

tracts and the semi-rich sub-contracts and the dribbles for sweat work which the construction of the Lakes to the Gulf ship canal will afford. This is a job with millions in it, and why shouldn't their distribution be supervised by Lorimer and Sullivan? Has experience with the "better classes" in politics gone very far to prove that the difference between machine politicians and the kind of men who would supervise this distribution if Lorimer and Sullivan missed it, is more distinctly a difference of public spirit and civic fidelity than of social clubs and business affiliations? One hopeful thing about the coalition that elected Mr. Lorimer is its indication that old party lines are breaking down. When they break down so completely among the politicians they are certain soon to collapse altogether.

+ +

Public School Legislation for Chicago.

Two legislative victories have been gained by the teaching force of the Chicago public schools (pp. 373, 409, 413) over a domineering "business board" of education. One is the defeat of a measure backed by the inner business ring of the board, and opposed by the teachers' organizations; the other is the passage of a measure opposed by the inner business ring of the board, which had been proposed and was supported by the teachers' organizations. The teachers, aroused by the policy of screwing down their salaries, presented a bill which enlarged the educational fund and required the application of seven-eighths to educational salaries. Their victory in this matter was only partial; for they compromised upon a legislative increase of the educational fund, and an informal promise that their salaries should not suffer. Questions of the inner ring's future good faith apart, with reference to that promise, and the teachers' victory was complete. On the other measure, however, there was no compromise. The teachers' victory in that case was overwhelming—at least for the time. The object of the inner business ring of the business board of education in supporting this measure was twofold. It aimed to establish a superintendency of the factory-boss type, and also to open the way for further gifts of public school-land interests to big business interests. Incidentally the school book trusts were cared for; but this object was to be secured through the superintendency provisions. All the important "africans" in the bill—of Commercial Club paternity, by the way—were hidden in the superintendency and the land-lease wood piles. But the teachers were wide awake to the situation. All their organizations, including principals

as well as grade teachers, co-operated to defeat the bill. And their opposition centered upon those two of its features—the attempt to factoryize the schools and to burglarize what remains of the school lands. Their victory in defeating this vicious measure is a victory for the people of Chicago.

+ +

Porto Rico and President Taft.

Regarding our comment upon President Taft's condemnation of the Porto Ricans for attempting to coerce a superimposed foreign executive by refusing to vote appropriations (pp. 467, 484), we are advised that the President is justified from a democratic standpoint. The explanation is something like this: The controversy in Porto Rico hinges upon the question of direct or indirect taxation. Under Spanish domination, Porto Rican revenues were raised indirectly through tariffs, merchants' licenses, and so on. This impoverished the working population for the benefit of the landlords, who are now embittered at being taxed locally by taxation in some degree direct. Hence the present legislative deadlock, the landlord party claiming the right of "largest taxpayers" to assess the local taxes. Therefore it is argued that Mr. Taft, in taking sides against the Unista party of privilege, which controlled the Porto Rican assembly that has just adjourned, is standing for popular rights. This may be. But if in standing for popular rights he assails one of the most effective and historically approved legislative weapons for asserting and maintaining popular rights, doesn't he become a dangerous champion? In those circumstances his service to popular rights is somewhat suggestive of the service the elephant performed for the partridge in amiably seating himself upon her nest to help her hatch her eggs.

+ +

"In the Arms of the Mincio."

Once upon a time when a certain New York daily paper was in other hands, one of its editorial writers, upon a wager, composed two articles simultaneously, writing one with his right hand and the other with his left, on two wide-apart subjects, youthful love and European politics. By the terms of the wager both articles were to appear in the paper in due course, and one of them did. So would the other but for somebody else's blunder. A sheet of the manuscript on youthful love got substituted by the "copy" distributor for a sheet of the manuscript on European politics. Consequently, when the first of these articles