

cook told them they would have to end the game and leave the cook car as we wanted to sleep. Then the player who sat with his back to us—he who was cheating and winning, he who “knew just what he was about”—turned round and in a low voice, addressing the cook, said: “Oh, don’t stop the game now; I’m making good money.”

The industrial game—now being supplemented by presidential politics—reminds me of that game of cards. The great majority—believing the game to be a square one, although they know it to be ethically wrong, and economically unsound—intoxicated with the idea that at some time they will be the winners, consent to have the game continue; while the few, as they stack the cards, in many an aside are saying: “Oh, don’t stop the game now; we’re making good money.”

A. J. GRAY.

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THE PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF RAILROADS.

For The Public.

X.

General Observations and Conclusions.

4. Summary.

That public ownership of railroads is a political issue we may consider as a conclusive fact; not necessarily an active political issue, but one which is slowly but surely working its way from its passive into its active state. The general dissatisfaction with the manner in which the railroads have discharged their duties has been so pronounced that even from conservative quarters we have heard utterances to the effect that whatever the faults of public ownership, it would be an improvement on past and present conditions.

In our present inquiry we have therefore endeavored to answer the question whether public ownership of railroads has been successful elsewhere. We have made but few attempts to consider the outcome of a public ownership policy in the United States. If this policy has proved successful, and in some cases eminently successful, elsewhere, why should we doubt its success here? Are we not equally capable of doing what other nations have done?

All we have therefore sought has been the facts. And we have found, by quoting authentic statistical figures, that government ownership of railroads in foreign countries has not proved to be a financial failure. We have seen that the majority of state railways have given returns of from 3.5 to 7 per cent on the capital expended for construction and equipment of the roads. We have found that government railroads are not recent experiments, and that the tendency, after seventy, sixty or fifty years of application of the public ownership policy in the respective countries, is toward more, rather than less, state rail-

roads. We have seen that in the country where the public railways have in all respects reached the highest development, but 8 per cent of all the railways are now in private hands, and that this percentage is constantly growing less. We have found that the bulk of the world’s railways, those of our own country excepted, are operated as government railways; that this has made it possible to render service cheaply, and with financial success. As examples of this we have found that on the largest state railway system in the world the average passenger fare is less than a cent a mile; that in another country a thousand-mile journey can be undertaken at an expense of less than seven dollars; and that at an expense of slightly more than ten dollars the same journey may be made with accommodations far superior to those offered by the coaches in America. We have found that the accommodations offered by existing state railways, particularly in Northern Europe, are of a kind comparable to any, and that the service is rapid and punctual.

We have seen further that freight rates, contrary to current opinion, based on misleading figures, offering no true comparison, are not higher on government railroads, except in very special instances, than on the private railroads in the United States, and that, comparing European state railway systems with European private systems, the public railways invariably furnish cheaper service. And last, but not least, we have found that the safety of travel is greater, and in countries with highly developed state railway systems, far greater, than in our own country. We may add, to complete our statement, that discriminations in rates are unknown, and that the public railway administrations follow the progress in their respective fields fully as closely as do our private managements. Many of the developments and improvements in the railway field have been originated and first adopted by governmental railway systems in Europe.

In short, we have found from our investigation that the claim referred to in the introduction of this series, that “existing government railroads are not managed with either the efficiency or economy of privately managed roads, and the rates charged are not as low, and therefore not as beneficial to the public,” is *absolutely false* in regard to most of existing state railways; and in regard to the rest of them it contains only a half truth.

The facts quoted, however, not only permit us to reject the statement made by the present Republican candidate for the Presidency, as having been uttered either out of ignorance of real conditions, or in subservience to “vested interests”; they also permit those of us who believe in government ownership of public property to claim that government ownership of railroads has proved highly successful everywhere where it has been fairly tried. This, we claim, is because

public ownership of public highways is the only reasonable and logical condition of ownership—in a word, because it is the only condition of ownership which fills the demands of true, genuine democracy, in the deep and real sense of this word.

