

# The Public

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The prudent man considers well before telling a lie. It may not be believed.

The prize of \$1,000 offered by Mrs. Irving, of Chicago, for a successful business or professional man who can conduct his business for 30 days without lying, has been claimed by a Chicago alderman!

When clergymen pay a dollar apiece for babies to baptize, as a clergyman of Reading, Pa., is reported to be doing, the growing intimacy between mammon and piety is illustrated with ludicrous minuteness of detail.

Mr. J. G. Johnson, of Kansas, chairman of the executive committee of the democratic national committee, expresses the universal feeling of democratic democrats when he says he doesn't want "a democratic party that has to be labeled to distinguish it from the republican party."

There is a bright side for the "apertenant territories." Congressman Hull, of Iowa, already has personal interests to guard in the Philippines, and very soon, very likely, other American statesmen will be so deeply interested in our dependencies that it will be just like looking after their own affairs when they begin to legislate over the gap between the flag and the constitution.

Republican papers in Chicago take great satisfaction out of the reports that the Carter H. Harrison democracy of the Windy city has dropped Wm. J. Bryan as a presidential candi-

date. If they had done this now for the first time they would be rather late, for Mr. Bryan himself has declared that only in special and improbable circumstances will he be a candidate again. But the fact is that the Harrison democracy of Chicago anticipated Mr. Bryan's announcement by several months. They dropped him during the presidential campaign.

A dispatch from St. Petersburg asserts that the Russian minister of finance has raised the tariff duty on American bicycles 30 per cent., and on several resinous products of the United States 20 per cent. This is supposed to be prejudicial to the interests of American producers. But any sensible man may discover, upon a moment's reflection, that it will be more prejudicial to Russian consumers. They must pay higher prices for the bicycles and resinous products they use.

Some boasting is being done by the fiscal authorities of Chicago because they expect to increase the valuations of personal property for taxation. This means that they hope to make it harder than before for people to bring personal property to Chicago or to keep it there. One might suppose from this that cities flourish in proportion to the amount of personal property they drive away. Yet all will admit that abundance of personal property testifies to the commercial greatness of a city. Then why try to drive it away by taxation?

It is somewhat painful to see the vigorous attacks upon the supreme court that are being made by papers and public men who were aghast at the comparatively mild criticism which Mr. Bryan and the Chicago platform made five years ago. Shall we infer that the sancity of the su-

preme court depends upon the judgment it renders? To respect a court upon that principle is not much of a virtue. Anybody can respect a court that decides for him. The test of one's confidence in the judiciary comes when the decision goes against him. This is not to say that we entertain any exalted degree of respect for the court in its Puerto Rico decisions. That would be impossible after reading the opinions. There is much in those opinions that is worthy of the highest respect from any point of view, legal or political. But not one of them makes a sustained analysis of the constitutional principles at issue. Not one of them so applies constitutional principles to the facts involved as to produce a harmonious exposition of constitutional law of general application. Not one of them has the slightest chance of ever becoming a legal classic. Yet what an opportunity for a legal classic these Puerto Rico cases offered. For the sake of their own reputations, if for no other reason, the supreme court judges would be wise if they ordered a rehearing of the cases, and then put upon record opinions worthy of the court and the question.

Though President McKinley has in the most pronounced and emphatic manner declared that he is not and never will be a third term candidate for president, that this expresses his "long-settled conviction," and that he would not accept a nomination even if tendered, nevertheless let no supporter of his despair. If the circumstances require Mr. McKinley to forego this "long-settled conviction" for the sake of his party and the continued prosperity of his country, his public record is a guarantee that he will make the sacrifice. It would not be Mr. McKinley's first sacrifice of