

Robert M. La Follette, Statesman and Reformer



ROBERT MARION LA FOLLETTE of Wisconsin, re-elected governor of the Badger State, is one of the most striking and significant personalities in the American political world. The exponent of a spirit

jeerily hostile to that which had dominated in his state, he deliberately became the central figure in one of the most rancorous political quarrels ever known in the history of Wisconsin.

Governor La Follette first came into national prominence through his militant advocacy of the substitution of direct primaries for delegate conventions for the nomination of candidates for public office. He maintained with a vigor that not only made him a power in the politics of his own state, but at once made him known to the country at large, that direct primaries would restore to the rank and file of the people the control of nominations and destroy the influence held by scheming politicians and unscrupulous corporate interests over delegate conventions. Another reform with which he soon became actively identified was a new and radical system of taxing railroads and other corporate interests. Both of these measures have become embodied in the state law.

Aggressive performer that he is, Governor La Follette has shown himself to be a leader of whom any state or any party well may be proud. He has the gift of oratory so unmistakably within his grasp that even his most implacable enemy would be charmed into listening. He possesses also supreme courage, the most unyielding tenacity of purpose and an almost fanatical belief in himself and his principles. With a positive genius for political strategy, a talent for organization that transforms former leaders into wondering and admiring followers and with the irresistible force of a man of destiny, a man who follows his star without misgiving, Governor La Follette is today a firm footed and admirably equipped traveler on the road which leads to supreme distinction—even, perhaps, to the White House.

Governor La Follette is the first native of the Badger State to become its chief executive. He was born in 1855 in the little village of Primrose, Dane county, a few miles from Madison, the capital of Wisconsin. He was educated within the county, being first a pupil of the public school in his native village and afterward a student at the University of Wisconsin, from which he was graduated in 1879, having paid his way

through college by teaching school. In the following year he was admitted to the bar in Madison. He had scarcely hung out his shingle before he was nominated for district attorney of Dane county. This was exactly what he wanted, and he entered upon the duties with a vigor that could not fail to

bring success. He was elected and held the office for five years, exchanging it for a seat in congress. Although his congressional career was limited, lasting only four years, La Follette succeeded in making a favorable impression on the house. He won instant recognition as an able speaker and took a prominent part in the frame-

work of the McKinley tariff measure. Mr. McKinley was so convinced of his ability that he offered him the trying position of comptroller of the currency, which was promptly declined. The young statesman had already determined upon his future course, and his scheme even then contemplated the re-

had supported him and began his famous crusade against the railroads. He was a candidate before three state conventions for the nomination of governor, but failed to receive it until 1900, when the so-called "half breed" element, of which he had long been the acknowledged leader, obtained the as-

would have grown weary under the burden of such persistent failure. La Follette seemed to receive fresh inspiration at every defeat. He had little money. Arrayed against him were the great railroads, the big corporations and the well entrenched politicians. He had absolutely nothing but

position. Down below the maddened crowd of disappointed political adversaries was sending up a clamor designed to confuse him and make him lose his hold. His old enemies, re-enforced by an army of new ones, attempted to overcome him in the next convention. He triumphed serenely. This year they renewed the struggle, and the battle resulted in the sensational rupture of the Republican party organization in the state. There were two rival conventions, a frantic appeal to the national managers at Chicago, the court's decision and the bitter campaign, followed by a triumphant vindication.

He remembered also that Governor La Follette's victory is not the unequal and inevitable triumph of intellect over forces superior only in numbers. From the very beginning of his aggressive career the most brilliant and the most cultivated men of his own party have been arrayed against him. At one with the radical governor in party essentials, but dissenting widely with him in his methods of dealing with the people, Senator Spooner and Senator Quay, both intellectual and social giants in the Republican ranks long before La Follette was known outside of his own county, have resisted step by step every advance made by the rising phantasm which all the magic of their united influence could not dispel.

