

The Public

A National Journal of Fundamental Democracy &
A Weekly Narrative of History in the Making

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Vol. XIII.

CHICAGO, FRIDAY, JULY 1, 1910.

No. 639

Published by LOUIS F. POST
Ellsworth Building, 357 Dearborn Street, Chicago

Single Copy, Five Cents. Yearly Subscription, One Dollar

Entered as Second-Class Matter April 16, 1898 at the Post Office at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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EDITORIAL

A Third Party Embarrassment.

More or less acute political observers predict that no third party will be supported by the Hearst papers *unless* Mr. Hearst is its Presidential candidate, and that no third party will support itself *if* Mr. Hearst is its Presidential candidate.

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Democracy Finding Itself.

In its candid denial of a vital clause of the Declaration of Independence (p. 577), coupled with its emphatic assertion of the truth of a principle of that document with which the repudiated clause is connected, The Outlook has thrown a brilliant light upon an issue which is fast taking practical form in this country. That issue is nothing less vital than this: Shall American democracy be democratic or monarchical?

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The question sounds absurd, and so it is if construed literally; for the democratic principle and the monarchical are opposites. But disregarding logical nicety in language and "dealing directly with the facts," which has come to be quite the mode, the question is reasonable enough. We must give it that paradoxical form unless we would deny the pretensions of The Outlook and Mr. Roosevelt and such as they, to democracy. Shall American democracy be democratic or monarchical? That is, shall human rights be de-

veloped and established and secured by the people themselves, or shall they be conferred and conserved by superior persons? Shall the people govern themselves for their own good, or be governed for their own good by others?

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This question discloses itself practically in connection with the agitation for and the operation of the Initiative, the Referendum and the Recall. Ask any one his opinion of those reforms, and if he understands them and favors them you may safely consider him on the side of a democratic democracy; if he understands but opposes or is indifferent to them, you may prudently write him down as on the side of a monarchical democracy. The one believes that human rights must be established and defended by the people, the other that they must be handed down and conserved by superiors; the one that the people must govern themselves for their own good, the other that they must be governed for their own good by—well, by some Roosevelt or other.

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Perhaps no other one thing has done so much to clarify this issue as The Outlook's confession of faith regarding the Declaration of Independence. "We believe," to quote its words, "that the statement in the Declaration of Independence that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed is false;" but that the principle embodied in the Declaration that governments exist for the benefit of the governed" is "always, everywhere and eternally true." Turning to the Declaration one may see that the object of governments, alluded to by The Outlook as a principle, is security for "certain inalienable rights" among which "are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," and that this statement of principle is coupled with the modifying statement which The Outlook rejects, that they derive "their just powers from the consent of the governed." According to the Declaration of Independence, then, the object of governmental authority is the good of the people governed, its source the consent of the people governed. But according to The Outlook, while its object is the good of the people governed, its source is not the consent of the people governed, but is—what? Some superior, of course. And what is that but the essence of monarchy? The monarch reigns for the good of his people, if we take his word for it. To call those persons democrats who believe in government for the good of the people governed as some quite superior person may conceive that good to be, is to

wrench language; but if out of politeness their claims be deferred to, we must call them monarchical democrats in order to distinguish them from the democrats who believe in government for the good of the people governed as the people governed conceive that good to be. The latter are the democrats Abraham Lincoln had in mind when he spoke for "government of the people, by the people and for the people."

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With this distinction apprehended, there is little difficulty in understanding why many persons who profess democracy are so paternalistic in the methods they advocate. Their democracy is of The Outlook kind, which would have government of the people and for the people, but not by the people. It is of the Roosevelt kind, which would do the people good and make them good, with grape and cannister if necessary. To such democrats Roosevelt is an idol. To such democrats, and he is indeed their great exemplar in this as in other respects, the Initiative and Referendum and the Recall are in the category of democratic sentimentalities. Mark it well, the movement for the extension of those reforms in this country, toward which the monarchical democrats have turned a cold shoulder, will yet have to encounter their active opposition. The reason is that those reforms most distinctly give practical expression to the fundamentally democratic principle which the Declaration of Independence proclaimed and Abraham Lincoln accentuated, but which to Mr. Roosevelt is sentimental and to The Outlook false.—that governments are not only for the benefit of the people but that they derive their just powers from the people.

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The Napoleonic Roosevelt.

It was with hesitation that we wrote last week of the possibility of Mr. Roosevelt's being called again to the White House (p. 577), lest we might be overestimating his popularity. It never occurred to us that this might be an underestimate. We had not then read the estimate of Rockwell D. Hunt, Ph. D., which appeared in the California Weekly of May 27. Dr. Hunt says:

Theodore Roosevelt is the greatest of living men, the "most startling character since Napoleon;" among nations the United States of America is the mightiest in achievement and potentiality; the peace of the world is the most momentous as well as most alluring of all public questions. The conditions are perfect; the hero of San Juan and of the Peace of Portsmouth, in the midst of his matchless powers, is henceforth called to serve humanity by accepting the post never before proffered to mortal man—President of the United States of the World. This is not