

theretofore been denied. But these conclusions are not inferences merely. The plain fact appears to be that the organ of the I. W. W. was suppressed contrary to law and without legal warrant; that street speaking was denied to the I. W. W., although allowed to others; that the owners of halls were intimidated by the authorities into breaking contracts of hire with the I. W. W.; that I. W. W. speakers were arrested for attempting to speak on the streets, and were crowded, men and women, in great numbers into small and filthy places; that they were subjected, in addition, to the tortures of the police "sweat box"; and that when convicted of "disorderly conduct" for simply asserting their right to speak, they were sentenced like felons. The authorities of Spokane were doubtless wise in agreeing to end this controversy, lest it develop into a national scandal with themselves as culprits. They would have been wiser never to have begun it.

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Raiding Anti-Vaccinationists.

What has happened up to date to the Anti-Vaccination Society of Atlanta, Georgia, we are not advised; but through the Atlanta Constitution of February 26th we learn that its organization meeting was lawlessly invaded by the police, led on by a health officer, and the rights of those present were treated as fanatics are always disposed to treat whoever rejects the particular form of fanaticism to which they are devoted. Without warrants the police entered the private room where the meeting was in session, interrupted its proceedings, demanded the names of those present, and commanded them to submit to vaccination. If the meeting had been one of Negroes, the conduct of the Atlanta police would be accounted for. But it was a white folks' meeting.

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Theatrical Behavior.

Bernard Shaw, who writes many good things, never wrote to better purpose than when, in explaining why he refuses curtain calls as a dramatic author, he implied that actors ought to take a lesson from his example. The illusion of a play fades when actors—representing the dead, the dying, the hero, the villain, the victim and all—come trooping out in costume with bows and smiles, to be applauded for their acting. The applause is a proper tribute, if it does not bring the actors out nor interrupt the scene in its progress. But as Mr. Shaw says, "actors do not need the encouragement of applause," if they really are actors; for then "they are serious artists doing seri-

ous service to the community and practicing a high profession." Actors should realize that they spoil their art by answering curtain calls, and audiences should learn that it is as ill-bred to interrupt a good play well played as it would be, to quote Mr. Shaw again, "to interrupt a symphony or a church service."

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PARTY GOVERNMENT VS. PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT.

President Taft is quoted as saying at Rochester, "We will never get ahead without parties."

How far have we got ahead with parties?

Powers have been built up which defy governmental authority. Industrial power exists which may be used tyrannically or beneficently as the group known as the Morgan-Rockefeller interests decide. There is *no* guaranty that this group will not bring on a panic whenever it deems advisable to sell stocks, put the money in vaults and buy the stocks back at panic prices,

Trusts divide up the territory of our country, make collusive prices, and the power of the government under the party system does nothing to offset the consequent high cost of living.

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But, "How are you going to give expression to the varying views of ninety millions of people?" asks President Taft.

This way. New York is the most populous State. It takes votes of the people very successfully. This if done in the most populous State can be done in any State. It can be done in all States. It can be done on the same day. It can be done on the day that Presidential electors are chosen. It can be done on any question of national policy.

For example: The tariff question is not yet settled under many decades of partisan government. President Taft does not seem to know whether the people want the tariff raised or lowered. Suppose at the next Presidential election the question, "Shall the tariff rates fixed under the Taft Administration be reduced?" were submitted to the electors. Would this not give to the millions of voters of the United States the means of expression on this definite question?

And if this can be done on one question of national policy, why cannot it be done on other questions and on varying questions?

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"How are you going to put the views of ninety millions into the form of legislation?" asks the

President. If the legislators cannot put the views of the people conclusively expressed on a definite question into the form of legislation they are not very expert. It may be that they have not been trained in the school of partisan politics to carry out the will of the people. If so, a new school can be formed to train them to really represent the sovereign people whom they now deride as "the peepul," "the masses," "the mob" or "the rabble."

But will such legislation "be agreed upon by a majority of your Representatives or Senators unless you organize parties?" asks President Taft.

What have parties or party organizations to do with such a matter, settled by the people in their sovereign capacity?

If the Representatives or Senators do not agree, on a question upon which the people have agreed, it must be because the party system makes for inefficiency and not for efficiency in representation.

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Organization is a good thing. Therefore why should the people of the United States, voting by States, not do a little organizing to obtain the means of expression in their sovereign capacity?

Details can be left to representatives to put in the form of statutes.

But to arrive anywhere—"to get ahead"—the people of this country must get direct legislation as the means of expression, and the recall as the means of making representatives represent, and upon this solid ground they can reorganize their political institutions on American principles.

LEWIS STOCKTON.

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HIGH PRICES AND HIGH RENTS.

We have often had occasion to explain away the thoughtless notion that high prices for competitive commodities are caused by high rents for land. But the notion sticks, and we are glad now to quote in our support a clear cut and brief exposition of the subject by a professor of economics in one of our leading colleges.

The quotation is from an article by Prof. Warren M. Persons, which appeared in the issue of *La Follette's Weekly Magazine* for March 26.

Prefacing his article with the statement that "if there is any economic proposition that can be said to be universally held by economists it is" that "high rents do *not* cause high prices." Prof. Persons goes on to say:

Are the shoppers deceived who go from Madison or Janesville, Wis., to Chicago in order to buy their goods of the great department stores?

Are the prices of goods at Wanamaker's in New York, or at Marshall Field's in Chicago, necessarily higher than the prices of other dealers who pay much less rent?

A little consideration will show that the large rents on State street in Chicago or on Broadway in New York are due to the fact that these streets are traffic centers.

Wanamaker is enabled to pay an enormous rental because his location enables him to make enormous sales.

The owners of favored sites simply absorb as rent what those sites are worth for business purposes. A landlord of a location in the suburbs, or in a smaller city would be willing to take as much, but he can not obtain more than the site is worth for use.

Prices are determined entirely independently of rents.

No one expects to get a cheaper suit of clothes by leaving New York and going to Jersey City.

If higher prices can, for any reason, be obtained for goods than were formerly received and thereby the merchants are enabled to obtain greater profits than heretofore, they will bid against each other for favorite locations. Thus the landlord will receive more rent than formerly. It is the increase in prices that causes the increase in urban rents.

After that clear treatment of the question of rents and prices with reference to cities, Prof. Persons applies the same principle in this equally admirable fashion to agricultural regions:

I am writing from New Hampshire, a State of many abandoned farms. The State issues a booklet through the Secretary of State describing many abandoned farms which may be purchased for less than it would cost to duplicate the buildings on them. Any number of farms can be bought for \$5 to \$20 an acre. The reason that the farms have been abandoned is because they cannot produce wheat, corn and oats in competition with the farms of Iowa and Minnesota at the present prices of those cereals.

If prices should continue to rise it is probable that the time will again come when it will be profitable to work the abandoned farms of New Hampshire and Vermont.

It is only through an increase in prices of agricultural products that an increase of rents or selling price of these lands can come about. The farming lands of the West have increased in value from \$50 to \$100, or from \$75 to \$150 an acre because of the increase in the prices of their products and not vice versa.

The mistaken notion which Prof. Persons so clearly explains away, may find an appearance of support in the fact that absolute and concentrated monopoly of land may enable its monopolizers to raise the price of its products.

If, for illustration, all the coal mines were absolutely monopolized by a syndicate, the syndicate might raise the price of coal above the point at which it would rest if the owners of coal mines were in competition. In the latter case the price of coal would be governed by the cost of produc-