In a campaign Governor La Follette is an original and tireless worker. Wherever he appears he attracts a large personal following, and he is careful to overlook no locality, however remote. His office becomes a veritable beehive of industry. By personal letters and printed documents he reaches great numbers of men of local influence in all parts of the state. He is a man of blameless reputation, strong in his likes and dislikes, and is termed by his enemies a dictator and declared to be vindictive. He is eager to be the people's champion. His mind is aglow with the ambition to do great things for the public welfare, but he does not permit his enthusiasm to overtop his good judgment. Above all, he is preternaturally shrewd. He is by no means averse to meeting the enemy with his own tactics; when pitted against La Follette the children of darkness must keep a sharp lookout.

Governor La Follette is forty-nine years of age, but he seems much younger. Although he is Wisconsin born, his family was of Huguenot extraction, and that accounts for his distinctively Gallic name. He is of diminutive stature, but shapely and with a strikingly handsome face and head. In his early

life he was at one time inspired by his trionic ambition, but realized that his lack of presence was prohibitive. Mrs. La Follette was a classmate of the governor at Wisconsin university and is a woman of marked intellectuality and personal charm. There are four children, Fola, Robert, Philip and Mary. **GEORGE H. FICARD.**

NOVEL TAXES.

A couple of hundred years ago a very extraordinary tax was levied on bachelors at Eustham, in the state of Massachusetts. It was there duly enacted that every unmarried man should every year so long as he remained in that condition kill half a dozen blackbirds or three crows. In order to show that he had discharged this obligation he was mulcted in the tax of the heads of his feathered victims.

Not very long since it was seriously proposed in this country to levy a tax on houseless who became the wives of foreign noblemen. A bill for that purpose was introduced in the New York legislature which provided that a duty of 2 per cent should be imposed on the dowry of any woman who married a foreign nobleman in that state or whose dowry was paid out of the revenues of any property within its boundaries. The proceeds of this novel tax were to be devoted to the establishment of manual training schools for females and the provision and maintenance of homes for aged and destitute members of the same sex. But, unfortunately for those two very commendable objects, this measure for the taxation of impecunious noblemen's American brides failed to become law.

DOWN WITH DIFFICULTIES.

You will find that the habit of minimizing annoyances or difficulties of making the best of everything that comes to you, of magnifying the pleasant and the agreeable and reducing to the least possible importance everything that is disagreeable and unpleasant will help you wonderfully not only in your work, but also in your attainment of happiness.

It transforms the disagreeable into the agreeable, takes the drudgery out of distasteful tasks, eases the joys of life wonderfully, and it is worth infinitely more than money. The sunny, buoyant, cheerful soul manages, without losing his equilibrium, to glide over difficulties and annoyances which throw others off their balance and make them miserable and disagreeable. By the alchemy of serenity he extracts from the annoying rocks in his path the precious metal which enables him to do something worth while.



AS A SCHOOLTEACHER.



ROBERT M. LA FOLLETTE.



AS LAWYER.

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work of his party in the Badger State. He went back to Madison and resumed the practice of his profession, wisely regarding that action as a stepping stone to further opportunity. In 1890 he was again a candidate for congress, but was defeated. Undaunted, he immediately allied himself with the disgruntled wing of the party which

cendency on the floor of the convention and amid the wildest enthusiasm named its favorite for first place on the ticket. His previous failures to obtain the nomination had in no way worked to his disadvantage. On the contrary, they had served to enhance his reputation as a man of purpose and strong resolution. A less indomitable spirit

his grim determination and his magnetic force. He intrusted himself and his cause to the people, and from that moment the reform movement took definite shape. He had not misjudged his court of final arbitration. He was elected by 100,000 majority. Having attained the summit, it required a steady head to maintain his

he probably did not know that they had just won a fight at Otjhimana-pero. Most of the black hair used in wigs and "switches" comes from the convents of Italy and Spain, while the fair and red hair comes mainly from the heads of Russian, Swedish, German and Danish peasant girls. An eel has two separate hearts. One beats 60, the other 160 times a minute. In Dutch Guiana the women carry upon their persons all the family sav-