Let me here repeat, that it should be understood that when we attack private ownership of railroads we attack a condition; we do not attack personalities. If private ownership is a wrong condition, if it has been fruitful of corruption and public degeneration, it is not the past and present owners or managers who are the only ones responsible. We, the people of the United States, who permit this condition to continue are responsible. Let us not as cowards blame others for what in the last instance is due to our own inactivity, apathy, and lack of appreciation of the ideals of a true republic. There are railway officials in the United States who, as men, are of the highest type. It has been said before, and it may well be repeated, that there are in this country able railroad men who, if serving the interests of the whole people, rather than the interests of a private monopoly, would raise the railway system of this country to the foremost place in the world. There are men in the service of the railroads, occupying the seats of directors, who realize the inequity and the attendant evils of private ownership. There are others, in managing positions, who denounce as strongly as anyone the depravity of their stock-gambling superiors. But these men will not come to their own until our railway system is operated for public benefit rather than for private gain. Let it therefore be fully understood that it is the present inequitable system of monopoly we denounce, not the men who are the victims of our institutions.

The railway system of America has an opportunity ahead of it not equaled anywhere in the world, but only the ignorant boaster of his country would claim that we have as yet reached the goal. It is true that America has placed itself foremost in the world in many respects, due to industry, skill, persistence, and energy; and our practical railroad men have carried out a wonderful work. They have proved themselves equal to any occasion where their ability has been permitted to freely exercise itself. Let the fullest opportunity be given to these practical railway men—not to exploit the public for private gain, as many of them have been compelled to do against their will in the past, but to bring the railroads of America up to the highest standard attainable.

This opportunity the people of the United States have in their power to sooner or later give to their practical railroad men; for we can place our transportation systems on the same equitable basis as have our European sister nations. This,

however, we can do only by studying what these nations have accomplished. No prejudice or false patriotism should be permitted to enter into our sincere endeavors to establish the true functions of our government.

It is not intended to here present arguments in relation to the current objections to public ownership. It has been the aim to simply present the facts. But there is one objection to public ownership so frequently offered, and of such a character, that it should never be permitted to remain unanswered. This objection is offered by those who disbelieve in American honesty in public affairs—those who claim that public ownership would be a failure because our public officials would not perform their duties honestly. This claim is an insult to every true American; it is an insult to the highest conception of American manhood, and as such it should be met. Should we, as Americans, whether we be born under the stars and stripes, or have from free choice linked our future with the destinies of the Republic, should we admit that as honest men cannot be found among us as can be found among the individuals of our sister nations? Should we be so forgetful of the highest ideals of true citizenship as to be able to make such a statement without shame?

If in the past public honesty has not been as conspicuous in our various governments as in the European governments, what has been the cause? Is not the cause the very existence of the corrupting influences created by our fostered monopolies? European representatives of the people, it is said, guard their honor jealously; so do also American representatives—of the people. Representatives of private monopoly, of vested interests, however, are, as a rule, not so jealous of their public honor. But, were we free from the corrupting influences, would we not also be free from their representatives? If we eliminate special privileges accorded to vested rights we shall find that even among us there are true, honest, upright men, proud of public confidence, who would place their integrity above all else, and would regain for America one of its nearly lost treasures—the faith in democratic government.

When Americans as a nation lose their faith in American honesty the word "American" will have lost its significance. It will be a misnomer. It had better pass into oblivion. For the American nation was founded on conceptions of freedom, justice, and honesty; and whenever these attributes shall be lost sight of, then let us no more be proud of our country, and let us admit that the prophecy of half a century ago, that republican government would prove to be a failure, will come true.

And still, why do we picture this condition? For this prophecy shall never come true. Whatever be the opinions of the few who have lost sight of the high ideals of Americanism, Americans still have faith in American honesty. Let

the dead bury their dead. But let us who still believe in the future of America, sow the seed of truth. The one reform previously inquired into is but one of the many which shall carry our country and our people forward and upward. It is required of us that we fulfil our duty. Let us shake off that spirit of indifference that holds us down, and let us fearlessly, but intelligently, take one forward step at a time. Let the prejudice of false patriotism be powerless in preventing us from expressing and acknowledging the true state of affairs, and let us not be foiled by the over-estimation of the power of opposition. Then our efforts will create a freer and better America than the America of today, and we shall be able to develop a spirit of true patriotism, of real progressiveness, of justice for the many as well as for the few, and for the few as well as for the many. We shall, in a word, be able to raise our country to that plane where we shall have a right to proudly and justly call it "the land of the free."

