

The Public

A National Journal of Fundamental Democracy &
A Weekly Narrative of History in the Making

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Vol. XIV.

CHICAGO, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1911.

No. 705

Published by Louis F. Post
Elmworth Building, 537 South Dearborn Street, Chicago

Single Copy, Five Cents Yearly Subscription, One Dollar

Entered as Second-Class Matter April 18, 1898, at the Post Office at
Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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EDITORIAL

Dying Is Not Death.

A dying man is not dead until he dies. He isn't very dead even then, if in life he has done his best for the best he knows—provided he *tries to know*.

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Parasite and Host.

Mr. Taft's plea for Big Business amounts to this, that all it asks is to be let alone. Other parasites ask no more. But why should business interests that are not parasitical tolerate business interests that are?

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Cardinal Gibbons and American Politics.

Cardinal Gibbons's sermon of last Sunday might be regarded as the mere personal opinion of a medieval churchman, expressed freely as a citizen in a country of free speech, had it not been delivered by an ecclesiastic of the highest authority this side of Rome, in the exercise of his ecclesiastical office, from the pulpit of his cathedral, and to obedient religionists, large numbers of whom may accept it as a priestly command instead of an individual opinion.

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As it is, the Cardinal's sermon may well disturb non-Catholic American citizens who, in the interest of free worship and free speech, have stood as a bulwark against what has seemed to them to be an irrational fear of Catholic ecclesiasticism in

American politics. If resistance to the Socialist party by Catholic ecclesiastics has not been generally resented, it is probably because the more bitter anti-Catholics in the general mass have perhaps feared Socialism more than they have feared Catholicism. There has, therefore, been little or no occasion for excitement among those who stand for religious freedom. But Cardinal Gibbons appears now in the role of a Prince of the Church dictating as such to its communicants in the United States with reference to their action in matters purely political. He denounces not only the judicial Recall, but also the Initiative, the Referendum, and the election of United States Senators by direct vote of the people. All these are live political issues in many States; and two of them, the Initiative and the Referendum, are political issues before the Supreme Court of the United States. May non-Catholic American citizens who believe in the democratic side of those issues, be trusted to consider with patience this apparent effort at ecclesiastical dictation?

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Nor is this an isolated instance. The political dickering of President Roosevelt with Catholic ecclesiastics of high degree, both here and at Rome, in which Mr. Taft participated and of which Cardinal Gibbons could not have been wholly ignorant, whereby the Republican party was both influenced and hugely strengthened in voting power and Mr. Taft's election as President secured in the end; the ecclesiastical campaign against the Socialist party in the United States; the appointment by Mr. Taft of Senator White to the Chief Justiceship at a time when political questions such as those against which the Cardinal is now preaching, are coming before that tribunal; the recent extraordinary speech of the Catholic Archbishop at Chicago implying resistance to the political authority of the people if need be,—these are among the larger historical factors in a possible popular movement which a sermon like that by Cardinal Gibbons is not unlikely to provoke and which it would not be so easy as heretofore for the average American citizen to oppose.

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The sermon itself was pretty weak. "If you cannot trust the members of the legislature how can you trust their constituents from whom they spring?" reads like advice to some third interest instead of an appeal to the common sense of the community; and the Cardinal's climax, "What has been good enough for our fathers ought to be good enough for us," is a decided anti-climax. There is nothing in the sermon as reported to appeal to the

judgment of good citizenship. But there's the rub. Under the circumstances it is likely to be regarded not as an appeal to good citizenship but as an ecclesiastical command. And this cuts two ways. Cutting one way, it tends to exert ecclesiastical authority on purely political questions over the votes of citizens of Cardinal Gibbons's communion; cutting the other, it tends to let loose a flood of anti-Catholic prejudice in American politics.

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Secretary Fisher.

Walter L. Fisher's announcement at Hutchinson, Kansas, that he counts himself a progressive, *but* "a true progressive" and "not a hypocritical or demagogical progressive," was coupled with a suggestion for a test. "You should judge men," he advised, "not by what they say but by what they do." It is a good test, though a risky one for the Administration up to date. Mr. Fisher himself has not yet been put to this test in national affairs; but he soon will be, and his friends are hoping that in his efforts to avoid the demagogical in progressivism he may not tumble over into the plutogical.

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WHY THE DECREASE?

There has been no period of five years since 1870 when railway stockholders had less reason to expect fat dividends, or more reason to be satisfied with lean dividends, than during the five years ending September 30, 1875. During the following 31 years from September 30, 1875, to June 30, 1906, the wealth and population of the country much more than doubled. Nor in any section of the country in those fat years were more millions of thrifty people added to the population, or a greater increase of merchandise produced for transportation by steam, than in the section where the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad operates, and where the major portion of the people who supply its traffic and enrich its stockholders live.

Bearing in mind those indisputable facts, a comparison of the stockholders' profits of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad for the five years ending June 30, 1906 (the last of the five fat years), with the five years ending September 30, 1875 (the leanest five for forty years), furnishes food for reflection.

The capital of that railroad had been increased 11.82 per cent. There was an increase of 324 per cent in the number of passengers carried one mile: 520 per cent in the tons of freight moved one mile: 212.95 per cent in the total income from all sources