker nudged me as he said: "It cost us just seven thousand dollars to win that particular district for him, and he thought his speech did it."

No matter how amazing may be the corruption which is revealed by the muckraker or a court of investigation, it will be found that it all springs from the ease with which the balance of power can be secured when two parties contend. Careful investigations and practical politicians agree in placing the corruptible vote of the country at two per cent. of the whole. But as things have developed it would be better to say that under normal conditions of party warfare it would be necessary to corrupt only two per cent. to swing a general election. Of course in the constituencies on the firing line the percentage would be much greater, but the percentage is lowered at once when we add the many constituencies that are party strongholds and where corruption is unnecessary.

Of course the natural result of this extraordinary value of the corrupt vote to those who wish to control elections was to induce the venal voters to be organized so that they could secure the full advantage of their strategic position. In the cities political organizations that could secure favors for the floating, corruptible voters became inevitable. In almost every case they take on the form of an amazing and hideous charitable organization. The charitable side of these organizations wherever they exist is the very breath of their being, even though it takes the form of furnishing free whisky to the fallen souls of society who have lost all except their votes or their power to personate a voter. By a bitter irony of fate our free institutions can be controlled by the outcasts of society and those who prey on it. By banding together, or rather by following some leader who can dole out to them the means of debauchery and protection for misdeeds, they can subvert the will of the ninety-eight per cent. of decent citizens who put forth party platforms, expound fundamental principles of government and discuss abstract justice. Their leaders are quickly able to entrench themselves and increase their misbegotten charities by getting their own creatures appointed to office, and in that way securing control of the police and the administration of justice in the courts. The conditions that prevail in organizations of this kind are inconceivable to normal minds. The leaders of political gangs who can deliver votes are true philanthropists to their wretched followers, who cannot be blamed for being loyal to