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EDITORIAL

The Bellamy Storer Incident.

Except as a newspaper sensation, the personal controversy between President Roosevelt and Mr. Bellamy Storer is of little value. But if it should lead on to a disclosure of the facts regarding the relationship of Archbishop Ireland et al. to the Presidential campaigns of 1900 and 1904, with which it is connected, American history in some

of its politico-ecclesiastical aspects would be enriched.

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Roosevelt and the Japanese Question.

We hardly expected when we approved President Roosevelt's reasons for his proposed method of dealing with the Japanese question (p. 841), that we should be understood as also approving the method he proposed. The reasons given were democratic; the method proposed is imperialistic. To give the Federal government authority to exercise local police power would be destructive of the home rule principle, which is the sheet anchor of democracy. It would turn States into mere subdivisions of an empire. But though this is true, it is none the less true that States ought not to make or allow discriminations against the rights of their inhabitants on grounds of class or race differences. Mr. Roosevelt's strong indictment of such discrimination is what we approved last week, and we approve it still, for it is genuinely democratic. We do not approve his imperialistic conclusion. Unsound conclusions from sound reasoning, even to the extent of justifying imperialistic practice upon democratic principle, is no novelty—especially with Mr. Roosevelt.

* *

Mayor Johnson and Cleveland Traction.

The subsidized newspapers of the Plunderbund have been vociferous during the past few days in again denouncing Mayor Johnson of Cleveland for his alleged financial interest in the three-cent car line grants of that city (p. 749), the grants which threaten to put the traction plunderbund of Cleveland out of business by turning over all traction interests to the city itself. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Scripps of the Scripps newspaper league, in the interest of the city and of no other interest, guaranteed the financial backers of this municipal reform against loss. On the basis of that fact, the "Con-Con" company brought a suit to annul the grants, on the ground that Johnson had a financial interest in the matter. The implication is that he was to profit by it. The fact is that he cannot make a penny. All profits go to the city—directly as soon as the law will permit, and meantime indirectly through a municipal holding company. Instead of submitting to the delay involved in a trial, Mayor Johnson demurred to the complaint. In legal practice this proceeding tem-

porarily admits the allegations of the complaint for the sake of having the question of law passed upon. Heretofore the courts have held, where public bodies have corruptly given away public rights to plundering corporations, that the courts cannot invalidate the grants, the only recourse of the plundered public being to proceed directly against the officials. Mayor Johnson relied upon this policy of the courts, and, defying direct proceedings against himself, knowing that he could prove his fidelity to the public interests, took the ground that notwithstanding all the false allegations of the "Con-Con's" complaint against him, the grants for the benefit of the city were good in law. On this point a local judge has ruled against him in these preliminary proceedings. But in doing so the judge describes the complaint as "an omnium gatherum" of accusations, and expressly states that his decision is upon the assumption that these wild allegations are true, and not upon the merits of the case. Yet the plunderbund newspapers, suppressing these facts, are making merry over what they call Mayor Johnson's defeat. If it were a defeat it would be the defeat of the city of Cleveland and not of Mayor Johnson. But it is not a defeat. The case is to be tried upon its merits next week. Moreover, only one or two small franchises are in any way affected by the decision. The larger and controlling ones are in nowise affected by it.

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Conditions of Success.

In saying that "the man who is temperate, industrious, honest and thrifty succeeds, while the man who is not fails," Prof. Laughlin of the Chicago University is more comprehensive than discriminating. He ignores the fact that there may be industry without personal honesty, as burglars prove; and both industry and thrift without civic honesty, as Mr. Rockefeller has proved. Success of the kind to which Prof. Laughlin alludes, business success, is not only often achieved without honesty but it is often missed because of honesty.

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Postal Organizations.

To politicians and business men of the sordid type, there is a soothing sound in that protest against organizations of postal employes which insists that these organizations must do nothing to influence Congress to give them higher or fairer wages or better hours. Yet it is a protest wholly without merit. There is no reason whatever for denying government employes the right to in-

fluence public sentiment, which does not apply to every citizen. It is an administrative, a bureaucratic, notion altogether. And it is not made in good faith. The persons from whom this protest comes have no complaint to make of business men seeking subsidies of Congress. The spirit of the protest is the spirit of the master toward the servant—the spirit that demands of servants that they be humble.

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A Touch of Single Tax in New Jersey.

If the New York Times reports the matter correctly, the New Jersey city of Bayonne is undergoing a measure of single tax experience. A Republican assessor, Mr. Hugh Colville, although he protests strongly that he is merely enforcing the law conscientiously, is roundly denounced by beneficiaries of speculative real estate interests as a virulent disciple of Henry George. Mr. Colville, being a real estate dealer, understands land values, and he has assessed the lots of Bayonne at market rates. Naturally, the increase has fallen most heavily upon the owners of vacant lots, for theirs is the kind of property that is usually allowed to escape. From this class, therefore, a sky-piercing howl has gone up. "For instance," says the Times, "ex-Tax Assessor Daniel J. Murray, a leading Democratic politician, has been assessed \$4,500 for five vacant lots on Avenue C, whereas last year, when Mr. Murray was himself the assessor, the assessment was \$1,300." Another "protestant was the Democratic boss, Thomas Wagner, who was chief of police under a former administration and was removed from office by Mayor Garven. Last year Wagner's property was assessed for \$4,800. This year Assessor Colville slapped on a valuation of \$9,400." W. H. Gantz's case was even more startling. "Last year he bought some land fronting on Newark Bay, and obtained also the riparian rights, which had never been taxed at all. This year Mr. Colville presented to Mr. Gantz a bill based on a valuation of \$3,500."

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The Times report continues most interestingly: "Louis N. Creighton, a real estate broker, who is agent for numerous property owners, had the taxes raised smartly on all vacant lots he is agent for. So many taxpayers came to the City Hall to protest against their assessments that all complaints were ordered to be put in writing and sworn to. The Commissioners questioned owners closely about valuations this year and seemed disposed to uphold Assessor Colville, who says he only fol-