

# The Labor World

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## Sentenced.

In a temple of finance on Avenue Four,  
A silver and gold dollar met;  
The gold one exclaimed with a glance at the door,  
"Why, haven't you gone away yet?  
I thought you were sentenced in '73  
To serve with the poor and distressed  
And here you appear in the household with me,  
Whose blood is the purest and best.

I mingle with the princes at home and abroad,  
And serve the elite of the land;  
No workman who carries a pick and a hod  
Soils me with a toil begrimed hand,  
While you are not welcome where fashion holds sway,  
And don't go to Europe at all,  
So with the poor working class you'll have to stay,  
The rich folks won't have you at all."

The poor silver dollar retorted with scorn;  
'Tis true, I'm the workingman's friend,  
I've faithfully served him ere since I was born,  
And faithfully will to the end.  
I've fed and clothed millions and built happy homes,  
I'm welcome in workshop and mill,  
And when the great era of free coinage comes,  
The workingman's pocket I'll fill.

I don't run to Europe at every breeze,  
Deserting the land of my birth,  
But I circulate freely wherever I please  
And stay in the best land on earth,  
You bring to your classes silks, laces and wine,  
And trample the poor on the street;  
While I serve the masses on different lines,  
And bring them their clothes, bread and meat.

## Security of the Ballot.

F. A. MYERS.

There are plenty of laws relative to elections, but they are practically dead letters—because the public conscience is blunted. As "a scare crow" these laws have lost their terrors.

Corrupt practices must be rendered unprofitable and impossible.

This has been secured, in great degree at least, by compulsory secrecy of the ballot and by an official ballot.

When there is no way of determining how a man votes, bribery almost ceases. The Australian ballot law of England has practically suppressed bribery. Those of the United States that have adopted it find it a strong safe-guard to the voter against bribery. It gives a man a right to his political conscience.

Coercion and undue solicitation are undone. Employers are shut out from nodding to employes. Men receiving wages from cities, industries and corporations are no

longer bound by such wages—their places are no longer endangered.

The candidate and the official will not feel that republics are ungrateful, for the need of assessments will be removed. They will not be "bled" for the party's good any longer.

The voter will be "alone with his country, his conscience, and his God," and be ruled by his own intelligence where employer or boss cannot enter, where no promise or menace or cajolery can reach him, where no trick can deceive him, where no eye can scrutinize, where no voice can speak.

When the state prints the ballots, the public is simply resuming proper control of its own affairs. The people more than the candidates should be interested in the result of the elections, and therefore should have charge of the same. The people are deeply concerned to know which party is fairly in the ascendancy.

For the purity and protection of the ballot many devices for ballot-boxes have been invented. Nearly two hundred ballot-boxes have been patented in the United States patent-office. Some are simple, some complex mechanisms. Only three or four have ever been brought into actual use. The box known as the New Jersey box looks like a rat trap and is said to be a sure guard against ballot-box stuffing. It registers the vote in red ink and deposits it in a glass box below the register. Some devices have clocks in them, which regulate their time of opening. One device sews the ballots together and winds them on a spool, from which they are unwound when counting. One invention requires merely the pulling of a knob for each person voted for. The Rhines system is a sort of typewriter process of voting.

To guard the suffragist in the performance of his greatest and gravest political duty from the arts and wiles and power of corruption, a rope has been stretched around the polls. The approaches thereof were thus secured. Guards of officers have been placed about the voting place. Moving before election day has been restricted, dis-

franchising one who has not dwelt a specified time in the precinct or district or state, and other regulations have been made, but to small purpose. Like a breachy horse, bribery goes over all these fences, and the "floater" is "seen" by the "boss." The principle of home rule by the people, the arbitrators of their own concerns, important or minute, has been carefully preserved in all measures and plans.

The heart of bribery in England was touched, when every candidate was obliged to publish, under oath an itemized account of his disbursements in the election. His expenses were also limited. Bribery annuls his election. His agent must be legally appointed.

The publication of a list of fit candidates has been the practice for a long time of certain papers in the United States. No perceptible good was secured by this plan. The character and ability and experience of the candidates were not improved by strictures and plain comments by these papers.

Ballot-box stuffing is past. "Voting early and often" depicts a by-gone fraudulent practice when the Tweeds reigned. Vest-pocket voting is obsolete.

The candidate who gives a check for a hundred, or a hundred thousand dollars, toward election expenses is, in a sense, a bribe-giver, and no bribe giver is truly honest. He knows it will be used for unworthy purposes. Limiting the candidates' contribution merely shifts the matter.

In some states to lay a wager on the election disfranchises the better for the time being.

Far back in English election history men have been disfranchised for bribery. At Hendon, in Wilts, England, there were in 1775, 210 electors, of whom 203 were disfranchised, nominally for bribery, leaving the decision of the contest in the hands of seven.

An organization in New Hampshire once declared:

"We denounce the republican and democratic parties for using money to buy votes and corrupt elections, believing that an honest ballot and a pure ballot-box are necessary to protect our free insti-