

# The Public

Fourth Year.

CHICAGO, SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 1901.

Number 166.

**LOUIS F. POST, Editor.**

Entered at the Chicago, Ill., Post-office as second-class matter.

For terms and all other particulars of publication, see last column of last page.

The price of beef is advancing. But let no one complain. This is a peculiarity of the McKinley brand of prosperity. Bigger incomes for trusts; heavier living expenses for their victims.

Mrs. Nancy B. Irving's offer of \$1,000 reward for any successful business man who can conduct his business for one month without lying, has stirred up a tremendous commotion in Chicago. The offer seems to have rubbed a raw spot. It has also called out many responses. Two bank presidents, presuming upon Mrs. Irving's inability to make a conclusive test, have applied for the reward. But cold chills must have vibrated up and down their respective spines when she icily announced her purpose to look into their tax records before paying either of them the money.

The Chicago grand jury, which has refused to indict Dr. Dowie, merits the strongest kind of commendation. The whole local press was mendaciously hot upon Dowie's trail. It hounded him as only a sensational and irresponsible band of newspapers can. Then the public officials took up the cry, and with no legal grounds for action strove to secure an indictment as they seldom strive when real but unsensational crime stalks abroad. Added to this were the indefensible action of the financiers, and the hue and cry of doctors and clergymen whose professional prejudices rather than their civic obligations govern their opinions on questions of public order. To cap all, Dowie often makes himself appear to be a character who would naturally excite in the thought-

less an itch to indict him whether there were legal grounds for it or not. Yet the grand jury, unlike the coroner and his jury, has calmly, judicially and sensibly decided that as Dowie has committed no crime it will find no indictment.

In Florida a negro was charged a few days ago with assaulting and murdering a white woman. He sought refuge with his own race, and they, law and order fashion, brought him to the jail to stand trial. But he was immediately seized by a white mob, carried to the place of his alleged crime, saturated with oil, and burned at the stake. Which, say you, are better fit for self-government—the white mob who committed, and their white neighbors who approved, that infamously barbaric defiance of law, or the negroes who brought this alleged criminal of their own race to the officers of justice, supposing in their simplicity that he would have the protection of the law and its officers and of a law-abiding community?

American patriotism blazed forth in newspaper head lines with meteoric splendor when the cable told of the glorious victory of William C. Whitney's "great brown colt" at the Derby races. This typographical illumination was enhanced in brilliancy by the lustrous fact that an American jockey had made "the nation's glory all the greater," because he "was the winning horse's rider." When American horses and horse fanciers and horse jockies win British horse races so gloriously, it really doesn't matter how much the administration and the supreme court (5 to 4) drag "old glory" through imperial mud.

The state tax commission of Minnesota has a problem to solve. It

must draft a bill for improving tax methods without coming in collision with the state constitution, which requires the general property tax. Since the commissioners appear to realize the absurd injustice of personal property taxes—unjust because, for one thing, they fall with excessive weight upon farming communities; absurd because farming communities nevertheless demand them—this problem is not wholly unlike that of the immovable body and the irresistible force. Perhaps the easiest way out of the difficulty would be to devise some scheme of constitutional franchise taxation sufficient to raise state revenues, and then recommend a constitutional amendment permitting local option in taxation for local revenues.

At the recent Australian commonwealth elections of members of the federal parliament, the Hare system of proportional representation was used throughout the island state of Tasmania. This was the largest scale on which the proportional method of voting has ever been tested. Proportional voting, it should be understood, is a system under which electors may vote for as many different parliamentary candidates as they wish, indicating which is their first choice, which their second, which their third, and so on. When the ballots are counted, the candidates who are found to be the first choice of a majority of the voters are at once declared elected. If they have more votes than they need, these surplus ballots are counted for their respective second choices. Then third choices are taken up, and so on until the full parliamentary delegation has been chosen by a majority of votes for each. At the election in Tasmania the total number of spoiled

ballots was less than 1,000—no more than were usually spoiled under the old system. As it happened, the persons elected were those who received the largest number, each, of first choice votes. The election, therefore, failed to exemplify some of the more complex features of the system. But as only three candidates out of the 11 senators and representatives to be elected received a majority of first choice votes, the work of assigning second choice votes became necessary. The system seems to have worked satisfactorily. Its principal advantage consists in destroying the effectiveness of party nominations. Voters can support their first choice for an office without risking, as under our system they do, the defeat of their second choice as well as their first. That is, they can vote for a minority candidate without "throwing away" their vote.

