

ment ownership, even with the safeguard of a civil service, the railways would be "the biggest and most powerful and most dangerous political machine in the history of the world?" If the civil service system now in vogue should be applied to a government system of railways it would lead to much offensive partisanship. If the president or general manager of a railway could be superseded at each change of administration the railway employes could undoubtedly be influenced by coercion and intimidation. But have we a perfect civil service system in our postal service? Can a system be called perfect, or even tolerable, which permits the president to appoint as postmasters thousands of men who have no knowledge of the postal service? In many cities the assistant postmasters have held their positions for fifteen or twenty years because the incoming postmasters, knowing naught of the postal service, are compelled to rely upon their assistants for the proper management of the post-offices. A true civil service system would make such a farce impossible. It would apply civil service rules to the chief as well as to the subordinates. It would require the retirement of postmasters and the promotion of assistant postmasters according to a fixed rule.

When the people have decided to go in for public ownership they must also make up their minds to exclude politics from government departments by the most drastic laws. At present the people find themselves at a grievous disadvantage when they try to keep the railways out of politics. Although in theory the railways are public servants, in fact they are public despots. In fact they are right now "the biggest and most powerful and most dangerous political machine in the history of the world," and the financiers who control the machine, can and do "give Czar Nicholas and Kaiser Wilhelm cards and spades in the game of despotism." In Germany, where the government owns the railways, the emperor does not wield as much political power as these financiers. In Russia despotism is on its last legs and Czar Nicholas is a ruler only in name.

The railway power in the United States is a despotism of such evil potency that the people are determined to destroy it, in spite of corruption among legislators, judges and executives. They understand that government ownership will present problems of no little complexity, but they know also that these problems can be solved by American genius, ingenuity and patriotism. With the people in control, the civil service system in all departments will be greatly improved and other methods will be adopted to exclude politics.

To keep the railways out of politics at this time is impossible from the very fact that the people do not control their government as they should. The Esch-Townsend bill, which provides for a certain measure of government regulation, is to be passed upon by the United States senate at the next session of congress. That senate is controlled by railway influences, and these influences have banded together for the defeat of the Esch-Townsend bill. The election of senators by direct vote of the people would give the people control over the senate and would speedily bring about government control and government ownership.

VISIT THE FAIR AT LINCOLN

All who visit the Nebraska state fair, which is to be held in Lincoln, September 4 to 8 inclusive, will be amply repaid. The attendance in the last few years has been an inspiration to the management, which has greatly increased the facilities for exhibits. The program promises to be most elaborate and will attract perhaps the largest attendance in the history of the state fair.

Visitors will find such evidences of Nebraska prosperity as will gladden their hearts. They will rejoice because they have been able to increase the total wealth of the state by many millions in spite of railway and trust extortion. They will take pleasure in the fact that this prosperity has been wholly due to their own enterprise and industry, and that if the wealth of the state is not greater it is due to the fact that unjust tribute has been paid in exorbitant freights and trust-fixed prices.

The fair will be visible evidence of the fact that Nebraska is a good place in which to live. All states suffer from trust and railway extortion, but not all states prosper in spite of these drawbacks as Nebraska has prospered. The fair will be a golden earnest of what the future is to be, when the harvests are free, when freight rates are fixed or the railways are owned by the government, and when the trusts have been brought under strict control.

But the Nebraskan need not wait for these things in order that he may find reasons to congratulate himself and to render thanks to the God who withholds the drouth and plague and who provides in such abundance of the fruits of the earth and of the beasts of the field. He will learn that there is a higher law than the law of man and

that those who seek to corner an unjust share of the wealth produced by the toilers of the land are like the little boy who tried to catch the great, round, bright sun which he saw dropping into the valley just beyond the next hill.

PHILANTHROPY AND FIVE PER CENT

A dispatch from Legaspi, P. I., states that Congressman Long of Kansas made an effective speech in which he virtually promised the islanders free trade because "from them there was no fear of competition in any pronounced form."

This is the spirit that breathes through all administration dealings with the Filipinos. When the trusts and great commercial interests have made sure of their five or ten per cent, then our manifest destiny directs us to help the Filipinos. The islands were "thrown into the lap" of the United States and it at once became our duty to instruct the Filipino in self-government. Our philanthropy, however, confined its beneficence to the easy task of giving advice.

On the other hand, our commercial relations with the Filipinos forbade the giving of that real help which would make the islands prosperous and self-government more easily obtainable. Our help did not extend beyond wise counsel, so long as the trusts suspected that the Filipinos might compete with the American manufacturer. But recently it began to be whispered about in trust circles that no pronounced competition was to be feared from the islanders. Then our loving-kindness began to expand and blossom into a perfect flower of philanthropy. But your trust magnate is a cautious man. He takes no chances. He does not allow his philanthropy to get the better of his judgment. While there existed any lingering doubt as to his certainty of five per cent he repressed his philanthropy. He sent over an official party of professional investigators to decide whether benevolence was a safe business proposition. The investigators have made up their minds that the Philippine islands will flourish under free trade and that with an increased purchasing power the islanders will be able to increase five and ten per cent to fifteen and twenty per cent. Therefore philanthropy is good.

REFERENDUM AND THE LOBBY

In dealing with the lobby the people must not forget that the most effective means of destroying its power is the referendum. Such has been the experience in South Dakota, where the reference of legislation to the people has rendered the lobby practically useless.

Everywhere in the nation today dissatisfaction with our legislative bodies, national, state and municipal, is being expressed. This is largely due to the influence of corporation lobbies upon legislators. This influence is apparent not only in cases where good laws are defeated, but where defective laws are adopted. It is a fine art of lobbying to ruin a good measure by injecting some unconstitutionality. When the measure is declared unconstitutional by the courts, the people are apt to cry out against their courts, and while undoubtedly much of the popular protest against the judiciary is well founded, it is noticeable that there is much fault-finding even when the court does its plain duty by pronouncing a defective law invalid.

An illustration of thoughtless criticism may be found in the protest of Governor Hoch against the action of the Kansas Supreme court in declaring unconstitutional the law providing for a state oil refinery under the guise of a branch penitentiary. The Independent neither upholds nor condemns the court for its decision. In this instance it wishes merely to point out the false point of view taken by the chief executive of Kansas. In a speech he said that if he had been on the supreme bench of Kansas he would have found some way to sustain such a necessary law.

This view of judicial duty contains a serious error. It advocates bias in judicial decisions and is a two-edged sword, for it can be, and has often been, used by the unjust judge who has succumbed to the influence of a great corporation. Governor Hoch did not say that the law was constitutional. He merely contended that it should have been declared constitutional because it was a law needed to protect the people of Kansas against the Standard Oil despotism. Is it not possible that the Standard Oil company favored the adoption of this law, knowing it to be unconstitutional? It is a noteworthy fact that the trust did not make a strenuous fight on the law when it came before the Kansas legislature.

Some of the criticism directed against the courts would apply more justly to the lobby-ridden legislatures. Should the Junkin anti-trust law be declared unconstitutional by the Nebraska Supreme court the people might be inclined to complain bitterly, and yet this