

**THE BOSS AND THE MACHINE.**

In this case the man runs the machine and not the machine the man. Crokerism is the best example. Unlike McKinleyism, both boss and machine are visible. The boss is not a true leader. He is the head of an army of subservient underlings but not a representative of the people. The boss counts noses, not men. Richard Croker is worthy of study and admiration. He is a strong man. All strength commands admiration. Only the way it is used is admirable, however. He represents kingship limited, not imperialism unlimited. He represents monarchial usurpation. Doubtless he would make it hereditary if he could. Richard Croker is the dictator of New York politics. In many respects he is like unto Oliver Cromwell. He is the head of a faction, but not a people. Crokerism is far safer than McKinleyism. Croker is captain of the ship. The crew may grumble betimes but they dare not mutiny. Croker is to them their self-preserving head. Not so McKinley. Croker is no figure head. McKinley is only figuratively the head of the republican party. The Robespierres of the machine can guillotine him any time they desire. They throttle him at all times. Not so with Croker. Croker is monarch of all he surveys so long as he wears the crown. Only Croker can dethrone Croker. That will be when he becomes weak. Then Richard of York will be no more himself.

There is no use of denying that there is much deserving condemnation in Crokerism. On the contrary there is much worthy of emulation in it. Crokerism is safety against anarchy because it represents a strong and absolute government. Croker is a usurper. He has all the characteristics of a despotic tyrant. Crokerism is the product of a weak and indifferent people. Weakness must be governed. A people who cannot govern themselves are in the swaddling clothes of social development. Croker studies the people, not to see what they will, but to discover their weaknesses that he may have his will. He represents absolute monarchy on American soil.

All governments exist by the will of the will. Indifferent acquiescence is no less the will of the people than independent and absolute sovereignty. Crokerism and machine government are the result of the treason of the people to the primitive and universal truth, that socialism is the union of those capable of maintaining themselves for their individual preservation and government inaugurated by them for their own benefit. Crokerism is the natural result of free and unlimited suffrage and the admittance of the unfit into the privileges of free citizenship. Crokerism and machine government find their strength in the unfit, in those who contribute nothing to the maintenance of government. On the contrary they are

largely a burden upon it. It is owing to their unfitness that the cohorts of Crokerism find self-preserving strength in the boss and he the voting strength that upholds his usurpation in them. The usurper invariably appeals "to the people," talks much about "the rights of the people," while he utterly ignores the self-supporting among the people, or else defies them. This was the method of Cæsar and of Napoleon. It is also that of Mr. Bryan. McKinley plays the same game, but with the appearance of profound moral intent. Croker descends to no such vile hypocrisy. Richard, the first, of New York, is not a leader. He dares not lead. He pushes. He neither makes nor unmakes public opinion. He defies it. In this is his strength. It is also his weakness. It is his strength because it dazzles and pleases his cohorts and slaves. It is his weakness because it defies the self-supporting moral element in the community which could behead him in a minute if it only had manhood enough to will it. Croker's strength lies in dallying with fate. The same was true of Cæsar and Napoleon. The same fate awaits Croker if he lives long enough. The strength of Croker is in corruption. The strength of the grave is there also.

No usurper, no tyrant, can withstand the determined will of a free and independent people. A slavish, ignorant or indifferent people must inevitably become the victims of a poor or indifferent government, or an absolute despotism. Like people like government is axiomatic. A weak or indifferent people require a despotic government to their safety. Any government which is not absolute is not a government, except in form. It may be a government de jure, it certainly is not de facto. The most absolute government possible is that inaugurated or intelligently maintained by a strong, free and independent people. Such a government is invariably despotic to the weak. No more absolute despotism exists than that of a prison or an insane asylum. The more intelligent it is the more absolute is it.

**The Safety in Crokerism.**

It is unequivocally safe to say that Crokerism is the best and safest form of government for New York City under existing conditions. That is not asserting that it is the safest and best government that city could have. Nevertheless it is the safest possible at present. What safety would there be to life and property in New York with such a machine made leader, and milk and water character as McKinley at the head of it? What safety would there be with such a "goodie goodie," such a universal sympathizer with the unfit, as Mr. Bryan? Anarchy would result in no time.

Compare New York or Chicago, with its heterogeneous and anarchistic pull and haul among its politicians, as to

safety of life and property? There is not a citizen of New York who harbors any great fear in that direction. There is not a citizen of Chicago who actually feels safe on its streets at night. It is doubtful if any observant and thinking Chicagoan feels really safe when he goes to bed. Think of the labor riots in Chicago! Look at the late anarchistic outbreaks in Cleveland! Does any one think such could occur in New York so long as Richard is himself? No intelligent New Yorker does!

Herein lies a good part of the strength of King Richard. The active business classes, not the millionaires alone, know that Crokerism is safe so long as Croker is king. Richard knows that to remain on the throne he must be the incorporation of public safety. The indifference of the intelligent classes of New York is largely due to this feeling of safety in Richard I. The country has no such faith in Mr. McKinley. It dare not trust Mr. Bryan if it has any intelligence whatever. He promises the army of unfits too much that he can never fulfill. Croker's trustworthiness lies in the fact that for every promise he demands absolute and faithful service. Bryan promises everything and demands nothing. McKinley has nothing to promise. The machine does that. It fulfills what it pleases. Croker represents a strong and unprincipled king and a weak and indifferent people. Suppose both were weak, what then? Bryan represents a weak and ephemeral ruler and a weak and fluctuating constituency. What must be the result? McKinley represents a weak leader, a strong machine cabal, and a more or less indifferent constituency as to the nature of the government. Who dares deny that Crokerism is not the best and safest of the lot?

Crokerism is far better than a weak ruler with a weak or indifferent people. It is far safer that the man run the machine rather than the machine the man, as is the case with Mr. McKinley and Mr. Bryan. It is better still when there is no machine; when the people are free and independent and select the freest and strongest and most independent men among them to represent them according to their intelligence. Chain-gang representatives are slaves, not men. A free and independent people will neither dictate nor be dictated to. Neither will they be led by the nose with machine made strings. The time has come for a parting of the ways. Neither McKinleyism, Bryanarchy nor Crokerism is suitable to a free and independent people. All three are unconstitutional. All three are usurpations. All three are begotten in iniquity and conceived in treason. The rallying cry should be constitutionalism, not anarchy; independence and not slavery; intelligence and honesty, not ignorance and corruption. Shall it be?

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