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EDITORIAL

FOR THE SOCIALIST CHRISTMAS TREE.

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THE latest official returns of the late election, now published by the *Evening Post*, are the fullest so far gathered. They may be considered substantially full and substantially final. Such obvious errors as 33,453 votes for the Socialist Labor Party are minor and immaterial. The figure is certainly several hundred below the Party's actual poll, leaving the Party substantially unshaken. Likewise there is a probable mistake in the Debs vote. It is given at 391,303. Here also the figures are probably a hundred votes or so below the actual poll. All such inaccuracies are, however, trifling. They cannot materially affect the robust revelation contained in the figures of the total poll in the nation, as given by the *Evening Post*.

On elections night it looked as if the country had experienced a tidal wave—a tidal wave in favor of Roosevelt. The impression of election night gathered strength from the subsequent figures which simply gave the Roosevelt "pluralities." Fuller returns, however, while they did not reduce the Roosevelt pluralities, began gradually to put a different complexion upon the case. What now may be considered the full reports, establish the important fact that there was no tidal wave; that what there was was a horse of a very different color, to wit, wide-spread disgust. This is shown by a comparison of the total national poll in this presidential year with the poll in the previous presidential year, 1900. In 1900, the total poll was 13,959,653; this year it was 13,247,909. In other words, after four years of national increase in the voting population, the poll for 1904 was more than 700,000 VOTES LESS THAN IN 1900! Even if there had been an increase in the total poll, it would have been a sufficiently remarkable fact had the percentage of the increase been below the percentage of the popular growth. When, however, despite popular growth, there is no increase whatever in the total poll; when the total poll does not even

remain at a standstill; when it even falls below the poll of four years previous; and when the decline is the heavy one indicated—then the fact is robustly significant. It acquires all the greater significance when it is considered that never before in the country's history did the poll of a presidential year fall below that of the previous presidential year, except at the second election of Lincoln, when over ten States were in rebellion and their vote was excluded.

The widespread disgust revealed by the last presidential election is subject for rejoicing. Tidal waves imply enthusiasm. It would have been a distressing sign if, in the midst of the vast want and misery in the country, the masses could have enthused for a Roosevelt or any other capitalist candidate. The drop in the vote shows loss of confidence among extensive layers of the population; loss of confidence in the fetiches of the old parties. When to this is added the circumstance that a very perceptible number of the votes given to Roosevelt were given in anger at the insultingly "sane and safe" Democracy, the figures become still more satisfactory. These are encouraging premonitions, inestimable symptoms of the real tidal wave that is forming and that is destined to swamp the capitalist system. This fact is a valuable present to be hung on the Socialist Christmas tree of the land. It stands in twin importance with this other fact—already announced in a previous issue—that the Socialist Labor Party, the only party of revolt that urged the voters not to support it unless ready to back it up has come out of this critical conflict unshaken in principle, unshaken in serenity, unshaken in strength.

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