On the whole, the federal elections in Australia do not turn out to have been so bad for the free traders as they were at first reported. These elections, held on the 31st of March, were for the members of the first federal parliament. The first reports to come to this country were in substance that the free traders had carried the senate and the protectionists the lower house. Later reports put this somewhat differently. The Barton ministry, which is protectionist, has a majority of 12 in the lower house, and is in a minority of two in the senate. That would seem to be only another way of stating what the first reports stated. But it is not so. The Barton ministry represents other political interests besides protection, and part of its support in the federal parliament comes from free traders who are with the protection ministry only on other points. This ministerial party in parliament is described as the most heterogeneous fiscal following a ministry ever had, ranging from protectionists, who are commercial prohibitionists, through all the gradations of high and low tariff men to absolute and avowed free traders. Competent

Australian judges of economic conditions predict that the ministry cannot survive its tariff proposals. If it proposes protection it is likely to lose six or seven of its free trade following, men who are anxious for a good excuse to break away. If it leans far enough toward free trade to hold these members, it will lose protection support.

Whether the present ministry succeeds in carrying a tariff measure, or resigns, and Mr. Reid, the opposition leader, forms an anti-protection ministry, in either event it is not probable that the measure will satisfy either party. It will be fought over at the next election, three years hence. What the result of that election will be, cannot, of course, be foretold; but free traders are now confident that they will go back with a majority. Even in Victoria, which was always protectionist as a colony, before the federation was formed, the free trade campaign last winter was aggressive and effective. A superfluity of local and minor issues kept the free trade delegation to the federal parliament from Victoria down to four out of a total of 23; but three of the other 19, though provisionally supporters of the Barton ministry, and therefore nominally protectionists, are in fact free traders, and at the next election the Victoria free traders will probably secure at least ten seats.

One of the contests in Victoria in the late election, though lost to the free traders, will almost certainly be won by them at the next trial of strength. They were led with great ability by Max Hirsch, who is conceded to have won a moral victory in what was regarded at first as a hopeless campaign. The district was strongly protectionist to begin with. Then there were adverse political complications locally. Piled on top of these obstacles was the fact that Mr. Hirsch is a German, and the Germans in Australia have excited political prejudice by sympathizing with the Boers. On top of that again was

a widespread hostility to Mr. Hirsch among farmers, because he is a famous Australian single tax advocate, and the farmers had been taught that as such he sought to put all the burdens of taxation upon their class. But in spite of these apparently insuperable obstacles, besides the difficulties in the way of a poor man's reaching an electorate of some 7,000 in a country so sparsely settled that he was obliged to travel 1,800 miles with horse and buggy, and 3,000 miles by train, in order to make 150 speeches, Mr. Hirsch soon had his adversary completely routed. This was so evident that the adversary's party withdrew him, although he was conceded to be their strongest man in the district, with but a single exception. The stronger man was put forward in his place. Even then Mr. Hirsch would have won the seat, but for the local ambitions of a candidate of Mr. Hirsch's own party for a seat in what we should call the state legislature, from the legislative district of Mr. Hirsch's new opponent. Mr. Hirsch's opponent had three times defeated that candidate, and was even then occupying the legislative seat; so, in order to get him out of the way, the legislative candidate and his friends threw their votes to Hirsch's opponent. This, and this alone, defeated Mr. Hirsch. He carried every legislative district but his adversary's, and would have carried that had not his own party support in that district been diverted from him, as already explained, to promote his adversary out of the way. As it was, Mr. Hirsch had 3,091 votes in the federal parliamentary district, to 3,632 for his adversary. In consequence of his having polled so large a vote and being defeated by a majority so narrow, together with his having made an astonishingly effective free trade and single tax campaign, his return to parliament at the next election is regarded as certain.

