

# The Public

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A Weekly Narrative of History in the Making**

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## EDITORIAL

### Getting Ready to Move.

Gradually but manifestly the Interests are packing up their allegiance to the Republican party for shipment over to the Democratic party. Watch Harper's Weekly if the process interests you.

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### "Insurgent" or "Progressive"?

"An Insurgent is a Progressive who exceeds the speed limit," was Gov. Hadley's definition. It pleased Mr. Roosevelt so much that he borrowed it to wash the taste of his Ossawatimie speech out of his mouth. But a comparison of the Roosevelt convention in New York with the La Follette convention in Wisconsin, has suggested another and better even if not a witty definition: "An Insurgent is a Progressive who means it." By either definition, however, Mr. Roosevelt's protest that he is not an Insurgent would be confirmed. As a Progressive his speed is like that of a rocking horse in violent action; and as to his meaning it, compare the output of his convention at Saratoga with La Follette's at Madison.

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### The Democratic Party in New York.

Between the tottering "forwardness" of those "progressives" who controlled the Republican convention in New York, and the vigorous backwardness of the reactionaries who controlled the Democratic convention in that State, what is a really progressive New York voter to do? If

either side wins, the one may be trusted to go back upon its forwardness, and the other to go ahead with its backwardness. Neither is all backward, to be sure; for each pledged itself to direct nominations. But both did it grudgingly, the Republicans under Roosevelt's whip, and the Democrats under pressure from the Progressive Democracy (p. 658). So there is no choice on that score except as to which will keep its pledge.

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When platforms fail, candidates may sometimes serve instead; but not so this year in New York. It must be remembered of course that the Democrats were at a tactical disadvantage when Gaynor headed off their nomination. Thomas M. Osborne is a good and strong man, capable of making a courageously progressive record in the State capitol as he did in the Auburn city hall and on the up-State public utilities commission; but the people of the State as a mass don't know it yet and probably could not have been shown in a six weeks' campaign. Congressman Sulzer has progressive tendencies and has been courageous in Congress even to defiance of Tammany Hall; he is impregnable in his district, but in the State at large, astute politicians on both sides might as easily have put him out of the running at the polls as those on his own side did at the convention. The only other candidate the Democrats had (except driftwood and the one they nominated) was Edward M. Shepard. Mr. Shepard is a genuine Democrat of great ability, and not only of gubernatorial but of Presidential size. Save for one point of political weakness he would probably have been nominated and elected Governor this year, leading the truly progressive elements of both parties; and as the progressive statesman he doubtless would then have proved himself to be, he might well have been the successful progressive leader in the next Presidential campaign. But that one point of political weakness was raised against him and it was fatal at the convention as we are obliged to confess we think it would have been at the election. The time has gone by when any man, however genuinely public spirited he may be, and as we believe Edward M. Shepard really is—the time has gone by when even such a man can command at the same time the steady employment of a client like the Pennsylvania Railroad and the political confidence of the people. In view of Mr. Shepard's political and personal character as well as his ability, this is to be regretted; but it is a fact which in present day politics must be reckoned with. So Dix was nominated; and a very respectable plutocratic Democrat is Mr. Dix.

When Dix, the Democratic nominee, is compared with Stimson, the Republican, what choice is there on the score of candidates? Stimson is a graduate from Elihu Root's law office. His sole claim upon public confidence is his prosecution for a large fee of certain sugar trust crimes which resulted in the conviction of "men higher up" who were in fact "low down," and the recovery of "swag" obtained criminally and a trifle in comparison with the "swag" that is obtained by trusts through the operation of laws to the perpetuation of which Mr. Stimson is pledged by his platform. A Tweed regime prosecutor could have done as much, and would if the criminal had been persona non grata at Tammany Hall.

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The progressives of both parties in Wisconsin, Kansas, California, Oregon, Washington, Maine, and all the other States in which progress means something worth while, may well bless their stars this year that they are not living in New York. Nor in New Jersey. Nor yet in Ohio.

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### The Meaker Candidacy in Massachusetts.

An opportunity to vote for a progressive candidate for Congress about whose fidelity and ability there seems to be no doubt and whose campaign speeches ring clear and true, is afforded in the Seventh Massachusetts district, which includes Chelsea, Everett, Lynn, Malden, Melrose, Nahant (the home of Senator Lodge), Revere, Saugus, Stoneham and Wakefield. We allude to the Independent candidate, W. Lathrop Meaker. The chairman of his campaign committee is Edwin Thatcher Clark, of Melrose; its treasurer is Ernest E. Brazier, of 14 Roberts street, Malden. Both are worthy citizens, bearing the burden of a hopeful progressive campaign under financial difficulties. As to their candidate, in every direction from which we hear of him we find him thoroughly well vouched for, and from his speeches he is evidently genuine in both heart and head. "It so happens," he said in a campaign speech at Lynn, wherein he advocated the Initiative, Referendum, and Recall, direct nominations, and a reduction of the tariff, and argued that the earth and all of its riches should be made the common property of all—"it so happens that just at the present this great issue of the equal right of all to the earth on which we live is presenting itself to the people with remarkable force under two different heads, one called Conservation, the other Taxation. The only logical and effective conclusion of all this