

A FIGHT FOR CLEAN GOVERNMENT AND POPULAR RULE

The campaign in the State of New York this fall is in no sense an ordinary partisan campaign.

Mr. Stimson and the principles for which he stands deserve the heartiest support of all good citizens who believe in public decency and who are capable of looking ahead and thinking of the welfare of the country of to-morrow no less than of the welfare of the country of to-day. Mr. Stimson was nominated in a State Convention which more accurately and truthfully represented the popular will than any other State Convention of either party held in New York State for the past generation. He was nominated by the progressive and independent Republicans, who fearlessly avowed their belief that the best service they could render their party was to make that party in the highest sense the servant of the whole people. Every progressive Democrat, every upright Independent, should support Mr. Stimson with the heartiest zeal, not only because of that for which he stands, but also because of what the combination against him really is and really represents.

This combination, masquerading in New York State under the name of Democracy, in reality represents no historic party of the United States at all, but is as frankly base an alliance between corrupt politics and corrupt business as this country has ever seen. Mr. Stimson is not opposed by anything that can legitimately claim to represent a National party with avowed principles and defined policies. He is opposed by a combination between political Wall Street and Tammany Hall. Tammany Hall can be called Democratic in the sense that it usually dominates the Democratic politics of New York City, and often dominates the Democratic politics of New York State. Political Wall Street is frankly and cynically independent; only, its independence represents exactly the reverse of the attitude of the honest Independents. There is a Wall Street Democracy; but its feeling for Democracy is tepid, and its sensitiveness to the pocket nerve very great. The

Wall Street supporters of Tammany Hall in this campaign include men who are nominally Republicans as well as nominally Independents and nominally Democrats; but their professed party allegiance sits on them lightly, and they find no hesitation in backing an organization whose very name has become a byword for political corruption, because they feel that they can trust this organization not to interfere with crooked business as Henry L. Stimson, the Republican nominee for Governor, has shown by his handling of the Sugar Trust that he would interfere with it. Nominally, the principles of the two parties to the alliance—political Wall Street and Tammany Hall—are far apart; but in reality their practices are the same; for each of the two partners believes that self-interest, exercised without regard to any conscientious scruple, should be the only guiding principle of political and personal conduct.

I need hardly say that when I speak of "Wall Street," I do not mean the honest business men who are in or near that street, but those big business men and big speculators who arrogate to themselves the title, and who have succeeded in impressing upon the public mind a definite and truthful image of just what they do really represent. The attitude of political Wall Street is frankly taken, and is avowed almost without disguise. It is substantially set forth in the columns of those journals whose editors are under the direct control, or the almost equally powerful indirect influence, of the particular financiers whose activity is of such sinister portent in American social and industrial life. These newspapers have often declaimed against the bossism and political corruption of the parties, and they have been particularly severe against the Republican machine that was overthrown in the Saratoga Convention, and against the Democratic machine that triumphed without opposition at the Rochester Convention. But their opposition to corrupt politics is mere sound and fury, compared to their deep and abiding hatred of all men who seek to do away with corruption in big business, who venture to oppose big business men when they are corrupt, and who stand for the principle of eliminating special privilege from our economic no less than from our

political life and of generalizing to secure a greater and more general equality of opportunity among men. They are tepidly against small political corruption; but the full bitterness of their hostility is reserved for the men who, although they war against corrupt politicians and lawless labor leaders, war no less earnestly against the crooked rich. Their opposition is a tribute of high honor to Mr. Stimson. They know he is absolutely incorruptible. He is not merely above corrupt influence in its grosser forms; he is a man whom it is impossible to sway by any exercise of those subtle influences which so often do bend well-meaning men of weak character aside from the path of duty.

The Republicans can afford to let their foes themselves describe themselves. One of the prominent exponents of the Wall Street attitude on public affairs is the New York "Times," and its description of the forces which nominated the ticket which it is now supporting is as follows:

"All day and to-night the Democratic leaders have been going, hat in hand, to Mr. Murphy, and asking him humbly to favor this or that candidate."

"Never before has Tammany Hall been in such unquestioned control of a State Convention. Never before has any Tammany boss been enthroned as a State leader in the unlimited way in which Murphy is recognized to-day. The Convention is in the hollow of his hand."

"Back of Murphy's control are rumors of strange and sinister influences. You cannot throw a brick in any direction in Rochester without hitting some lobbyist or railroad attorney."

"The woods have been full of them from the start. They got here before the delegates did."

"What was back of the secret candidacy of another leading candidate never sprung until the Gaynor movement was out of the way, but carefully planned weeks in advance? There are forty answers, and none of them favorable to the theory that the Democratic Convention is a people's convention."

"The writer of this despatch has attended many conventions, State and National, and he has never seen a more general air of distrust and suspicion than prevails throughout Rochester to-day as to the action of the Convention. The Convention session meant nothing. The real convention was in Mr. Murphy's room."

This candid statement can be accepted as absolutely truthful, since it is made by a Wall Street paper about the Tammany

Convention which nominated the Wall Street candidates.

Let no man say that in attacking crooked big business we are also attacking honest big business. Such an accusation is as absurdly untruthful as to claim that we are against honest politicians because we are attacking dishonest corporations. Our attack is on dishonesty in big men and little men alike. We appeal to all honest and independent men. We appeal to all young men who have the honor of the country close at heart and who believe in shaping conditions so that our National life shall be led along the lines of fair play, shall be conducted on a higher level politically, and with a greater chance for reasonable reward following honest effort industrially. We stand for the honest man, great or small, rich or poor, and we believe in trying to improve our system so as to give each honest man a better chance on his own merits to get the reward to which his honesty and exercised capacity entitle him in business.

No more sordid combination of corrupt business and corrupt politics, no combination more utterly sincere in its rejection of every high and inspiring motive, was ever faced than the combination we now face in New York State. Its leaders are seeking to influence honest men who do not understand the facts to support them upon the ground of material self-interest.

The Republicans of New York State ask men to support their side because in the end it will surely redound to the material interest of the American people if the principles for which they stand triumph, but they also ask for support on far loftier grounds. On a platform demanding the highest standard of efficiency and integrity, and declaring absolutely for rule by the people, the Republicans have placed in nomination for Governor a man whose life is a guarantee that, if elected, his performance will match this promise. His far-reaching honesty and broad sympathy make his entire fearlessness and disinterestedness, his high ability, of peculiar value to our people in the present condition of affairs. There never was a sharper contrast than that typified on the one hand by him and his associates, and on the other by his opponents and by the menacing forces which stand behind

those opponents and absolutely control them. The fight is on for clean, decent, and efficient citizenship, for cleanliness, efficiency, and decency in politics and in business ; and we have a right to expect the support of every man, without regard to party, who prizes the good name of America and the qualities that make for integrity and honor in our public life as a Nation.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.