

interests and should make it a point to antagonize the republican leaders only when they show signs of a disposition to serve the masses rather than the classes.

## Should Morton Retire?

Recently The Commoner printed an extract from "The Independent" in which the propriety of Secretary Morton's retirement from the cabinet is suggested. It will be seen that Mr. Morton has admitted wilful violation of the Inter-state Commerce law. If Mr. Morton admitted stealing one hundred dollars from another man's pocket would the president retain him in the cabinet? If not, why does he treat differently a confessed violation of the Inter-state Commerce law involving thousands of dollars instead of a paltry hundred? It will be seen that Mr. Morton defended the violation on the ground that honesty was too costly an experiment—what burglar would have stated it more strongly? But Mr. Morton's road made a contract with a salt company controlled by his brothers Joy and Mark Morton, for the sole purpose of giving the brothers a business advantage over competitors. Here is the use of a great railway system for family advantage in violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of the law. Can the president ignore so flagrant an offense? The president desires to stand before the public as the champion of civic righteousness; can he do so and at the same time show indifference to such a record of lawlessness?

The fact that the president is just now engaged in a great struggle with the railroads makes it still more imperative as "The Independent" suggests, that he shall not surround himself with an official environment that will cast suspicion on his own sincerity. If Mr. Morton reciprocates the friendly feeling that gave him a place in the cabinet he will insist upon retiring from the president's official household.

## Attacking Popular Government

The Chicago Tribune is opposing the initiative and referendum on the ground that it is not safe to trust the people. It denies "the invariable wisdom of the committee voting as a whole." It dreams of Athenian mobs and demagogues and fears that the masses could not intelligently decide such questions as, "Should the moon be made of Canadian or Swiss cheese?" etc. This is the poison which some of the republican papers are insidiously administering to their readers—poison that lays destructive hold upon the vital forces of the body politic. While provision should be made against hasty or sudden action, there is no argument that can be drawn from history or from human nature against popular government. The nearer the government is brought to the people the safer, the stronger, the purer it is. The editor of the Tribune ought to read Bancroft's defense of popular government in his address entitled "The People in Art, Government and Religion." It will be found in the seventh volume of "Reed's Modern Eloquence."

## LaFollette's Opportunity

Gov. LaFollette is a lucky man; the failure of the senate to act on the railroad bill at the present session will give LaFollette his opportunity. He enters the senate just at the time when public attention is turned to the railroad question with which he has been dealing for several years. In ability, in courage and in experience he will easily be the leader of the anti-monopoly element in the republican party in the senate and he can furnish the president just what the president badly needs in that body, namely, an aggressive spokesmanship. Usually a new senator has to wait a dignified time before entering actively upon his duties, but dignity gives way to necessity and with a strong anti-monopoly sentiment eager for expression Wisconsin's new senator could not, will not, keep out of the fight if he would.

Gov. LaFollette has the prestige of a succession of victories over the corporate influences of his own state and as he will face in the senate the men who turned him out of the last republican national convention he is not likely to allow senatorial courtesy to delay his attack on the railroad contingent. So far as he is concerned it makes little difference whether he wins his fight in the next congress or in the congress to be elected in 1906—the longer the fight lasts the more conspicuous will become his part, and that he will ultimately

win admits of no doubt. Circumstances have much to do with the success of a public man and just now circumstances are leading LaFollette into a contest from which he is bound to emerge with new honors—if he champions—as his friends expect him to—the interests of the masses on the railroad and kindred questions.

## A Word as to Colleges

A reader of The Commoner recognizing the danger that private colleges, endowed by capitalists, may be biased in their teaching makes an argument in favor of the public schools and the state universities. There is room for both the public college cared for by the state and the private college supported in such a way as to make it free to teach economic truth. The state university can furnish some advantages which the small college cannot furnish, but the small college can supply certain advantages which the larger school cannot furnish.

One advantage about the small colleges is that there can be more of them and that they can be located at convenient points so as to reach a larger number of students. They can also furnish an education at a smaller sum than it is furnished by the larger institutions, either state or private. The cost of tuition is not the only expense that the student has to bear. For instance, at Yale college the cost of board and room is considerably greater than the cost of board, room and tuition at some of the small colleges.

Then, too, there can be a religious instruction in the private colleges which is not possible in the public institutions. Those who oppose sectarianism in education ought to be satisfied to keep sectarianism out of public schools. They ought not to insist upon closing schools in which the student is brought up in a religious atmosphere.

There is room in this country for both the large college and the small college—room for the public institution and the denominational college. It is not necessary that a war of extermination should be waged between them. A healthy rivalry is apt to help both.