There were remarkable developments elsewhere in these Australian elections. So completely had the

war fever died down that at the local parliamentary elections, even in Melbourne, pro-Boers were successful at the polls; and in Queensland "patriotic" labor members were dropped by the voters, while those who had staunchly opposed the conquest of the Boer republics were successful favorites. In the federal contests, although the state of Victoria remained protective and there is nominally a protection majority in the federal parliament, as stated above, yet New South Wales maintained her free trade attitude, and South Australia, Tasmania, and West Australia, hitherto protectionist, returned majorities against protection. In West Australia the protectionists were politically almost annihilated. In this state as well as in Hirsch's district of Victoria, the single taxers came just in sight of success. The president of the West Australia single tax league, J. A. Thompson, a candidate for the federal senate, was seventh in the poll for a delegation of six. Similar exasperating fortunes attended the single taxers of New South Wales, where Mr. Lonsdale polled over 3,000 on that ticket only to be defeated by four votes. The leading single tax candidate in South Australia was Crawford Vaughan, who ran for the federal house of representatives. The delegation numbers seven, and there were 17 candidates. Mr. Vaughan was a "straight out" single tax candidate, yet he stood eleventh and polled 11,800 votes. It will be peculiarly interesting to American readers to learn that questions of conflict of power between the Australian states and the central government have already taken shape, and that Hamiltonism and Jeffersonism are dictating the direction of party lines of division.

Senator McLaurin, of South Carolina, is doubtless congratulating himself upon having a friend in the governor. This senator, though elected as a democrat and professing still to be a democrat, has voted consistently in the senate in support of President McKinley's administration. He voted

for the Spanish treaty of peace, not as a Hobson's choice, but cordially; he voted for the Puerto Rico bill; he voted for the Platt amendment in opposition to Cuban independence; he voted for the ship subsidy bill; he voted on all important measures with the administration republicans, and has been rewarded with administration patronage; and he is now advocating in South Carolina the adoption of the McKinley policy by the democratic party. Upon this record, Tillman challenged McLaurin's democracy, and the two agreed to carry that issue to the democrats of their state. For that purpose they resigned. But it became instantly clear that Tillman would overwhelmingly defeat this democratic candidate for republican service and honors, and the governor—also a McKinley democrat—interposed with a request that the resignations be withdrawn. McLaurin rectified his mistake at once by withdrawing his, for which he is being heartily applauded by the republican press of the country. The governor relieved him and his republican confreres mightily. After that, of course, nothing remained for Tillman but to withdraw also. It would be especially interesting to learn from Senator McLaurin upon what principle of southern honor he backs out from a joint agreement of honor without consulting the party of the other part.

Temporarily the excitement in Ohio over the tax fight which Mayor Johnson, of Cleveland, is making against the railroads and the county auditors has subsided. This, however, is only a lull. In a little while trouble will begin again. Meantime the mayor is preparing to bring other taxation delinquencies to the front. The most interesting proceeding in this respect, so far reported, is the mayor's reorganization of the local board of equalization. This board, as we noted last week, is now controlled by a majority who sympathize with the mayor's views on taxation. It had never used its powers, and was generally made up of very ordinary if not corrupt

men. But Mayor Johnson discovered that the members are appointed by the mayor, two every year, each holding office for three years. The first two vacancies would have occurred the 16th of next July; but that was too far off for Mayor Johnson's purpose. He, therefore, found pleasant and profitable occupation in other city positions for four members, and so made room for four new ones out of a total of six. To these vacancies he has appointed four men who can be relied upon absolutely both for intelligence with reference to matters of taxation and for the necessary moral stamina to resist temptation. The mayor expects that this board will be either legislated out of office, or suppressed by the supreme court as an unconstitutional body. But he says he neither knows nor cares which course is adopted by the tax dodging interests, for the board will have exposed them to the full before it can be disturbed.

As to the political situation, every eye in Ohio appears to be turned upon Cleveland. To average politicians Johnson's political tactics are inexplicable. They supposed at first that he was working either for the governorship or the senatorship. But this theory collapsed when Johnson published a positive statement saying that he was under contract for two years to the people of Cleveland to manage their city affairs and that nothing, not even a governorship or senatorship, could tempt him to quit the mayor's office. Then it was surmised that he had made a combination with John R. McLean, whereby he was to become democratic boss of Ohio and McLean was to go to the senate. The McLean party exposed their willingness to make the combination, by consenting to have the state convention held at Cleveland yet changing to Columbus as soon as Johnson publicly declared war upon McLean. Johnson did declare war upon him, and at the very moment when McLean's friends had consented to a Cleveland convention. For Johnson never fights in the dark. He regards McLean, and justly so, as