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SATURDAY - - - AUGUST 28, 1897

#### THE BOSS.

In all these diatribes against the boss in politics, lamentations over his successes and paeans over his less conspicuous reverses, are we not missing the mark? Is the boss, after all, a pestilential weed without possibility of good, or is he rather a plant, now unmistakably wild and unrestrained, dwarfing and killing more lovely growths; yet which, under proper use of the implements of political gardening, might be made to delight the eye and swell prodigiously the granaries of work and wisdom? We have Speaker Reed's word for it that a statesman is a politician who is dead. And, while this may suggest that we are blind to the good the living politician is doing, let us go a step farther and inquire whether the boss is not capable of being made an instrument of great good, instead of the unmitigated scoundrel we have been accustomed to regard him.

The boss has his sins and his limitations. From Tweed—or shall we say from Crassus—down to the petty political tyrant of every little American city, the baleful effects of "ring rule" have furnished the theme of numberless philippics. We all know how jobs have been perfected in councils and legislatures, courts have been influenced and elections carried by force or fraud. Then the boss is rarely a man of any decided convictions on public questions. Does anybody care or consider it worth while to know what Gorman thinks

about the tariff, what Platt's views are as to the best basis for additional banking currency, or how Quay would retire the greenbacks? There is an obvious falling off here from the leadership that based itself on force of advocacy of idea, well exemplified in such practical politicians as Douglas, Tilden, Blaine, or even Oliver P. Morton. Undoubtedly the boss deserves nearly everything that is said about him.

Yet it is about time to recognize the fact that genius for practical political organizations must be reckoned with. The evolution of American politics has given us the boss, and the pertinent question appears to be whether we shall keep on fruitlessly abusing him, content to carry the newspapers, magazines, clubs and pulpits, while the boss gets the votes; or, on the other hand, to recognize his efficiency for accomplishing things and turn it into useful channels. As a rule, the boss finds his reward in the triumph of his ticket. He is about as honest as other men, and no more avaricious than the average. He prizes a seat in the senate, not for its direct or indirect emoluments of fame or money, but because it helps him to lubricate the machine of which he is the chief engineer. And all political machines are merely means to the higher ends of measures. Every boss understands that. The Republican politicians knew well enough last year that McKinley's election meant personal triumphs not nearly so much as it meant a Republican tariff, currency reform and an American foreign policy. These things are somewhat above and beyond the business of the boss; but he dimly realizes their importance, and cheerfully offers himself and his machine as vehicles for their furtherance.

It is pretty clear that the boss in some shape we must have. Another rises up as soon as one is knocked down. The economist and the patriot will have to use him still to bring desirable things to pass. And the boss is, after all, only the prod-



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The people will get the kind of political leaders they want. These will be no lower morally or intellectually, and assuredly no higher, than the body of voters with whom they work. The boss is very much what we make him.—Oregonian.

Since the Klondike craze started nothing has been heard of Hawaii. The newspapers suddenly quit making war between Japan and this country, and Hawaii annexation, Japan and the whole subject dropped out of sight. The fact that the dispatches are again dealing with the subject indicates a falling off of interest in the gold craze.

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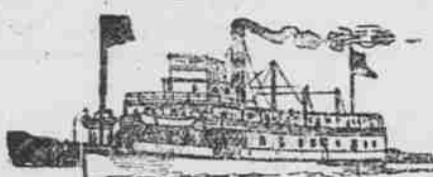
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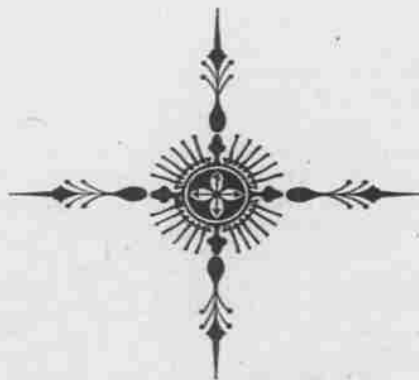
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