## The Guessing Contest

In another column The Commoner reproduces the opinion of Attorney General Moody as to guessing contests, together with the open letter on this subject which the editor of The Commoner addressed to the postmaster general more than a year ago. Mr. Moody's opinion is explicit and advises the postmaster general that he is authorized to refuse the use of the mails to newspapers which engage in guessing contest schemes, such as placing estimates upon the total number of paid admissions to the world's fair at St. Louis or the estimate of the total vote cast for the successful candidate for the presidency.

The attorney general's opinion does not appear to cover what is known as "dot counting" contests, which contests appear to be very popular with some newspaper publishers. The "dot counting" contest should go, along with other latter day lottery schemes, and the tone of Attorney General Moody's opinion with respect to the two particular cases cited justifies the impression that he would hold that newspaper engaging in "dot counting" schemes or similar contests, should be barred from the mails.

In the "dot counting" contest, as in other of these newspaper gambling schemes, in the language of the attorney general "thousands invest small sums in the hope and expectation that luck will enable them to win large returns. A comparatively small percentage of the participants will realize their expectations, and thousands will get nothing. It is, in effect, a lottery under the guise of a 'guessing contest.'"

## "Progress and Poverty" Dinner

It was Mr. Bryan's good fortune to attend the dinner given in New York on January 24 to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of Henry George's great work entitled "Progress and Poverty." The book has, within a quarter of a century, been translated in every prominent language and has exerted a tremendous influence upon the economic thought of the world.

Hamlin Garland presided; Henry George, Jr., gave a history of the writing of the book; Mr. Markham read a poem entitled "The Deathless Dead;" Wm. Lloyd Garrison presented a "Plea for Justice;" Mr. Louis Post discussed "The Economic Issue," and Mr. Bryan submitted a few remarks on "Equality of Opportunity," and incidentally referred to the fact that Tolstoy had

spoken to him in praise of two Americans—George and Garrison, whose sons were then at the banquet table. It was a memorable dinner, attended by many prominent in sociological work. The very air seemed to pulsate with moral enthusiasm.

## Attacking Paper Trust

The attorney general has commenced suit against the paper trust charging it with violating the Sherman law and asking for an injunction. Good for the attorney general. But why does he refuse to enforce the criminal clause? A few convictions would dissolve all the trusts. But the trusts are so bad that small favors from the administration are acceptable.

## An Old Sentiment

The following sentiment, expressed some two hundred years ago, is worthy of remembrance:

"If Reason's reach transcends the sky,  
Why should it then to earth be bound?  
The wit is wrong and led awry  
If mind be married to the ground."

No one is able to take a comprehensive view of life who does not consider the moral as well as the intellectual and physical man.

## Approve The Commoner's Efforts

Commoner readers are taking advantage of the special subscription offer in a way that is having a marked effect upon The Commoner's circulation.

A resident of Hallock, Minn., under date of February 13, writes: "This is legally Abraham Lincoln's birthday and the result of my work today is thirty yearly subscriptions to The Commoner. I enclose list of names and addresses, also money order for \$18 to cover the same."

One of the busiest citizens of Fayette, Mo., under date of February 11, writes: "With this I hand you thirty new subscribers and one renewal for The Commoner, for which find enclosed postoffice money order for \$19."

Under date of February 18, the same Fayette citizen writes: "It is a pleasure to me to hand you within an additional list of thirty-three new subscribers for The Commoner, each of whom has paid the special rate of sixty cents, making a total of \$19.80, and for which amount please find enclosed postoffice money order."

This is the third communication received from the good worker at Fayette and by his efforts alone, eighty-one new subscribers have been entered upon The Commoner's books.

Those who approve of the work The Commoner is doing have the opportunity of rendering material assistance through the special subscription offer. Every reader is invited to co-operate in this work.

According to the terms of this subscription offer, cards, each good for one year's subscription to The Commoner will be furnished in lots of five, at the rate of \$3 per lot. This places the yearly subscription rate at 60 cents.

Anyone ordering these cards may sell them for \$1.00 each, thus earning a commission of \$2.00 on each lot sold, or he may sell them at the cost price and find compensation in the fact that he has contributed to the educational campaign.

These cards may be paid for when ordered, or they may be ordered and remittance made after they have been sold.

The coupon is printed below for the convenience of those who desire to participate in the effort to increase The Commoner's circulation.

THE COMMONER'S SPECIAL OFFER	
Application for Subscription Cards	
5	Publisher Commoner; I am interested in increasing The Commoner's circulation, and desire you to send me a supply of subscription cards. I agree to use my utmost endeavor to sell the cards, and will remit for them at the rate of 60 cents each, when sold. Name _____ Box, or Street No. _____ P. O. _____ State _____ Indicate the number of cards wanted by marking X opposite one of the numbers printed on end of this blank. If you believe the paper is doing a work that merits encouragement, fill out the above coupon and mail it to The Commoner, Lincoln, Neb.
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