

The Public

PS Badger Apt 1-99
255 Ontario St

First Year.

CHICAGO, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1898.

Number 32.

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.

Gov. Pingree's reelection in Michigan is an unwelcome feature of election news to the plutocratic combine that has acquired a mortgage upon his party. It is an ominous intimation that that mortgage may yet be repudiated. Great and glorious indeed would be the day for the republican party when the Elkins-McKinley-Hanna triumvirate gave way to the leadership of Pingree. Then would come back to the old party the spirit that Abraham Lincoln breathed into it and that Mark Hanna has squeezed out.

The Elkins-McKinley-Hanna combination can find little consolation in the elections when they turn from Pingree's triumph in Michigan to Roosevelt's election in New York. They have less to fear from Roosevelt in one respect, for there is no Abraham Lincoln democracy in his blood; but they have as much to fear in another, for he now looms up as a competitor in the next republican national convention for McKinley's place. In Platt's hands he would be a strong card. That danger was not overlooked by McKinley when he refused to extend his campaign stumping tour into New York. It remains to be seen whether Roosevelt can be induced to take up with second place.

But of all the disappointments to Elkins-McKinley-Hanna that of the congressional elections must be uppermost in the tripartite mind. Pingree's triumph, Roosevelt's election, these might have been accepted as misfortunes to be overcome in good time; but how can the popular rebuke

implied in the congressional elections be explained away? All the McKinley organs protested throughout the campaign that every vote against republican congressmen would be a vote in condemnation of the administration. McKinley himself hinted as much in his stumping tour. And now the people have elected a congress which, if not hostile to the administration, escapes it by the narrowest margin. A clear majority of 47 has sunk to a majority of not more than 18, and probably not more than 13. The rebuke has come.

Dr. Connor, who, at the time of his appointment upon the president's committee for examining into the mismanagement of the war department, was suspected of having been appointed for a whitewashing job, has on more than one occasion, by his method of examining witnesses, not only justified that suspicion, but indicated that the job was congenial. The last occasion was during the present week in Chicago. We reproduce the facts from the report of the Chicago Tribune, the leading republican paper of Illinois. The witness under examination was Dr. Cuthbertson, surgeon major of the First Illinois cavalry. Dr. Cuthbertson's testimony was so badly suited for whitewashing purposes, that Dr. Connor, the committeeman, undertook in his customary manner to modify it by argument. "Doctor, do you know," he argued, "that the percentage of mortality in our army was considerably less for the first four months of campaign than of any other army of history?" The animus and object of that argumentative question was obvious. But Dr. Cuthbertson was not in the whitewashing business. He promptly replied: "I do not think there is any comparison. Our army

was within the boundary of the home government. A rich and generous government was behind it, and I am firmly of the belief that if it had been properly handled the campaign would have been less deadly."

The programme which the president's whitewashing committee appears to have adopted of trying to show that our casualties were less than other armies have suffered, reached the climax of absurdity when Gen. Wheeler was led on into testifying that our troops at Santiago were no worse off than the Spaniards! It is a programme that cannot succeed. Sooner or later the American people will demand information upon the real question at issue. That question is not whether our army suffered more or less than other armies, but whether it was subjected to useless suffering which the war department could have prevented.

Prof. Laughlin, of the Chicago university, Rockefeller's economic hothouse, has replied to Gov. Altgeld on the McCleary bill dispute, but without bringing out anything to his own advantage or to that of the McCleary bill. The fundamentally vicious feature of the bill is its manifest purpose to vest the issuing of the common paper currency of the country entirely in private banking corporations. That purpose Prof. Laughlin neither denies nor defends. We doubt if the people are yet prepared to believe with Prof. Laughlin that a bill with such a purpose "is not doing the banks a favor." In fact Prof. Laughlin himself must feel that he is throwing in a little extra for his salary when he assures the public that this bill, for which the banks are working with all their might, is not in their interest. When did the banks adopt the manners and customs of Altruria?

Perhaps it is ungentle to refer to Prof. Laughlin's salary in connection with the McCleary bill. At any rate he should have the benefit of his own protest when he says: "I am absolutely uninfluenced in what I think or teach by any person or by any authorities; in my university post I am responsible only to my conscience, so long as I do my duty. No one ever has, even in the slightest way, hinted to me what I should believe or teach."

