

The Public

First Year.

CHICAGO, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1899.

Number 47.

LOUIS F. POST, Editor.

Entered at the Chicago, Ill., Post-office as second-class matter.

For terms and all other particulars of publication, see last column of last page.

The enthusiastic reception of Prof. Herron's second course of religious-economic lectures in Chicago is significant of a gratifying awakening of public spirit. What was the dream of agitators yesterday, has become an object in practical politics to-day. Prof. Herron's voicing of the growing sentiment of radicalism is all that could be desired. His first lecture in the series on "Municipal Ideals" gives promise of even better work than he has ever done before, and nothing stronger than that could be said.

Gov. Lind, of Minnesota, takes high ground in vetoing an appropriation of \$20,000 for bounties on beet sugar. He rests his opposition to bounties upon principle. To find representative men like Lind resisting this form of corruption is encouraging. It should be understood that the legislator who votes for a bounty to assist private businesses, and the business organizations that solicit such benefactions out of the public purse, are engaged in furthering corruption. To take money for the use of others by legislation and in the form of taxes is as truly theft as to do so by means of a club or pistol and in the comparatively honest name of plunder.

The un-democratic democrats of North Carolina are attempting to disfranchise negroes in that state by an evasion of the 15th amendment to the United States constitution. That amendment guarantees that the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. But the North

Carolina Solons think they see a way around this guarantee. Since the suffrage may be abridged on account of illiteracy or poverty, they propose an amendment to the state constitution imposing an educational qualification and a poll tax as conditions of voting. In that way they expect to shut out a large proportion of the negro vote. But it might also shut out the white vote, to avoid which, it is proposed to exempt all persons who were themselves entitled to vote prior to 1867, when the vote was restricted to white men, or are descended from persons who were so entitled. In plain English this plan contemplates the disfranchisement of negroes for reasons not applying to whites. Should the supreme court sustain so palpable an evasion, that body might as well adjourn for good.

It has been evident ever since the brilliant naval battle in which Cervera's fleet was destroyed, that a conspiracy has been on foot in high official quarters to transfer the credit for that victory from Schley, to whom it belongs, to Sampson, the navy department pet. For some more or less inscrutable reason, such plutocratic papers as Harper's Weekly and the New York Evening Post have lent their columns to the purposes of this conspiracy, which reached its climax when the secretary officially informed the senate not only that Sampson was entitled to the credit of the Cervera victory, but that Schley had been reprehensibly derelict in connection with locating Cervera's fleet in Santiago harbor six weeks before the battle. Through all the fuss over this matter, Schley has maintained a dignified silence. But having at last been offered an opportunity to tell his own story officially to the senate he has done so. Without evincing any spirit of controversy, he tells the sim-

ple facts in a simple and dignified way; and what he tells is as destructive to the naval office conspiracy as his maneuvering off Santiago on the 3d of July was to Cervera's fleet.

When the present congress goes out of office next week, it will have appropriated not much if any less than one billion five hundred million dollars. Look at the figures—\$1,500,000,000. It has been obliged, of course, to provide for war expenses; but they do not vary much from \$200,000,000, and if we put them at \$250,000,000, an ample allowance, we shall leave over \$1,200,000,000 as the amount appropriated by Hanna's "sound money" and "national honor" congress and president. It is only a few years ago—hardly more than a few months—when the congress that appropriated a billion was anathematized for extravagance; yet this congress adds a quarter of a billion to that, and jeers at its critics as "economists." Well may it jeer. Most of the extra money is spent to enrich the rich, while nearly all of it comes, by means of a sneaking system of indirect taxation, from the pockets of the poor and middle classes.

We do not often agree with Edward Atkinson, the Boston writer on industrial statistics and economics, but when he says of the Philippines, as he did at a meeting of the Workingmen's Political league in Boston, that—

we have neither the moral right nor the political right, and I hope we have not the physical power to compel the inhabitants of those islands to become our vassals and to submit to a rule under the pretense of Christian benefit to them at the point of the bayonet with the sacrifice of thousands of their numbers to this Moloch of expansion—

we agree with him most heartily.

A southern editor, discussing the Philippine question, speaks gravely of