

Voting Through the Electoral College.

Bishop Merrill of the Methodist Episcopal church contributes to the North American Review for October a thoughtful paper on "Our Electoral System," in which he shows that under the constitutional plan of choosing presidential electors provision is made for the equality of states, but not for the equality of individual voters, the advantage of the individual voter for electors being with the voters in the larger states.

The inequality of which Bishop Merrill complains and which, as he says, is a subtle one, lies in the relatively greater power possessed by a vote cast in a large state. The question is, "Does one vote cast for each of thirty-electors have a greater effect in the final count than does one vote cast for each of three electors?"

"In the state of New York the voter casts a ballot for each of thirty-six electors. His vote is counted for each, and each elector chosen by that ballot votes for president; so that the vote of one man bears directly on thirty-six votes in the electoral college. In one respect the man has but one voice, but that one voice is potential in filling many seats in the body which decides the election. In another state each voter has a voice in selecting twelve electors, or one third the number chosen in New York. In determining twelve votes in the electoral college. His influence in the whole body is one-third as great as it would be if he could vote for three times as many electors, as does the vote in New York. In another state of still less population, the voter has a voice in the election of three electors, or one-twelfth as many as the voter in New York influences. In this condition of things it is pretty evident that the voter in New York has twelve times the power in the choice of president that he possesses who must exercise the right of suffrage in the smallest state. There is no unfairness in the fact that the larger state should have this preponderance of power, as a state, for the larger voting population justifies this; but that each voter should wield such an excess of power is scarcely compatible with equity and justice. The equality of the power of single votes is destroyed.

"It will be alleged in reply to this that the inequality disappears when it is remembered that in the larger state more votes are required to make the majority which elects; but the reply is fallacious, for the trouble is not in the greater or less number of votes requisite to the majority in the large or small state, but it has reference to the power of the single vote. Is not that vote multiplied, or its power increased, in proportion to the number of electors it helps to elect? If so, the lack of equality in the power of the single voter in the different states is demonstrated. This question of majorities will illustrate the point. A single vote is an influential in determining majorities in a large state as in a small state. Suppose that in the great state of New York the electors are all chosen by a majority of eleven hundred—is not that a supposable case? A change of six hundred votes would put the majority on the other side. That change of six hundred votes would take thirty-six electors from one side and add them to the other side. Then suppose that in Montana the electors are chosen by a majority of eleven hundred votes. A change of six hundred votes would put the majority on the other side. The charge of six hundred votes in Montana would take three electors from one side and add them to the other side. Thus it is seen that the six hundred voters in New

York have twelve times the power of six hundred voters in Montana. Then, if six hundred voters in New York can wield twelve times the power in the former state that he does in the latter? Nor is it possible that twelve votes cast in Montana can equal the one vote cast in New York; for the one vote touches the election of thirty-six electors in New York, while the twelve votes in Montana can only affect three electors, even if they do swell the vote of the three more than the one vote swells the majority of the thirty-six. If the ballot for each elector were cast separately, he of Montana would vote three times, and he of New York thirty-six times. Say not, then, that the ways of this system are equal.

"How can equality be secured? It cannot be till voters throughout the country vote for the same number of electors. This requires the election of presidential electors by districts instead of by states. Slight alterations in state constitutions will authorize this, and nothing oppressive would result if the National Constitution should be made to require it. In this way the voice of the people can have free expression and a voter in one part of the Union will become equal to a voter in any other part of the Union. It gives to every one the right to vote for the elector of his choice, with the assurance that his vote will be as influential in determining the composition of the electoral body as will the vote of any other man."

The importance of Bishop Merrill's proposition will be better appreciated when one considers the immense influence of city populations in determining the presidential vote of states. Under the district system every section of the state would be represented by the choice of its majority; both city and country would be fairly treated. Besides the district electors two "senatorial" electors would have to be chosen, and these would be voted for on a general state ticket. Each voter would vote for one district and two "senatorial" electors. This would give, as Bishop Merrill believes, "to every man who votes an equal voice with every other man throughout the Union."—November Review of Reviews

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Notice for Publication.

Land Office at Oregon City, Oregon.
October 6, 1896.
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE following named settlers have filed notice of their intention to make final proof in support of their claims, and that said proofs will be made before the County Clerk of Lincoln county, at Toledo, Oregon, on November 21, 1896, viz:
THOMAS J. LAYNE, H. E. 9, 470, for the northeast 1/4 of the southwest 1/4 and east 1/2 of northwest 1/4 of section 10 and southeast 1/4 of southwest 1/4 section 9, township 13, south, range 11 west.
He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: Perry P. Prescott, William H. Simmons, E. M. Davies and J. O. Stearns, all of Waldport, Oregon.
Viz: PERRY P. PRESCOTT, H. E. 9, 478, for the north 1/2 of the northeast 1/4 of section 9, and south 1/2 of southeast 1/4 of section 4, township 13, south, range 11 west.
He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: William H. Simmons, Thomas J. Layne, E. M. Davies and J. O. Stearns, all of Waldport, Oregon.
Viz: WILLIAM H. SIMMONS, H. E. 8, 703, for the south 1/2 of the southeast 1/4, southeast 1/4 of southwest 1/4, and lot 2 of section 23, township 13, south, range 11 west.
He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: Perry P. Prescott, Thomas J. Layne, E. M. Davies and J. O. Stearns, all of Waldport, Oregon.
Viz: E. M. DAVIES, H. E. 9, 475, for the northwest 1/4 of southwest 1/4, west 1/2 of northwest 1/4 of section 10, and southwest 1/4 of southwest 1/4 of section 9, township 13, south, range 11 west.
He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: Thomas J. Layne, William H. Simmons, Perry P. Prescott and J. O. Stearns, all of Waldport, Oregon.
ROBERT A. MILLER, Register.

Notice for Publication.

Land Office at Roseburg, Oregon.
October 22, 1896.
NOTICE is hereby given that the following named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim, and that said proof will be made before J. P. Jones, County Clerk of Lincoln county, at Toledo, Oregon, on December 5, 1896, viz:
GEORGE W. DAGGETT, H. E. No. 7, 532, for the south 1/2 of southwest 1/4, southwest 1/4 of southeast 1/4, section 22, township 11 south, range 11 west.
He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: J. P. Wolf, A. Matke, A. Schlampepennig and Martin Lyons, all of Astoria, Oregon.
R. M. YEATCH, Register.

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