ings in the shape of heavy bracelets, anklets, necklaces and even crowns of gold and silver. The people of Belfast are interested as much in the building of the Allan turbines as in the construction of the next challenger for the America's cup. About 9 per cent of young Germans are found to be unfit for military service. Of the beggar and vagabond class no less than seventy in a hundred are not fit for soldiering. The total tonnage entering and clear-

ing at the port of London in 1903 was 20,000,000, an increase of 20,000 tons. New Britain, Conn., with its population of 30,000, gets along with its policeman by day and only one at night. It is estimated that 5 per cent of about \$85,000,000, of the annual income from American railroads goes to foreign investors. The best corks come from Algeria. There are 2,500,000 acres of cork forests in that country.

HERE AND THERE.

The United States has twenty-six and one-quarter miles of railroad for every 10,000 people. Britain has five and one-third miles per 10,000 inhabitants.

Agriculture is so bad in Russia that the average yield of wheat per acre is little more than one-third the average yield from English soil.

The Vienna police are about to experiment with a phonograph in taking

a prisoner's answers to questions asked in the preliminary examination, so that when the actual trial takes place there may be no dispute as to what he said.

The public health and marine hospital service costs \$1,000,000 a year. Following the abolition of the lockstep and the cropped head in New York state prisons has come the doing away with the stripes on convicts'

clothing, and 3,000 suits minus the stripes are being made.

In Tibet nearly every public office has two incumbents. One is supposed to be a check on the other. But sometimes this dual authority does not work well—in war, for example.

Since 1840 the world's production of meat has been increased 67 per cent and grain 423 per cent.

To do reverence to the memory of an ardent smoker named Ondersmans who had died in Rotterdam all his old cro-

nies came to the funeral smoking long clay pipes. Ondersmans left a year of money to pay the expenses of a yearly smoking concert to keep his memory green.

The German government is receiving \$17,000 daily from pictorial post cards passing through the mails. The average daily number is 1,446,933.

When the Kaiser promised to inscribe on the flag of the German troops who are fighting the Hereros in South Africa the names of the battles they won

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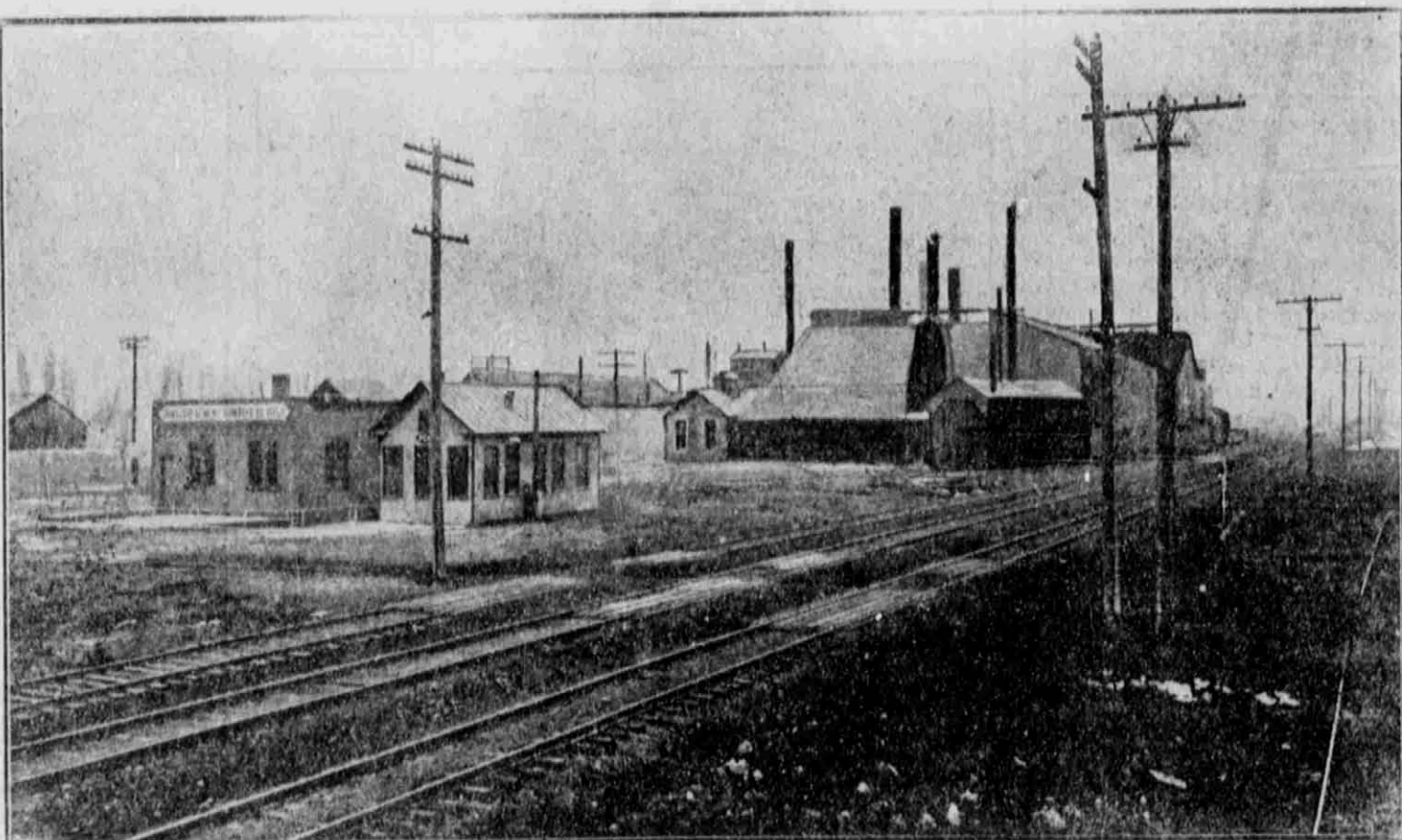
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1898 100 Barrels per day
1900 250 Barrels per day
1902 350 Barrels per day
1904 500 Barrels per day

