The Public

Seventh Year. CHICAGO, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1904. Number 342.

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Entered at the Chicago, Ill., Post Office as second-class matter.

For terms and all other particulars of publication, see last page.

Bryan's sturdy blows at imperialism, in his advocacy of Parker's election, appear at last to have had an effect upon Parker himself. His speech on the 15th upon welcoming a delegation of anti-imperialists to his home, would have been altogether inspiring but for his retention of the last of the Philippine-question "weasel words" which he had previously injected into his acceptance speech.

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In his acceptance speech he undertook to modify his party's excellent platform declarations regarding Philippine independence. One of his modifying phrases limited the redemption of the proposed promise of independence to the Filipinos to some indefinite time or other when we of this country may conclude that they are "reasonably prepared" for it. His other modifications he has since explained away or dropped. But this one clings. So all the good things he said in his speech to his anti-imperialist visitors last week are sicklied o'er with the repetition of that fateful phrase.

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It is to be regretted that Judge Parker did not adopt Bryan's anti-imperialist pace earlier in the campaign. He might in that case have avoided entangling himself in ambiguities which he now finds it difficult to repudiate; and the genuine democrats of the country might by this time have become prepared to accept the assurances of those close to him, and the indications of his anti-imperialist speech, that he is truly a man of democratic instincts.

Parker's old-man-of-the-sea is David B. Hill. Whether he is indebted to Hill or not for his political advancement, his relations with Hill have been close enough, and Hill's position of managership in his campaign has been such, that the average voter who knows and detests the kind of politics which Hill represents, naturally shrinks away from supporting Parker. Not content with discrediting his candidate in this general way, Hill has gone upon the stump to proclaim, as he did in West Virginia on the very day of Parker's anti-imperialist speech at Esopus, the old shibboleth of the slave oligarchy, that this is a "white man's government."

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A "white man's government"? Yes. In the sense that the majority shall administer it, and the majority are white, it is a white man's government. But not in the sense in which Hill's phrase is used. It is not a government where white men may enslave black men. It is not a government where white citizens may disfranchise black citizens by class legislation reinforced with shotguns and tissue ballots. It is not a government where white criminals may with impunity burn black criminals at the stake. Yet all this barbarity is involved historically in the phrase "white man's government," and it is to that barbarous spirit that Hill appeals. Judge Parker's democracy would need to be better known to the genuine democrats of the country than it is, to carry him successfully through a campaign in which the man who is popularly believed to be closest to him, personally and politically, makes speeches of that undemocratic kind.

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And now this same Hill is to be sent into Indiana, it is reported, to follow Bryan. The Republicans have thought of following Bryan there with Beveridge. They need not trouble themselves. If Hill cannot undo Bryan's work for Parker among the democratic-Democrats of Indiana, it is useless for the Republicans to try. Bryan has done the same marvelous campaigning in Indiana this year that he did in 1896 and 1900. He has made no pretenses of a personal or political liking for Parker. But he has shown that the Democratic platform is good as far as it goes, and that the political atmosphere which Parker would bring to Washington with reference to imperialism and militarism would be preferable to that which surrounds Roosevelt. On this line he has undoubtedly influenced many a reluctant democratic-Democrat. The effect that Hill might have upon such voters—Hill with his record for "peanut politics" and his "white man's government" speeches—may be imagined.

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Almost dead as is the national campaign throughout the country, there is no deadness in the State campaign in Wisconsin. Lines are drawn in all directions, through churches and clubs, through business interests and political associations. This is the result of a real fight over a live issue. Gov. La Follette is attacking the monopoly interests of his State, and they know it. Accordingly every key they can touch, every wire they can pull, every influence they can exert is made to produce its effect. The State is fairly alive with political excitement. It is the same as in the national elections of four and eight years ago, when the monopolists rubbed their eyes to see in Bryan a foe to fear. La Follette represents in Wisconsin the same democratic sentiment in the Republican party which in the Democratic party has rallied under Johnson in Ohio and under Bryan

in the nation at large. And it is pleasing to see the democratic-Democrats of Wisconsin recognize democratic leadership though in the Republican party. There is a regular Democratic candidate against La Follette. But he can carry only the hide-bound party vote and divide the pluto-Democratic vote with the bolting Republican candidate. With clear vision and good sense, the democratic Democrats of Wisconsin are joining the democratic Republicans to reelect La Follette.

