

# GOOD GOVERNMENT.

Speech Delivered by Hon. Joseph W. Folk

At Shelbyville, on Saturday, September 12, 1903, to a Crowd of Eight Thousand People.

"This is the most moral county of Missouri. It has the highest regard for God and man. We have no fear of the knife which is probing for hoodlers. We have good government, honest officials and an empty jail.

"There is not a man, woman or child in this county who does not seek to honor the greatest exponent of good government, not only of Missouri and the United States, but of the world. This county is in sympathy with this work in the past and in the present, and is with him in his fight against the hoodlers.

"It is said by some that this is the hoodler state, but certainly we have a man who stands up and enforces the law against those who put him in office. He had friends who told him, 'Don't do it.' The corporations said, 'Don't do it,' but he did it.

"I now present this man, Circuit Attorney Joseph W. Folk of St. Louis." Such was part of the introduction which Mr. Folk received Saturday at the hands of Congressman James T. Lloyd of the First district, who presided over the sixteenth annual reunion of the old settlers of Shelby county.

Mr. Folk spoke as follows:

It has been 63 years since the first term of the circuit court in Shelby county. The grand jury evidently could find no wrongdoing, for no indictments were returned. At the next term a number of the citizens of the county were charged with "betting on horses," an offense evidently very common in those days. I judge from that, those early settlers were from Kentucky or Tennessee. The county has been remarkably free from serious crimes, an evidence of a high order of citizenship and of good government.

Thomas Jefferson once said: "The time to guard against corruption is before it shall have gotten hold of us. It is better to keep the wolf out of the fold than to trust drawing his teeth and talons after he shall have entered." The people must be constantly on the alert to keep corruption out. Whenever the people become inattentive to public affairs, corruption follows as a logical consequence. Under our form of government all authority is vested in the people, and by them delegated to those who represent them in official capacity. It is a valuable thing to be a citizen in a republic such as ours, for each citizen is a constituent part of sovereignty. Under a monarchy, the king is the fountain head of power; with us the people are. As a king should be careful and watchful in the exercise of his authority, so should the people in a republic. The people, in giving attention to public affairs, are attending to their own business; yet, how careless they become at times; how indifferent to their own welfare they often are. The people are partners in the affairs of state. Each individual has as much power in its management as any other, yet the majority of people are neglectful of this, their highest duty. If a firm is composed of a dozen men, and ten of them give no attention whatever to the business, leaving it entirely to the two, they cannot complain when they awake some morning and find that they have been plundered. When good citizens voluntarily abdicate the throne of American manhood by neglecting civic duties and leave the government to the vicious minority, they may expect to be robbed by dishonest officials. Thomas Jefferson wrote that "man is the only animal that devours his own kind," and that "if once the people become inattentive to public affairs, congress and assemblies, judges and governors shall become wolves. It seems to be the law of human nature in spite of individual exceptions." The majority of officials, I believe are honest, else we would have anarchy. It is true, however, that civic evils increase as the exercise of civic duties by good citizens decreases.

The indifference of electors is the weakness of a republican form of government. To arouse them and make them realize the necessity of exercising their civic duties is a matter of supreme importance. The responsibility of citizenship is not discharged by a vote on the day of some general election. Every good citizen should attend his party primary. Even this is not all; he should take part in the first meeting of precinct, ward or township where tickets for general elections or primaries are born. Ninety-nine per cent. of the people are honest, but the one per cent. of dishonesty is perniciously active and works while the ninety-nine sleep. The disregard by good citizens of their civic duties breeds corruption by leaving the selection of those who should represent the people to the base and

sordid. These demand of those elected to office that they be served even if the public interests suffer. If the official refuses to prostitute his office for the benefit of this class he is put under the ban of their disapproval and forever disbarred from holding any other office, that is, if they have their way about it.

It is the duty of the state to protect the individual in the enjoyment of his rights. Citizenship carries with it privileges. It is, however, a reciprocal relationship. The citizen owes a duty to the state. He must contribute to its support politically as well as financially. His other civic duties are as morally binding as his taxes. Patriotism does not mean merely love of country in times of war. There is as much patriotism in the ballot as there is in the bullet. The patriotism of peace is as necessary to free government as the patriotism of war. Indeed history shows that republics are in more danger in peace than in war. Where wars, pestilences and all other calamities combined, have destroyed one republic, corruption has undermined a score.

As the people are partners in the state, it is well enough to take stock now and then. If there is anything wrong, let the people know it. It is always best to let the people know the truth. To show a man that he has been robbed is not to slander him. You are charging the robber with dishonesty, not the robbed. There are no more honest people anywhere (than Missourians), and they are determined to dislodge the vampires who have fastened themselves on the state.

