

which registers interchanges of free labor. There is no escape, then, from his conclusion. Government monopoly should begin where free competition ends.

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Moneymaking Ability No Recommendation for Public Office.

A point of general interest has arisen in connection with the—shall we call it trial?—of Dwight H. Perkins, school architect of Chicago, by the delectable Mayor Busse's "business" school Board, ostensibly for long concealed "incompetency" as an architect, but really for "insubordination" in respect of the privileges of a building contractors' ring. We allude to certain assurances of the "business" president of this "business" board—a factotum of the beef trust,—in an impudent letter to the City Club regarding its courteous request that the Perkins "trial" be in the open. He assured that club of the competency of the members of the Board to handle the matter without outside advice, because they have been successful men in business. Parenthetically, it might be remarked that the business success of some of them, like that of the Mayor who appointed them all, is of a kind that one might in the mellower years of life prefer not to have had—a kind which even they would be sensitive enough to shrink from describing in all its "executive session" ramifications. But the point we wish to emphasize as of general interest, is the notion of the beef trust president of the Chicago school board—for it is a general notion—that success in a private money making business especially qualifies for usefulness in public office. It is not so, and in the very nature of things it cannot be so. So far from qualifying for usefulness in public office, success in the modern art of making money naturally would and actually does disqualify. Any man who has spent his life in grabbing dollars—regardless of how, so he keeps out of jail—and piling them up for himself, is the very worst kind of man to put in charge of community interests unless he first reforms.

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Folk's "Platitudes."

It has been said by those who have studied his career that Joseph W. Folk, formerly Governor of Missouri, is "a man of platitudes who believes in his platitudes." Nothing better could be said of any public man. The heart of the objection to most men of platitudes is that they do not believe in them. "All men are created equal" is a repulsive platitude on the lips of a pro-slavery man, an

aristocrat, or a plutocrat; but "all men are created equal" is music on the lips of a genuine democrat. "Thou shalt not steal" is cant on the lips of an advocate of special privilege; but "thou shalt not steal," on the lips of a man to whom unjust appropriations are theft though the law allows them, is vital and inspiring. In this view, some of the recent platitudes that Mr. Folk has uttered place him in the front rank of democratic Democrats. He wrote them for the Kansas City Post last November. Among these platitudes, which are as pearls when the man who utters them understands and believes in them, we reproduce the following:

The Democratic party should fight, not wealth, but the wrongs that make poverty. The conditions that produce poverty are the conditions out of which tainted riches grow. The equalization of the distribution of wealth is the most serious problem confronting the American people. The maxim of Jefferson: "Equal rights to all, special privileges to none," expresses every essential element of real democracy. With this motto as a guide, the infamies of privilege in every form can be destroyed, and unto all men can there be restored the equal right that belongs to each, the fair and the equal opportunity of each and every man to live and labor and to enjoy untrammelled the gains of honest toil. The rock in the way of equal rights is privilege. The battle of true Democracy should be to overcome the entrenched privilege harpies. The privilege of lawlessness leads to graft, and to a government by the few, with wealth and political power enough to secure official favors.

Then there is privilege conferred by law. The most conspicuous privilege of this description is the protective tariff. The Democratic party should make a straightout fight against the present system of protection. . . . The real purpose of protection is to stifle competition and to that extent give monopoly. The time has come to protect the people from monopoly instead of protecting monopoly from the people. . . . Whenever a few men obtain more than they ought to have through privilege, there must be some who will have less than they should have.

In those words upon monopoly, the political situation in this country is pointedly suggested. The time has indeed come—it came long ago, but it is not past—"to protect the people from monopoly instead of protecting monopoly from the people."

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Rockefeller's Comprehensive Benefaction.

