

The Public

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

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EDITORIAL

The Beginning of a New Decade.

When The Public first appeared, just ten years ago, the United States was beginning her war upon Spain. Inasmuch as that war had been precipitated by the insane cry of "Remember the Maine," we loathed it; but in so far as it seemed to be a war for the release of a neighboring people from a foreign yoke they were themselves too weak to throw off, we regarded it as a worthy war. For detestable as all war is, there are things more detestable even than war; and one of them is superimposed dominion. We believed then, as we believe now, that war for the liberation of one's neighbors is as worthy as war for the liberation of one's own people. Possibly not so popular or prudent, yet certainly as worthy. But as the war with Spain went on and developed into war upon the Filipino republic, it became all too evident that its animating purpose had been not liberation but conquest. It proved to be as loathsome in its purposes as in its insane battle cry.



Circumstances prevented the complete consummation of the imperial purposes of that war. To some extent the contemplated conquests were checked. But not altogether. The present colonial policy of this Republic is a sore reminder of the degree to which the spirit of conquest prevailed over the spirit of democracy; and the country still staggers under an inheritance of imperialistic no-

CONTENTS.

EDITORIAL:

- The Beginning of a New Decade..... 1
- The Eleventh Volume of The Public..... 2
- Christian and Jew..... 2
- Mr. Root on Immigration..... 2
- American Government by Clubs and Cossacks..... 3
- The Police Spirit..... 4
- American Ideals..... 4
- Vacant Lot Gardening..... 4
- The Industrial Depression..... 4
- The Banking Alternative..... 4
- Mr. Harmon's Candidacy..... 5
- Old-Age Pensions..... 5
- Ownership and Regulation..... 5
- President Roosevelt's Policy (A. H. Henderson)..... 5

NEWS NARRATIVE:

- The Union Square Meeting..... 6
- Emma Goldman..... 8
- Local Self-Government in Des Moines..... 8
- Taxation in Rhode Island..... 9
- Direct Legislation in New York..... 9
- Presidential Politics..... 9
- The Traction Question in Cleveland..... 9
- News Notes..... 10
- Press Opinions..... 11

RELATED THINGS:

- Watching the Crowd (Jesse S. Dancy)..... 13
- A Kick in High Finance (G. T. Evans)..... 13
- Opening Editorial of the First Issue of The Public..... 13
- "The Outlook" on Plutocrats..... 15
- Labor and Neighbor—Remedies. 4. Justice, Freedom and Co-operation (Ernest Crosby)..... 15

BOOKS:

- An Explanation of Anarchy..... 19
- British Finance..... 20
- Books Received..... 20
- Pamphlets..... 20
- Periodicals..... 21

tions which the war with Spain engendered and the war upon the Filipinos fostered. But as the decade has rounded out, evidence of a return to the ideals of Jefferson and Lincoln accumulates. "Back to democracy!" is a growing sentiment—not in the sense of turning backward toward dead ideals that have been discarded, but in the sense of again going forward toward living ideals that have been for a time ignored.

VII. RATIONAL OPTIMISM

During this momentous decade there have been times of pessimism, and there have been times of a silly optimism worse than pessimism; but there has come a time also of rational optimism. We hailed its dawning three years ago (vol. vii, p. 627), and we identify its presence now. This period of industrial awakening, The Public was begun to promote. Wars and conquests intervened and distracted public attention; but the wars are past, the emptiness of conquest is realized, and the political conflict between what Raymond Robins calls the Group of Plunder and the Group of Toil is broadly open. The Public therefore begins its second decade with infinitely better opportunities for serving its purpose than circumstances permitted at the beginning of its first, and may with entire appropriateness reproduce, as it does in the department of Related Things of this issue, the editorial greeting it offered in its initial number ten years ago. What that greeting was then to the beginning of our first decade, let it be now to the beginning of our second.

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The Eleventh Volume of The Public.

When he volunteered, without other personal interest than his interest in the service he believes The Public renders to fundamental democracy, to raise a sustention fund to assure its continued publication (vol. x, pp. 1081, 1088), Daniel Kiefer promised to advise our readers in due time of plans to be formulated for making this fund effective by placing the paper upon a basis of income which would relieve it from further dependence upon any fund. This promise is now partly redeemed with a statement from Mr. Kiefer on the 21st page of the present issue.

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To Mr. Kiefer's statement let us add that the eleventh volume of The Public, of which this issue is the first, will close with the final issue of December. The twelfth volume will then begin with the first issue in January, a shifting back from April which had been considered and decided upon

prior to the change in the proprietorship of the paper. One other alteration should be explained. The publication date has been shifted from Saturday to Friday. This is because the day of printing has been shifted from Thursday to Wednesday. The object of the latter change has been to assure the delivery of the paper over as wide a territory as possible within the week of publication. The Public has gone into the mails at Chicago regularly on Thursday nights and Friday mornings, and yet it has frequently not been delivered to readers even at such near-by points as Cleveland and Cincinnati until the following Mondays. As the fault seems to lie with the post offices at points of delivery, and to be impossible of rectification, the paper will hereafter be mailed at Chicago a day earlier than heretofore—on Wednesday nights and Thursday mornings, instead of Thursday nights and Friday mornings.

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Christian and Jew.

We are criticized for speaking of the massacre of Jews at Kischeneff (vol. x, p. 1154) as having been perpetrated by "a Christian mob." We did not intend, of course, that any one should infer that we supposed the murderous mob to be composed of essential Christians. That would have been a contradiction in terms. And if Jews had not been the victims of this mob, we should have felt no necessity for describing it as "Christian." But these Jews were massacred by a mob of partisans whose impulse was their own conformity and the Jewish non-conformity to conventional Christianity. We might describe such Christians as fetish Christians; but this seems hardly necessary, since the context plainly shows that "Christian" is used as the historical antonym of "Jew."

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Mr. Root on Immigration.

It is difficult to believe that Secretary Root is really responsible for the interview which comes back to this country in a Vienna publication. Surely he is old enough to know that the same objections he makes to continental immigration were made to Irish immigration in its day. Yet he is reported as saying that the Irish were welcome. So they were welcome, but not by the class of Americans who corresponded then to the classes that want to restrict immigration now. Has Mr. Root forgotten the days when the Irish immigrant was repulsed with, "No Irish need apply!" a phrase so familiar that it became the refrain of a street song? It is true enough, as Mr. Root says,