We are told corruption exists in other states. That is probably true, but we will let the people of other states do their own housecleaning, while we attend to Missouri. Let Missouri "show" the other states and set an example for them to follow. Let us make Missouri the first of all the states in civic righteousness.

While other cities may have been as corrupt as St. Louis, and other states afflicted with as many dishonest officials as Missouri, it is true that at no time or place has so much corruption been laid bare as here. It seemed to be the usual and accepted thing. In St. Louis franchises were sold unblushingly by officials, the money going not into the city treasury, but into the itching palms of these public plunderers. No bill of consequence passed the municipal assembly unless the members were paid for their votes. The people of St. Louis elected thieves to be makers of laws for them. In state affairs dishonest legislators have sold their votes to a scandalous extent.

The next highest official in state government betrayed his party and his people and turned out to be a hoodler. Legislators made a commodity of laws and passed or defeated bills for their own gain, not for public good. They flaunted their corruption in the faces of the people and outraged every sense of honor and decency.

The responsibility rests on the people for correcting this state of affairs. Unless the people do something about it, all these disclosures will be of no avail. The epidemic of bribery has been checked, now the people must do their part. No man who has the welfare of his state at heart can afford now not to take an active part and interest in public affairs. If the corruptionists are ever to be annihilated in Missouri, now is the accepted time to do it. It is not likely that so much emendation to our public plunderers will be found again for years to come. Every citizen has a work to do in this critical period of the state's history. The good or ill effects of the hoodler disclosures in Missouri depends upon what the people do about it. Let the action of the people be such that the name "Missouri" will stand for civic honor everywhere.

The first duty of the people in each county should be to elect to the general assembly only men of high integrity, men who can be honest in action. No man who is in the slightest degree tainted with the influences of corruption should be trusted, no matter how capable he may be. We do not need so much brilliancy and wit in legislative affairs, but we do need more common everyday honesty. No ability in a public official can compensate for dishonesty. Insincerity on the part of a public official is a species of dishonesty. The man who denounces corruption in public and then in private makes secret alliances with corruptionists is not apt to be of much benefit to the people in official position. The people are entitled to honest treatment, and the practice of political parties putting planks in platforms merely to catch votes should be condemned. The principle should be recognized that honesty is the best policy in public and private life. Do not elect a legislator whose private character will not bear the closest scrutiny. Evil will come out sooner or later. If a man's private character be bad it will show itself in time in public life.

An official does not have to steal from the treasury in order to be dishonest. If he appropriates to his own use the powers which he holds in trust to be exercised for public good, he is just as dishonest as if he were to put his hands into the public treasury and filch from it the public money.

In the beginning of our government, it was found that public affairs could

not be well administered without party organizations. It is through parties that men come to an agreement as to public policies and announce their principles and intentions. One man may be just as honest and just and patriotic as another, yet they may differ on governmental questions. I accord to all others the right to think as they please on public matters, but for my part I believe in the teachings of Thomas Jefferson, for which the Democratic party stands to-day. "Equal and exact justice to all, special privileges to none," should be the golden text of free government, and it embraces all the doctrines of true Democracy. Parties are made for the public. The interests of the public must always come before party. So long as the Democratic party for instance serves the public better than any other party it is entitled to and should receive public confidence and support. Public officials are usually placed in office by party organizations to be servants of the public, not simply party agents. One may be in private life a Democrat or a Republican, but when he steps into public office he should, in the exercise of his official functions, have the public weal first in view. After all, he who serves the public best serves his party best. A party organization is entitled to credit for selecting faithful public servants, and it can not evade responsibility for the unfaithful. If a political party condones wrongdoers it should be condemned by the public. A party that turns off its rotten limbs is entitled to credit. The weeding out of public corruption is the honor of a party, not its disgrace. I am a Democrat, but I do not believe a Democratic lawbreaker is any better than a Republican lawbreaker. Both are criminals. I believe in exposing and punishing Democratic rascals the same as Republican rascals. Officials are not elected to prosecute only political opponents, but to enforce the law impartially against all offenders, Democrats or Republicans. The cloak of Democracy should be torn from him who tries to use it to hide his corruption. If wrongdoing exists, the sooner it is discovered and stopped the better for the party and the better for the state. Under no circumstances should our eyes be closed to corruption for fear that by making a fuss about it the party might be injured. I have no patience with such talk. The enforcement of law can not hurt any party unless the organization in some way is particeps criminis. It should not injure any organization to get rid of public plunderers. If a party can not get along without rascals the people will get along without that party. There can be no trucking to hoodler influences at this time. The watchword must be: "No compromise with public plunderers." Any party that tries to get the hoodler vote in Missouri will reap a whirlwind and should meet with disaster. The only way to stamp out corruption is to strike it hard whenever and wherever it shows itself. There can be no conciliation directly or indirectly between civic honor and civic depravity.