We are inclined neither to condemn nor to approve John D. Rockefeller's proposed sight-unseen endowment of any or all social work to which his trustees may now or hereafter apply its munificent income. Since it may be the expression of a genuine purpose to do good in the world with the bloated fortune he has acquired, we cannot condemn him personally. Since there is no other

practicable way in which he could accomplish the beneficent design we assume him to have—except, of course, by doing exactly as we ourselves would have him do—we cannot condemn his method. But neither can we approve his method on its own merits. For what is it but a method for distributing, through trustees or a corporation, to future generations, the earnings of the labor of those generations?

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Mr. Rockefeller will not pass over to his trustees for the purposes he contemplates, any existing wealth of much moment. He will pass over little but paper evidences of title. And evidences of title to what? Simply to ownership of the earth. What, then, will be the nature of the income his trustees or paternalistic corporation will dispense? Nothing whatever that he has earned, or even acquired. Nothing whatever but a proportion of the earnings of the people of the future. They will pay some of their earnings to Mr. Rockefeller's posthumous representatives as profits on their uses of the earth, and his representatives will distribute that income in their discretion, probably for the "greater good" for which the endower lived and his endowment is to be established. But isn't this better than to have Mr. Rockefeller's heirs use that income selfishly? Let us not be too sure of that. In selfish hands those indefensible titles might not be so secure from exposure and abrogation, as in the hands of a beneficent corporation. Neither would they be the source of so much power for evil. Corporations are managed by trustees; trustees are men; men are human. Could not such an endowment be used with mightier force than heirs could use their patrimony, to bolster up social and industrial conditions in perpetuation of privilege—schools, colleges, pulpits, magazines, newspapers?

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EDUCATION IN THE COMMON LIFE.

We boast of our public schools. We never tire of boasting of them, we braggart and blusterful Yankees. But there is something wrong in the system or in its economic setting,—something that we ought to lack the heart to boast about. Notice this result of an inquiry into what the system does for our children, made by H. J. Waters, president of the Kansas Agricultural College, and reported by him in his inaugural address:

Of the eighteen million children in the graded schools in the United States today, less than a million, or less than one in twenty, will ever matriculate in a high school or academy. Moreover, of the

nine hundred thousand pupils in the secondary schools, only about two hundred thousand will be enrolled in our colleges and universities, or approximately one out of every four. It requires, therefore, approximately eighty pupils in the grades to supply one college or university student. Less than one in five of these college and university matriculates graduates. Therefore, over four hundred graded school pupils are required to furnish one college graduate. Of more significance than all this is the fact that seven out of every eight of the boys and girls of the United States leave school between the fifth and sixth grades and go out into a world of splendid opportunities without the training and intellectual power to enable them to take advantage of these opportunities.

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This condition may be accounted for in part by the pitiful financial state of parents, which drives them to put their children to work as soon as the law permits, and sooner still if they can evade the law. It may be accounted for in part by the eagerness of school children to get out into the world and earn a little money. It may be accounted for in part by the failure of public school authorities to relate education to the common life, in consequence of which pupils lose interest in the schools, or never get any. Other factors still may enter in. But be the cause what it may, there is little to boast of in a school system which empties its class rooms, between the fifth and sixth grades, of seven out of eight of the pupils that have entered.

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One of the effects of this weakness is a large population of American grown men and women whose education is utterly inadequate to their abilities, and it may be to their opportunities. We know of no better illustration of this than that afforded by the Ferris Institute, which is located at Big Rapids in the lumbered-off regions of northern Michigan. This institution was founded a quarter of a century ago by Woodbridge N. Ferris and his wife, when they realized the narrowness of the public school regime, under which both had worked. Their aim was to educate for life as it is lived, and to this end the Institute places no maximum limit of age upon its pupils. Among the thousand or two who pass through this institution annually are youths of fifteen, young men in their twenties, and men of middle age. From a, b, c's up, through a professional preparatory, and regardless of sex or age, these pupils study and work together, in some cases for a little time, and in others through the course and into the State university, to which their graduation here entitles them. To the limited extent of its facilities, this