

# The Public

Sixth Year.

CHICAGO, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1903.

Number 293.

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 page.

For the first time since entering upon its career as a world Power, along with the other freebooters which boast that distinction, the American government has recognized a new republic.

The Cuban republic begged for recognition in vain. Not until an American battleship was wrecked in a Spanish harbor in Cuba did the American government feel justified in interfering; and then not in recognition of the new republic, but to preserve the peace near our own borders. The republic could not be recognized because it had no government de facto; which meant that it hadn't succeeded in expelling an enormous Spanish army. Even recognition of belligerency was denied it, thus leaving Spain to treat its patriots as criminals instead of soldiers.

The first republic of Asia, as perfect a de facto government as history records, one which the people of all the Christianized parts of the Philippine Islands freely recognized and obeyed, also appealed to the American world-Power for recognition in vain. Instead of welcoming that republic to the family of nations, the American government bought its territory and people of a foreign Power which it had expelled; insulted its envoys, ignored its existence, menaced its exposed ports with battleships, fired upon its army, slaughtered its people like rabbits in a royal chase, laid waste its lands, and finally subjugated its country.

The South African Republic

and the Orange Free State were other little nations which appealed in vain for American recognition. They sent envoys to Washington, and the envoys were entertained, like tourists, with views of scenery from the back windows of the White House; though with this advantage over the ordinary run of tourists, that the President himself condescended to act as guide. The South African Republic could not be recognized because it was only an "autonomous dependency" of Great Britain. Lacking the treaty-making power in its fullness, this republic was not sovereign de jure, wherefore its sovereignty de facto could not count. That was the reason we could not recognize it. Why we could not recognize the republic of the Orange Free State has never yet been explained. For that republic was sovereign, both de jure and de facto, and had been for many years.

But if the American government was virtuously averse to recognizing republics in those instances, it has been neither averse nor slow with reference to the infant republic of Panama. Slow! It has been speedier than electricity. Not merely did it act so speedily after the event as to make the American recognition of nationality seem like a postscript to the Panama proclamation of independence, but it prepared for action well in advance of the event if not in advance of the intent. When was a little republic ever before so swiftly internationalized?

We should be glad, were the circumstances in harmony with any such hypothesis, to suppose that this reversal of recent American policy with reference to struggling republics, indicates a change of heart. But not the most sublime spirit of charity could tolerate

that supposition. The criminal animus is all too plain. Forty millions of loot is directly involved, nearly all of which will go to the Wall street owners of the old Panama canal stock. A ship canal is to be built, in connection with which there will be much graft. Large sections of country adjacent to the canal will be enormously increased in value, to the great joy of land speculators "on the inside." So much for immediate commercial considerations. The patriotic part of the affair involves glorious possibilities in the way of national expansion. With the little republic of Panama down on the northern borders of South America, where it may serve in multiplied degree the leverage purposes that Texas served on the borders of Mexico in the '40's,—with this advantage, a thorough-going patriotic administration, supported by a patriotic Congress and a Wall street clique, would find it almost child's play in politics, diplomacy and war to gather in the whole territory from Colombia to the Rio Grande—Mexico, silver mines, and all.

To adjust the Negro race question, Bishop Halsted, of the African Methodist Zion church, proposes the segregation of Negroes in one or more States, where whites would not be permitted to live. If Bishop Halsted's plan were feasible to begin with, it would probably be "knocked into a cocked hat" upon the first discovery of commercial opportunities in the Negro State. From that moment the "extension of civilization and Christianity" among the blacks would rise to be a business, political, religious and graft problem of paramount importance. You couldn't keep white men out of a Negro State with a standing army, after the discovery of rich money-making chances there. The Negro inhabi-

tants would have to "move on" to a new Negro State in the interest of "advancing civilization."