ERIK OBERG.

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PRACTICAL POLITICS.

For The Public.

Before the Election.

Now Voter is blithe as a robin in June.
 "Put salt on my trail," is the turn of his tune.
 (The weather is warm, and the Voter is dry,
 And Candidate-Candidate cometh nearby.)
 And Candidate-Candidate bucketh the game,
 And Voter, so blithe, singeth ever the same;
 For be he like robin or jaybird or goose
 He knoweth a thing when a Candidate's loose.

Now Candidate goeth abroad in his might;
 With his wad and his smile he's a beautiful sight.
 His horn he can blow, and a horn he can drink;
 To Him-That-Wears-Two-Horns he tippeth a wink.
 Saith: "Hurry along for the time is at hand
 When Candidate-Candidate saveth the land!"
 But the land of a loser is lost on the day
 That Candidate-Candidate maketh this play.

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After the Election.

A Candidate croucheth alone in his lair,
 And the look on his face would put kinks in your hair.

He diggeth in pocket and findeth a sou;
 He findeth some bills—they are bills overdue—
 He muttereth prayer—of a heathenish kind—
 And is glad, very glad, oh he is—in your mind!—
 For Candidate-Candidate fell off the roof,
 And ye that were "friends" of his, hold ye aloof.

A Candidate cocketh his hat on his ear
 And crieth triumphant: "Oh, look who is here!"
 "Skedaddle!" he saith to those holders of place
 Whose Candidate lost in the Candidates' race.
 "You're nix cummarouse; I have friends of my own."
 And, he addeth, aside, in a quieter tone:
 "I've spent all I had, every God's blessed bean,
 But what I'll get back will make Boston look green."

Poor Voter is gay as a frolicsome wind.
 He bloweth how easy were Candidates skinned.
 He swelleth his chest and he puffeth cigars
 Until urchins hang on, thinking he is the cars.
 And prouder he groweth, and lighter in weight,
 And faster he speedeth to ultimate fate,
 Where things that he getteth will teach him to reck
 That Voter's whole body consisted of neck.

E. J. SALISBURY.

BOOKS

"THE FEMININE PRINCIPLE IN EVOLUTION."

The Cosmic Procession, or the Feminine Principle in Evolution. By Frances Swiney, London. Ernest Bell, York House, Portugal St. W. C. Price, 3s 6d.

These "Essays of Illumination" contain the theory of an "eternal truth" which the author feels called to announce in very positive terms.

"To comprehend fully the deep and sublime significance of the oneness of sex the soul must rise above the personal plane," says Frances Swiney. "We do not say there are two Electricities, negative and positive, but that electricity manifests under a dual aspect. So it is with sex."

Taking for her argument, that the basic source of all phenomena is the eternal creative feminine principle by which all exists, she proceeds to prove her ground by the support not only of the high priests of materialism, but by all the occult and religious legends of every race and time. By a very subtle analysis of the symbolism of every sacred scripture, including the Hebrew, it is shown that the feminine principle is the spirit and substance of all creation. "Thus the word 'Lord' in the original includes the Supernal Mother, but this deeply significant fact has been systematically ignored by the translators and commentators of the Bible, who have been at great pains to suppress every reference to the Divine Feminine throughout the Hebrew Scriptures."

The author draws largely on ancient and theosophic myths and legends for the wisdom and force of her reasoning, but the whole story of the creation, fall and redemption of the human race, as recorded in Jewish and Christian faith, is brought to the proof of "the Divine Feminine as the true beginning, as the true center of manifestation, as the true consummation; for the Divine Mother is designated as the fount of all truth." And we are charged to remember that wherever the word "God" is used by the translators of the Old Testament, the word Elohim, the Supernal Mother, has been thus mistranslated.

The idea which the author of the "cosmic procession" very ably and persistently advocates throughout her well-written "Essays of Illumination," is the oneness of sex, with the feminine as the will force, the creative power, the leader un-