

there is no petition and consequently no investigation. In regard to the recent general elections, it now appears that there have been very few petitions filed. I have no personal knowledge of any corruption in any recent contest, but it would not be a fair assumption that there was very little corruption merely because very few petitions are filed.

As a final illustration of this defect in the Act, the writer has been credibly informed that in at least one instance since the Act was passed the two rival candidates themselves in one election agreed that each should be at liberty to spend as much as he pleased, and that there should be no subsequent petition and there was none. Both candidates being wealthy the opportunities for corruption were immeasurable and the contest turned upon the skilful spending of the respective corruption funds.

In view of the foregoing facts it must be obvious that agents intending to indulge in corrupt practices have very little to fear, as the risk of exposure and punishment is comparatively trifling. Let us suppose the case of an agent who takes money to a district generally regarded as corrupt. What risk does he run of detection and punishment? In the first place he feels that there is a chance that his purchase of votes if carried on skilfully will never be known; secondly, he has reason to think that there is an agent of the other candidate in the same district similarly equipped; thirdly, he has reason to believe there will be no petition if his candidate is successful; fourthly, he knows that, if by any chance a petition is presented, there will be the usual opportunity for a counter-petition and a safe "trade;" finally, he knows that an investigation can be stifled by certain admissions which would not concern him. Is it any wonder then that agents in the heat of an election will run the risk—such a very little risk—in order to secure large returns? They do it because they feel that they can do it safely. And they will continue to do it until a law is passed that will make them realize that they cannot escape. So soon as there is such a law vigorously enforced many of the corruptionists will abandon their corrupt practices, and the few reckless ones who might still violate the law would cease violations as soon as there