

familiar with its workings, a machine-government. This political machine is a contrivance, composed of numerous elements, so combined as to produce a given result or attain a specified object. These elements are represented by a class of men, who make politics a profession, and above all, aim at making it profitable to themselves.

This of course necessitates placing all positions of trust and emolument in the hands of men of their own class, aiming always to deprive the people of the right or option of selecting them. In war we know it is impossible to accomplish anything without organization, unity of purpose, and concert of action. So in politics, and under our defective forms of popular election, this process of maneuvering proves an easy matter as it is but a curious combination of fraud and force.

The first step in this political farce, is termed engineering the primaries and is done by an assemblage of *sovereigns*. The routine is something like this: At a certain appointed hour, the captains of tens and the captains of fifties are in prompt attendance; a machine politician is placed in the chair by a popular (?) vote; a machine politician places his nominees on the list; by a machine politician the nominations are adopted and the ticket is made. The engineering of the primary is now completed and everything has gone along just as a machine naturally does its work.

The secret work known as "making up the slate," having been previously done, each element composing the machine knows what to do and does it well. Occasionally, factions arise in the different parties, which cause the "breaking of the slate," but the result is the same, of no use or importance to the country. The management of the conventions is nearly equally simple, but in order to produce a popular effect on the people, a declaration of party principles known as a platform, must be adopted.

Every plank in this platform glows with patriotic and virtuous sentiment, which are forgotten

as soon as adopted. Every post supporting it glitters with indisputable propositions, and is embellished with a choice selection of sparkling generalities, which sound very well but mean very little. Two subjects must always be touched upon in the building of a well constructed platform; first a curtailing of the public expenditure, and second, a nicely worded denunciation of the miscreants who rob our brave soldiers and sailors of their justly deserved pensions.

When this masterpiece of composition is completed, the work of the convention is done, and we have two great parties equipped ready to contest for the prize. We have two great machines representing our nation, and all the man outside of politics can do, is stay outside or select with which party he will run. Aside from these conditions his only alternative is independent action, but this is always accompanied by hard work and probably defeat in the ultimate.

This we say describes the prevailing custom in politics; but in cases of special exigencies, a man not known as a professional politician may sometimes be elected. It is but a few years since such an one filled the Presidential chair. He attempted a radical reform in politics and even politicians pretended to favor his ideas, for in their first platform under his administration a plank inscribed "Civil Service Reform" was inserted. This looked very well but meant nothing, as the professional politician always favors a good thing, but never does it unless it furthers his own interests. On this occasion, as others, the platform was not upheld, and the President disgusted with the success of the project let the machine grind on as before. Things have come to such a state that a public office is now sought by many, because of the emolument it brings rather than because of the honorable functions with which it clothes him. History painfully demonstrates to us the point to which through corruption our politics has brought us. How many cases can be cited where the opportunities and powers of office were used to increase the gains