

# The Public

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## EDITORIAL

### The passing of materialism.

With the passing of the cynical grafter of high finance, and the decline of the boastful "business" man and his vaunted "business" methods in government—or, perhaps as the cause of this—we have the passing of the materialistic philosophies which have for a generation had a maleficent vogue. We need no college professors to tell us this. The fact is obvious. But it is assuring to be told, as Prof. George Santayana of Harvard is reported from Paris as saying in a lecture before a distinguished audience at the Sorbonne, that there is an increasing growth in America "of the idealistic school

as distinguished from the materialism that has hitherto been in vogue."

### The traction question in Chicago.

Two important lawsuits are pending with reference to the Chicago traction question (p. 577)—one in the Supreme Court of the State and one in the Supreme Court of the United States. They involve legal rights of the traction companies which if decided adversely to the companies would knock them completely out. They ought therefore to be decided before and not after the people vote on the extension of franchise. But the companies want them postponed, which is easily understood. It is not easy to understand, however, why their postponement should be desired by any honest citizen. Yet men whose whole civic stock in trade is that they are honest citizens, are trying to induce the city officials to seek of the companies the very postponement the companies themselves are trying with all their might to get. The only rational explanation is that these exceedingly honest citizens will bear watching.

### Death of Gen. Herman Haupt.

Gen. Haupt, who died suddenly on the 13th of this month, had long been distinguished as the oldest graduate of West Point. He was born in 1817, was a great civil engineer before the Civil War, in which he served on Gen. McClellan's staff, and to the day of his death was a Democrat to the heart's core. Gen. Haupt's son, Lewis M. Haupt, also distinguished as an engineer, served on the Isthmian canal commission until his antipathy to the schemers for the Panama route made his further service impossible. Later events are justifying his judgment in the choice of routes. In this judgment he had the intelligent and hearty support of Gen. Haupt. Gen. Haupt was one of the men whose example of courageous democracy in the trying days of rampant imperialism, made it seem worth

while to stand out for the great equality doctrines of the Declaration of Independence.

### Gov. La Follette's primary reform.

Of Gov. La Follette's first and second choice plan for primary voting (p. 597) nothing adverse can be said by anybody but the politicians, who dread the loss of their power at primaries. Gov. Deneen came to the rescue of this class in Illinois, by gravely insisting upon the importance of a majority decision, something never before known in primary voting, and then providing for it in his bill with such nicety as in effect to take the nominations away from the voters and turn them over again to the conventions, where politicians and corporations can control them. In Wisconsin, La Follette honestly tried, by his first and second choice plan, borrowed from Australia, to make a majority choice necessary, yet to leave the decision with the people themselves. But the legislature, under politician and corporation influence, voted down his bill. They pretended that it was confusing, and in allusion to a popular riddle called it the "Mary Ann" bill. In view of this solitary objection a quotation from the Chicago Tribune is appropriate. In its issue of the 18th it said truly of the defeated "Mary Ann" bill:

This is not a confusing system of making nominations, and perhaps is calculated to secure good results. It happens often that the choice of a voter at a primary is governed by sectional considerations. His vote is cast for the candidate of the county or the district. If he had a second choice he would designate the man who, locality aside, was in his opinion the best qualified man. If anybody should be the first choice of a minority and the second choice of a majority he probably would be the strongest possible nominee.

### Harmon on Roosevelt.

Judson Harmon's wit regarding President Roosevelt's agreeable interchange of civilities over the Santa Fe rebate case is pointed with a sting or two. "The President and the Attorney General," he writes, "seem to be congratu-