

derous desire for vengeance. They only trifle with themselves when they defend capital punishment as a preventive of murder. It is as certain as any fact can be that capital punishment is not a preventive of crime. It is almost as certain as any fact can be that capital punishment promotes crime. Within three days after the hanging of those Chicago bandits there were numerous burglaries and a double murder in the very city of their execution. The best preventive of lawless murder is not lawful murder. It is the general inculcation of respect for human life. That is the only preventive. But this preventive is impossible so long as society itself deliberately destroys human life, and teachers and preachers and law-givers applaud the custom.

One street car franchise in Chicago which has just expired affords a specially advantageous opportunity for executing the mandate of the people as expressed in the recent referendum (p. 7) for municipal ownership. This is the franchise of the Chicago Passenger Railway company, extending from the new post office building to the western limits of the city.

The 99-year grant does not apply to this road at all. The company owns absolutely nothing, not even the shadow of a pretense to a claim, except the movable tangible property, which would be old junk if removed. There is, therefore, no excuse in this case for any renewal of franchise, for any dicker, for anything whatever but a proposition from the city to compensate the company reasonably as to amount and mode of payment for its organized junk. Should a fair offer be refused, the "hold-up" would be evident; and we take it that the people of Chicago would make short work of a manifest "hold-up" by its incorporated servants.

Happily, the excuse of dilatory litigation does not apply to this case. Happily, also, other fran-

chises of like kind end in a few months, so that a considerable municipal system would soon be possible with this nucleus. The only thing to fear is that men of power and influence in local politics own stock in the existing company, and are therefore likely to use their power and influence to secure an extension of the street franchise.

Gov. Garvin, of Rhode Island, has challenged the corrupt ring of his State to what from a distance looks very much like mortal combat. This ring rules the legislature, and by the refusal of that body to alter antique laws it disfranchises and defies the people. No one is allowed to vote for city councilmen, for instance, unless he pays taxes; and the ring keeps non-landowning Democrats off the personal property tax lists so as to prevent their voting. Cases are cited of such men being listed for hundreds of dollars as soon as they force themselves upon the voting list by buying real estate. Other evils are as bad or worse. To remedy them several bills have been introduced in the legislature, but the ring has these referred to committees and the committees never report. Popular petitions are smothered in the same way. Among the bills so smothered are three proposed constitutional amendments, one for an initiative, one giving registered voters the right to vote for city councilmen, and one conferring the veto power upon the governor. All these have been smothered in the judiciary committee, and the legislature has adjourned until after election, thereby evading the obligation of either defeating the amendments or submitting them to popular vote this Fall. Gov. Garvin has met this defiance of the ring by calling a special session for next September to enable the legislature to act before election instead of afterward upon the proposed amendments. This call for a special session is of exceptional importance and of much more than local interest. To any one at all familiar with the "rot-

ten borough" politics of Rhode Island, it means that the Governor has resorted to one of the few gubernatorial prerogatives in Rhode Island to compel the ring to come out into the light and let the people look at it.

Says the Brooklyn Eagle of Congressman Baker, "the railroad pass incident thoroughly disgusted members,"—meaning members of Congress. Very naturally. Public officials who accept railroad favors secretly, are apt to be disgusted with those that refuse them openly.

Senator Bacon is to be complimented upon having secured from the Senate (see Congressional Record of April 20, page 5,411), along with the appropriation for placing a statue of Frederick the Great, which he could not prevent, a supplementary one for the erection of a statue of Thomas Jefferson. While we are kowtowing to European royalty in bronze it is not a bad thing to have at hand a bronze reminder of American democracy.

The American movement for Philippine independence is gaining strength among churchmen and educators. At any rate it is gaining names. Whether this is a gain of strength or not will be better known when the Presidential campaign waxes warm. In the list are two Catholic prelates, 36 Catholic and Episcopal bishops, 59 college presidents, and at least 153 college professors, including 75 from Harvard, 41 from Columbia, 21 from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and 16 from Amherst. Their signatures are appended to a petition to the national conventions of the two principal political parties urging party declarations in favor of granting independence to the people of the Philippines.

Little Dolly had been sitting opposite a guest with a waxed mustache. After gazing at him for several moments, she exclaimed: "My kitty has smellers, too."—Sacred Heart Review.