

ing full value of site and improvements separately, together with other details as to real estate values of much more than local interest, can be had of the "Supervisor of the City Record," City Hall, New York City. It may be described as "Section 1, Blocks 1 to 315, Borough of Manhattan," of the assessment roll supplement of the City Record. Reports of other sections are ready for delivery at the same price—25 cents each, plus 10 cents for postage.

Whoever takes an active part in public affairs is subject to suspicion. A poor man who champions something in which there is manifestly no "boodle," is usually suspected of harboring envy of the "successful." A rich man who champions something in which there is no "boodle," is usually suspected of being a demagogue seeking popularity with the lower mob. Anybody who champions something in which "boodle" is probable or possible, is likely to be suspected of being a "boodler." Oftentimes these suspicions are malicious. Yet any of them may in particular cases be well-founded. Experience goes far to prove that the last of the three is the least frequently indulged, the most reasonable in its nature, and oftenest the best founded in fact.

We are living in an age of graft. From the railroad passes with which most legislators and not a few judges are brought into pleasant relations with corporation influences, to the large sums that business interests contribute for the purpose of electing "safe and sane" men to office, we are engulfed in a flood of grafting. All of it is not vulgar—not even splendidly vulgar. Social aspirations, political ambitions, professional careers, are largely dependent on the good will of men who profit by governmental favor. They find this field for grafting cheap. Men who are too honest to be bought with "dirty dollars," will often serve respectable grafters faithfully for the social favors, political prestige or profession-

al advancement which those grafters command. But much of current grafting is brazen bold. Although it assumes garbs of gentility which in Tweed's day would have seemed superfluous, it makes few pretenses of virtue. Readers of Lincoln Steffens's articles in McClure's ought to be pretty well convinced that this is so.

Mr. Steffens's latest article, that in McClure's for October, is on the politics of Wisconsin. Its revelations make meaty food for thought. Senator Spooner denies what it reveals about him; but his denial is like the South Carolina darky's lame back, which was "powerful weak." Mr. Steffens confirms by this article his previous intimations that the business classes and their "safe and sane" tools in office are the worst enemies of the Republic. One of his incidental observations is particularly striking. We do not remember having seen the fact noticed in print before; yet it is a very significant fact, which can hardly have escaped any observer. "I have noticed," writes Mr. Steffens, "that a public official who steals, or, like Lieutenant Governor Lee, of Missouri, betrays his constituents, may propose to be governor without being accused of ambition. 'They' seem to think a boodler's aspirations are natural. He may have a hundred notorious vices; they do not matter. But a 'reformer,' a man who wants to serve his people, he must be a white-robed, spotless angel, or 'they' will whisper that he is—what? A thief? Oh, no; that is nothing; but that he is ambitious." This is said apropos of Lu Follette, whom the grafters accuse of ambition, having nothing else to accuse him of yet feeling the force of the onslaught he is making upon their graft structures. But its application is universal. It is so common that one may infer, with the almost absolute certainty of being right, that the public man who is reputed in high business or social circles to be "ambitious" or a "demagogue"

is raising havoc with some kind of graft. Conversely the reputation in those circles of being "safe and sane" is almost as sure an indication of fidelity to high grade grafters and devotion to their profitable privileges.

In the controversy over the Chicago traction question which has for several days been lively in the local papers, there have been only two important contributions favoring the proposed compromise ordinance. One is from Alderman Foreman, who, as chairman of the transportation committee, is the nominal sponsor for the ordinance. The other is from Edwin Burritt Smith, who, as leading special counsel to the committee, is responsible for its legal perfection. Mr. Smith's contribution is only a republication of his letter in reply to Judge Tuley (p. 352) first published several weeks ago. Neither Mr. Foreman nor Mr. Smith have met the issues which they themselves have raised. The most strenuous reasons for urging the adoption of the ordinance are, first, that it would give the city, at the end of 13 years, a free hand in dealing with the traction question by ridding it of the obstacle of obstructive litigation; and, second, that it would meantime secure good traction service. That the ordinance would produce those results is denied by Judge Tuley and Judge Dunne, and their opinions in that particular are buttressed by the published opinions of a considerable number of practicing lawyers of unquestioned ability and respectable standing. Yet Mr. Smith and Mr. Foreman both ignore these objections. They assume that the results named would be accomplished, and defend the ordinance upon that assumption. They neglect to show that the city could not be tied up with litigation at the end of 13 years under the ordinance, as well as now without it; and they make no attempt to explain how it would be practicable under the ordinance, any better than without it, to compel the traction companies to furnish good service.