There should be a constant search for corruption. It is an undertaking of some degree of delicacy to ferret it out. Enemies must be made in the very effort to find corruptionists. Men will complain because they are interrogated in reference to depravity. In the course of investigation, individuals may be injured, but it should be remembered that one who has done nothing is in no danger. No honest man can be hurt by investigation. No dishonest man has any right to object because his misdeeds are made public. Publicity and enforcement of law are the chief antidotes for corruption. Some people who secretly sympathize with corruptionists appear to get very indignant because reporters obtain from witnesses facts regarding corruption and publish them. Do they mean to say that the people are not entitled to know who the rascals are? The people are the ones most interested, and if they are being plundered and have been betrayed by any man, the sooner they know it the better. There can be no honest objection to publicity as long as the truth is told, and no one can yet dispute that score. No innocent man has been besmirched in the slightest degree. The interests of justice and the mandates of the law as to inquisitorial proceedings, must be carefully guarded, but things the people have a lawful right to know they are entitled to. If rottenness exists in civic affairs it should not be hidden. There is no secret cure for corruption. If it exists, let "hell be raised" until it is eradicated.

The enforcement of the law against bribery is of the highest importance to the commonwealth. Other offenses violate one law while bribery strikes at the foundation of law itself. If bribery is allowed to go on the consequences of the violation of other laws may be escaped by bribery. The heinousness of the crime has been realized by the people of all ages. It has ever been the greatest foe to democratic government.

The purpose of the law in punishing crime is not revenge, but as an example to others as to what they may expect if they commit similar crimes. To accomplish this the punishment should follow the crime. A distinguished justice of the supreme court of the United States has written an

article published in a well-known magazine, advocating the abolition of appeals in criminal cases. While we may not be ready to go to that extent, it is unfortunately true that there is entirely too much laxity in the enforcement of the criminal law. The criminal law has come to be regarded as a machine for the protection of the guilty instead of the punishment of the guilty. With us a man may be solemnly tried for a felony; a jury of his peers may pronounce him guilty and sentence him to the penitentiary, yet if he be wealthy or have influential friends he can immediately give bond pending appeal, and walk out of the court along with the jury that convicted him. The wretch who is unable to give bond must abide his time in patience within the penitentiary walls, while his appeal is being passed on. This system is not democratic. It is not "equal and exact justice to all, special privileges to none," for it gives to the rich man his liberty on his appeal and denies it to the poor man. I have some sympathy for the man who comes into court charged with crime, the result largely of environment, but I have none for the man who has about him the cloak of respectability and glamour of wealth, who deliberately cleans out municipal warders and plunders the people of an entire state. If mercy be shown, I would have it extended to those who know not what they do when they violate law.

The right to bail after conviction should exist not as a matter of right, but solely on the doubt that may exist as to the defendant's guilt. A law should be enacted providing that after conviction for a felony there shall be no stay of execution on appeal unless a judge of the supreme court, upon an inspection of the record shall determine that there is a reasonable doubt of his guilt, and probable cause for the appeal. When the evidence of guilt is plain and clear and there is no error in the trial, it is a mockery on justice to have a defendant immediately upon the verdict of the jury being announced, merely sign a bond and go his way as if nothing had happened. There are times when this looseness of judicial proceedings breeds a spirit of mob violence in the people. Good government demands a correction of this condition. There is a statute on the books now that evidently aimed to accomplish this result, but it has been rendered nugatory by other statutes and judicial constructions.

The corrupt legislator traffics in the honor of a sovereign people. The soul of the state is its honor, when that is gone all is lost. Corruption costs in civic honor; it costs in money, for every dollar paid a corrupt official must come out of the people in one way or another; above all, the cost of corruption is the inevitable decay of the government where it is tolerated, and the undermining of the liberties of the people.

Civic depravity can not exist if the people make up their minds not to permit it. There is nothing so powerful as public sentiment. There can be no stronger organization than the hearts and consciences of the people. The corruptionists can not stand before the sentiment of a just, intelligent and aroused people. Let that opinion have a free course; let it be pronounced in thunder tones; let it open the ears of the deaf; let it open the eyes of the blind and let it everywhere be proclaimed what we of this great state think of the principle of civic righteousness and of that corruption we abhor. Let the decree be announced and enforced, that the corruptionists must go.

Rot Returns from Preachers.

Of all the brilliant preachers of modern times no one shone more resplendently in conversation than the eloquent Baptist minister, Robert Hall. For all whining pietists, for all oracular utterances of commonplace, all angles for praise, in the pulpit or elsewhere, the great preacher had an ineffable contempt. One day a sleek, querulous old man belonging to his congregation met him in the street and said: "Ah, Mr. Hall, you have never been to see me, sir. I've—I've been very ill; I've been at death's door, Mr. Hall." "Why didn't you step in?" was the quick response. When asked for advice by a young man who desired to enter the ministry, and who gave as a reason that he wished not to bury his talents in a napkin, Hall replied: "Then put them in a pocket handkerchief, sir; that will be large enough!"