Thoughtful citizens, who believe that the judiciary should be free not only from taint but from distrust, were not a little concerned upon learning last week that Judge Grosscup, the Federal judge at Chicago, is a large owner of traction stock which depends for its value largely upon franchise privileges. However conscientious he may have been, Judge Grosscup's judicial conduct with reference to Chicago traction questions has seemed on the whole much more acceptable to traction interests than to the representatives of the public interests. A natural inclination in that direction might have been assumed, owing to class intimacies and a certain trend of legal training. But now it appears that Judge Grosscup has all along had financial as well as class interests running parallel with those of the Chicago traction company. He owns a large interest in the 50-year street-car franchise of Charleston, W. Va. Judge Grosscup thinks that this ownership does not disqualify him from sitting as a judge between the public interests of Chicago in her own streets and the claims of the Chicago traction companies. If he could be challenged, like local judges, he might learn that others do not share this opinion. He thinks himself qualified because the persons interested in the Chicago companies are not interested in his company. He is sure, moreover, that he has the stamina to pass fairly upon the rights of the Chicago companies, notwithstanding his interest in the same kind of privilege elsewhere. This confidence may very likely be well founded. There are men whose sense of justice is so keen and their devotion to it so faithful and impersonal that personal interests cannot sway them. Judge Grosscup may be such a man. We are not questioning it. Yet it would doubtless be more satisfactory to the people of Chicago, whose rights hang in the balance, if he had no large financial interests of a kind similar to those for which the Chicago traction companies contend before him.

The campaign in Illinois for a constitutional amendment allowing the legislature to enact a special charter for Chicago (p. 435), proceeds as if the demand for it were unanimous. This assumption has led the school board of Chicago into a gross abuse of power. Although it has refused the use of school buildings for discussions of taxation questions, on the ground that they are not educational questions, it has ordered the school teachers to join in a school campaign for the proposed charter amendment. But popular sentiment is not unanimous in favor of this amendment, and there are sufficient reasons for the opposition.

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While the amendment would open the way for some excellent and much-needed reforms, the principal manifest motive for urging its adoption, is the sordid desire of a large body of acute but reputable tax-dodgers to shift their own legitimate burdens off upon the shoulders of posterity, which cannot yet speak for itself. Their influence is buttressed by the banking interests, which are ever alert for opportunities to increase the general stock of gilt-edge municipal securities, for such securities constitute part of their stock in trade. Those two interests easily draw to their support a miscellaneous aggregation of business men, politicians, professional men, club men, dainty reformers, etc., some of whom are quick to see which side their bread is buttered on, and nearly all of whom think of hell as a place where one is not on agreeable terms with the moneyed classes. The motives of these men are evident. But it is not improbable that there are other motives of which few of these men are cognizant.

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Hints are abroad that this charter amendment might enable the traction interests to get a "tighter" grip upon the city's streets. Of the reasonableness of this fear we are unable to judge. We can, however, indicate the theory out of which it springs. Although no charter under the proposed amendment would be operative until adopted by local referendum, yet it is argued that amendments to the charter, after its adoption, could be made by the legislature without referendum. In support of this view the fact is cited that although the present charter law was adpted by referendum it has been frequently amended by simple act of the legislature. And so it is urged, and not without great force and plausibility of argument, that under the proposed charter amendment long term street car franchises might be granted without referendum, by way of amendment to the charter after its adoption by the referendum. If that theory is correct, a very acceptable charter might be presented to the voters of Chicago for its adoption, and when it had been adopted the first legislature with a pecuniary appetite might be invoked to give the traction grafters all they want. There seems to be enough plausibility to this point to admonish all municipal-ownership advocates to cast a negative vote on the proposed charter amendment at the election next month. It is quite true that the legislature might now do all that is thus feared. But the circumstances are different. The people of Chicago are on the alert with reference to the legislative power as it is; but if there were a readjustment, such as this charter would make, they might easily be caught off their guard. Since the proposed amendment does not affirmatively prevent legislation

in favor of privilege, as it does against reforms that strike at privilege, it had better be voted down.