We are Growing
There's a Reason

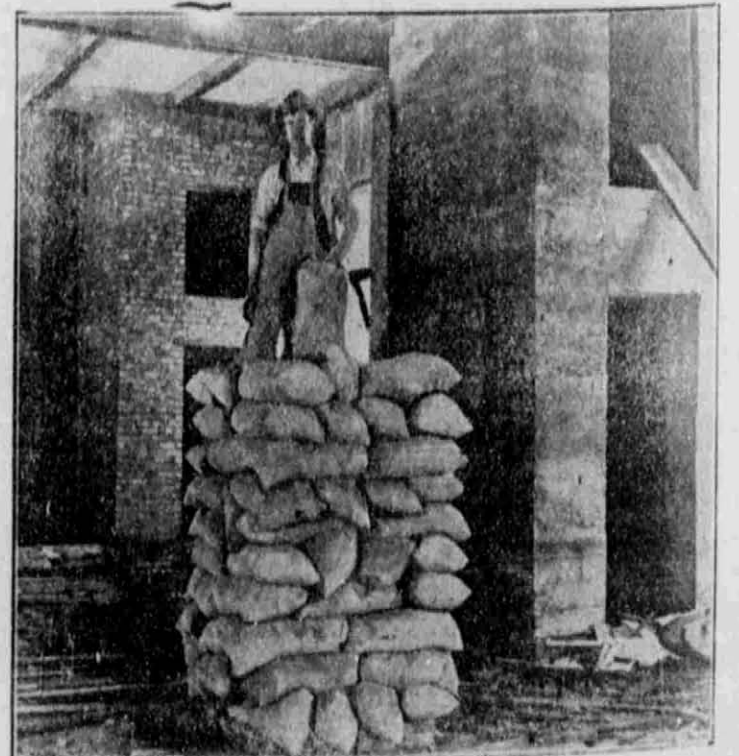
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Concrete
Floors
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United States
Government
Building

Floor Slab
15 feet
x
5 ft. 10 in
x
3 1-2 in.



Showing dead load of 8190 lbs.
or 819 lbs. per sq. ft.