That no one has ever hinted directly to Prof. Laughlin what he should teach is probable enough. It may have been unnecessary, owing to the confidence of the trustees of Chicago university in his fidelity to plutocratic interests. They probably know him and he knows them. But that he would receive hints hardly less forceable than kicks, were he to become plutocratically unsound, was startlingly illustrated in the case of Prof. Bemis, who was invited to resign from the faculty of Chicago university because he did not agree with the eternal monopolies of Chicago on the subject of the ownership and control of Chicago streets.

Nor are we dependent alone upon the Bemis case for our opinion as to the tenure by which Prof. Laughlin holds his economic chair in the Chicago university. At least two of the trustees have spoken. One of these trustees is Ferd W. Peck, of Chicago, who in an interview upon the subject of professorial responsibility, after the difficulty at Brown university over President Andrews's financial heterodoxy, said that the trustees should see to it that "no unsound financial doctrines nor anything of a dangerous character be taught." The other trustee of Chicago university, Daniel L. Shorey, also referring to the Andrews case, said: "If the trustees had quietly asked him to resign, and had not given him a fallacious reason for it, their action would have been approved by nine-tenths of the intelligent men of the country. It was an awful blunder that they made." Now Prof. Laugh-

lin may never have received any direct personal hint as to what he should teach at Chicago university, but to a man of ordinary acuteness these published hints from two of his trustees would be enough. He credits himself with having changed his opinion on the quantitative theory of money. That change of opinion brought him in harmony with the great monied interests, to which his trustees are related. Suppose upon reconsideration he should change back again, would he expect to make the change public and still retain his chair? Prof. Laughlin is not so simple.

Reports reach this country from Berlin which indicate that the emperor's party is preparing a bill for the repression of socialism. The extraordinary growth of the socialist party in Germany makes the emperor shiver. And well it may. For the socialist party of Germany polls the largest vote of any of the parties of the empire. It would hold the balance of power in the reichstag if the districts were not shamelessly gerrymandered. But, dangerous as this party now is to the party of divine right, it will be a thousand times more dangerous if repressed by force. Two million voters cannot be wantonly suppressed, even by a nondescript survival of "God's anointed."

The Chicago Tribune is so hard driven for proof of its contention that wages are rising, as to resort to what it editorially calls "the report of the Senate Committee on Wages and Prices, of which Senator Allison was chairman," covering "the period from 1840 to 1891." Now it happens that there is no Senate Committee on Wages and Prices, and never was. The committee to which the Tribune probably refers is the Senate Committee on Finance. This committee made a report in 1893 on wages, prices and transportation, in which it professed to cover the period, as to wages, from 1840 to 1891. But Senator Allison was not chairman of that committee. The chairman was Senator

Aldrich. Apparently the Chicago Tribune meant to refer to the well known Aldrich report, and got into a muddle. But its muddle as to the identity of the report is a trifle in comparison with its folly in referring to that report at all as an authority. The statistics of the Aldrich report have been completely and irrefutably discredited. To cite them in proof of increasing wages is prima facie evidence either of dishonesty or ignorance.

It was quite unnecessary for the Chicago Chronicle to oppose woman suffrage in order to prove that, in spite of its political professions, it is not a democratic paper. But it does seem to have been necessary for it to offer some rather stupid arguments in order to make a pretense of reasoning about the matter. Among these, of course, is the worn out plea that as women don't vote in large numbers under limited suffrage rights, they would not do so if the suffrage right were unlimited. That argument has been demolished time and again. If women take no interest in tame school board elections, it is because these elections are tame. Neither do men turn out in large numbers at unexciting elections. But what bearing has that on the question of their right to vote? This weary argument against woman suffrage is supplemented by the Chronicle with an assertion that woman suffrage in Colorado, where it is unlimited, is also a failure. That will be news to the women of Colorado. The reasons suggested for the failure are humorous enough for Puck—just about. One reason is that women stay away from the polls when the weather is bad. If that were a valid objection we should have to disfranchise the whole republican party; for it is proverbial that in bad weather the republicans poll a light vote. Another reason advanced by the Chronicle is that in the cities of Colorado "meretricious women, whose votes are purchased by unconscionable candidates, crowd around the polling places," thus keeping respect-