Congressman Baker, who refused the Baltimore & Ohio railway-pass bribe, has put a riddle to the Democratic party in Congress. He has asked them in caucus to refuse these petty bribes. That a majority of the Democratic side of the House indicate a disposition to travel on railroad bribes and pocket as a perquisite the liberal traveling expenses which the government allows them, is not reassuring as to the sincerity of the party in power when it criticises the President for accepting railroad favors. Some officials look upon passes as too trifling to be regarded as bribes. But consider the enormous number of passes the railroads give out. Is it supposable that these free rides are given with no expectation of return—that they are mere courtesies? If they are, then why not give them to ex-Congressmen, ex-legislators, and ex-judges? Why confine the courtesy to men who control legislative or judicial favors? No lawyer trying a case against a railroad would accept a juror who had that railroad's pass in his pocket. Are legislators and judges who have passes any more to be trusted than jurors? It is to be hoped that Mr. Baker will drive his party on to refusing passes. Republican officials cannot be expected to refuse them. What are Republican officials there for? But Democrats, as members of a party in opposition to corporate aggression, if for no better reason, are bound to decline these and all other corporate favors. It may encourage Congressman Baker to know that the Democratic judges of Chicago are now refusing railroad passes, although the custom of giving them has long been common and more or less reputable.

It was a wise warning that Samuel Gompers gave the Federation of Labor at Boston, when he told the delegates to beware of anti-

trust legislation, because much of it is aimed at the labor movement. All anti-trust legislation, however sincere, is heavily charged with elements of such danger. The only safe method of attacking the trusts is to undermine their monopoly privileges by repealing the laws that make them. That kind of anti-trust legislation cannot be used against the labor movement. All other kinds can be.

Complaints of the fruit trust are coming in on the score of its increasing the price of bananas. "By this increase in price," says a fruit merchant who is quoted by the daily papers, "the trust has practically stifled the demand for bananas among the poorer classes of people." The same merchant explains the power of the fruit trust in this respect by saying that it "owns all the banana land, all the ships—in fact everything but the water between America and the tropics." If it did own the water it might sell its ships and have even greater power than now. There are people, it is true, who think that monopoly of the land is less important than monopoly of machines, and to them it may appear that monopoly of the ocean would be less important than monopoly of the ships. But they would be in error. Monopoly of the ocean would really be the more important, whether we were in the canoe age or the age of ocean greyhounds.

A promising movement is under way in Cuba to tax unused lands enough to force them into the market. Similar steps are being taken with reference to the building sites of Cuban cities. Crude as the method is, the principle involved and the purpose sought are those of the single tax policy. By still another crude method, but sound as far as it goes, the city authorities of Paris are reported to be encouraging the erection of cottages for the poorer classes by exempting them from taxation. Crude as all these innovations are, they afford

good object lessons of both the efficacy of the single tax principle and the advances it is making in actual legislation.

Carroll D. Wright regards the single tax question as "too vast for discussion." He is prepared to say, however, that "when the single tax advocate can demonstrate to us"—not merely demonstrate, mind you, but demonstrate "to us"—"that one-half or even one-tenth of the benefits they claim for their system are possible, we will all become single taxers." The condition is practically impossible. Carroll D. Wright couldn't be convinced of one-tenth of anything that might jar him loose from his job.

Republicans must feel like blushing for their pride in Hanna's Ohio victory, when they read such comment upon it as the following from the Boston Herald, a paper of their own party:

Hanna and Foraker, Nash and Cox, stand for all manner of political corruption, and all manner of abuse of power. So far as political morality is concerned, they are as unworthy and shameful as any Democrats in the land. Johnson, with his adopted Bryanism and his own peculiar Populism, was defeated; but the defeat was not a victory of right and justice, only the victory of a machine organized to promote criminal politics.

That criticism is almost as withering a comment upon Republican morality in Ohio as are the increasing signs of commercial disaster a reflection upon the good sense of the majority of Ohio voters. They voted for Hanna because he promised to preserve good times; yet in less than two weeks after the election he has allowed stocks to fall, grain to decline, banks to fail, wages to be cut, strikes to be provoked, and workingmen to be turned out of employment with empty dinner pails. Hanna's word may be as good as his bond, but if it is his bond must be somewhat indifferent as a commercial asset.

How nearly the United States have retrograded to the period in their history which is distinguished by the enforcement of the