There is all the more reason for this when certain speeches in support of the proposed amendment are considered. We allude to the speeches of which John S. Miller's, before the Bankers' Club on the 15th, was typical. Mr. Miller recognized, what is the fact, that this amendment is proposed in order to avoid the necessity for calling a constitutional convention; and his objection to a constitutional convention was that it would open the way "for the cranks, and lunatics and agitators." These handy terms are bankerese for all active objectors to high-grade graft. In view of speeches of the Miller type, it will be safest for citizens who have no axe of their own to grind, no special interest to serve, but who believe with some fervor in equitable public policies and are therefore "cranks" and "lunatics" in the estimation of the grafting interests miscalled "conservative," to vote against the charter amendment. Instead of constitutional patchwork, contrived in the interest of arrogant classes, let us have a constitutional convention, through which the people can be heard on the whole question of constitutional readjustment.

There is reason in the idea that the preferences of the legal profession in a community are a good guide in the selection of judges. But there is none in the notion that this preference is expressed by the vote of a lawyers' club. Yet a lawyers' club in Cook, the Chicago county of Illinois, with a membership of only 900, habitually assumes to speak for a bar of 5,000 members, on the question of judicial preferences. It has done this with reference to the choice of judges at the approaching election. The highest vote it casts for any candidate is 520—about 10 per cent. of the total membership of the county bar. This vote is entitled to its full value, as indicating the preference of a respectable club of respectable lawyers, including all of the more dangerous corporation-owned practitioners; but its exploitation as an indication of the preferences of the bar of the county is not quite ethical.

Some implications are made by the Record and Guide, the real estate review of New York, that the local tax department there is remiss in not assessing all property, unimproved as well as improved, at full value, as the law requires. If deserved, this is a good criticism. There is no fair reason for assessing unimproved lots lower in proportion to market value than those that are improved. It is often urged that the owners of unimproved lots get no income from them, and therefore should be treated more gently than improvers. But if these owners get no income from their vacant lots it is their own fault. The fact that a vacant lot has market value proves that it is in demand for improvement. If, then, it is not improved, the reason must be that the owner is holding out for higher prices. In other words, he is preventing the lots' yielding an income now, in order that he may some time in the future possibly reap a larger reward. This disposition should not be encouraged by tax discriminations. If either kind of owner is to be encouraged by tax officials, it should be the improver and not the forestaller. But after all this has been said, the embarrassments of the New York tax officials must be considered. For many years it has been the custom there to assess improved property at 50 to 60 or 70 per cent. of market value, and unimproved at from only 15 to 30. This custom is being reformed. Efforts apparently in good faith are being made to bring all assessments up to the level prescribed by the law—full market value. But it is evident that this cannot be done as quickly with property heretofore assessed exceedingly low as with that which has by custom been assessed relatively higher, without making trouble for the assessors; and their admirable report (p. 402) indicates a disposition to advance to the legal requirement as diligently as possible. No harm will be done by stimulating this disposition on the part of the taxing officials; but they have fairly earned exemption from severe criticism. It is gratifying to observe in the criticisms of the Record and Guide a judicious balance in this respect.

While the utmost sympathy is due to men who are denied employment for having passed the age limit, or, indeed, for any other cause, how is it possible to sympathize with the criticisms on employers for refusing to hire these men. This is a false scent. Employers don't refuse to hire men for the joy of making them miserable. They do it because other men can serve them better. The true reason for sympathizing with the unemployed is not that this employer and that, or all employers together, refuse to hire workers; but that the unemployed workers have no where else to go to earn a living. And why have they no where else to go? Is it in the nature of things that men should be workless when the demand for workers is as limitless as human wants. We have all gone far astray in assuming that so-called employers are the real employers of labor. They are only middlemen—workers themselves in some degree, and in some degree monopolists, it may be. The real employers of labor are the consumers of labor products. And in the nature of things who are these? They can be no other, in the nature of things, than some kind of plunderers who give no work for the work done for them, or else workers themselves. If consumers, the real employers of labor, are workers themselves to the same degree that they are consumers, then it is impossible to conceive how there should exist at one and the same time an unsatisfied demand for products and an over-supply of productive labor. In that case we must "give up" the riddle. But if the consumers are in any degree plun-