Some years ago a man in Alabama lost a dearly-loved wife, and expressed his grief in these words, inscribed on her tombstone: "The light of mine eyes hath gone out." Within a year he married again. A friend of Bishop Wilmer, walking with him in the graveyard, asked what he thought of the propriety of the words since the new nuptials. "I think," said the bishop, "the words 'But I have struck another match' should be added."—Saturday Evening Post.

A yellow-fever epidemic prevails in Mexico. It is reported that 2,300 persons have died at Linares. A shotgun quarantine prevails at Monterey, Bawel and Linares. Telegraph companies at St. Louis have been forced to hire men instead of boys to deliver messages, the opening of the schools being responsible for the scarcity of youngsters.

# FLORIDA SWEEP BY HURRICANE

Many Lives Lost and Property Loss Will Reach Millions.

## HALF THE ORANGE CROP RUINED

Many Sections Cut Off From the Outside World and No Communication Can Be Had—One Town Completely Washed Away.

Jacksonville, Fla., Sept. 15.—The wires south of Palm Beach and Tampa are still down, and will not be in operation for a day or two. Further details of the destruction wrought by the hurricane have been received by mail and passengers on the incoming trains.

The steamer Inghalva of Liverpool, owned by the Inch Shipping Co., from Galveston, laden with lumber and cottonseed meal for Hampton Roads, went ashore near Boynton Friday night. The ship's steering gear broke, and she floated at will, striking the beach with great force and breaking into three pieces. The captain, mates and 14 of the crew were saved. Nine were drowned, among them the engineer. The small boat, with five men, was battered to pieces by the waves, and its occupants drowned.

The schooner Martha T. Thomas, 750 tons, Capt. Watts, cargo of lumber Appalachicola for Baltimore, was wrecked nine miles south of Jupiter. The schooner is split in half. The crew were all saved.

At Palm Beach the damage was serious. Grunser's opera house was partly inundated, as were eight other business blocks, which were also damaged in other ways. All the boats on the Lake Worth water front, excepting three, were wrecked and sunk. The Hotel Royal Poinciana was slightly damaged.

Two lives were lost in Tampa by the storm. Louis Baron, a cigarmaker, who was struck by the falling cornice of a building, died the next day. His skull was fractured. L. Y. Hunnicut, a motorman, met his death near the Cuesta Rey cigar factory in West Tampa. He received a shock from a live wire, which proved fatal.

In Ybor City several cigar factories were badly damaged.

Passengers arriving here, Monday, by train from Tampa report the property loss there due to the hurricane at about \$1,000,000.

It is expected that half the orange crop has been cut off around Tampa and one-fourth on the east coast.

It is feared that many of the beautiful winter homes of northern people have been swept away or practically ruined.

There are no wires south of Tampa, and trains are delayed. What has happened at Punta Gorda, Punta Rassa and Miers is not known. It is reported that Punta Rassa has been completely washed away, but no communication with the place has yet been possible.

Owing to the timely warning of the weather bureau all shipping remained in the harbor after Friday morning. It is feared that the schooner Eva J. S. Henton, which sailed for New Orleans early Friday, has been lost. Much apprehension is also felt for the steamship Johnstone, which is reported to have sailed from Mobile for Tampa last Friday.

Middle and west Florida are entirely cut off from the outside world. A train which left here Monday morning for River Junction could get no further than Greenville. There is no wire connection beyond Drifton. Both of these places are approximately 100 miles west of Jacksonville. Nothing is known or can be learned here of the storm which swept the middle portion of the state.

## WINTRY WEATHER COMING.

The Corn and Wheat Crops of the Central West Threatened by Coming Frost.

Chicago, Sept. 15.—Creeping steadily eastward, the freezing weather that now centers in the Dakotas is reaching out to threaten the corn and wheat crops of the central west. The frost is expected to reach Missouri and Illinois to-day or to-morrow, and may reach as far down as Kansas, unless checked by a change of conditions.

A difference of 20 degrees in temperature is noticed between eastern and western Iowa. At Des Moines the temperature was 70 degrees, while at Omaha it had fallen to 50, and was still going down. A greater difference was observed in Kansas City.

Thousands of cattle and sheep are freezing on the plains of the northwest as the result of the unprecedented heavy snow storm for this season of the year. Railroad traffic is blocked by snow fall of ten inches in the Dakotas, Colorado, Wyoming and Montana and the entire British Northwest is prostrate in the grip of a frigid wave.