

SERFAGE OF THE SOUL *

WE are for principles and not for men. Our fight is for social and economic theories that are sound, and against those that are false. We support men or war against them only incidentally to securing the type of governmental action which we need. But there are men who personify forces of evil in such a manner that the concrete attack must be made upon them, or else the evil left untouched. Until we sweep away the malign master mechanics of politics, whose skill is like the skill of the underworld; until we do away with the domination of those gunmen of the upper financial and political world, whose activities are as obnoxious as those of the gunmen of the underworld, we cannot effectively secure the great social and industrial reforms which the Progressive party was created to obtain.

The conditions of boss rule are such that inevitably the boss tends to work hand in hand with those men whose activities in the business world are most detrimental to other honest business men and to the public at large. It is idle to hope for far-reaching legislation to remedy what is wrong in our industrial and social life until we have driven from politics the men whose presence has done so much to aggravate this evil and whose political life is conditioned upon their representing, openly or underhandedly, the interests that have most to profit by the continuance of the evil.

The people who, whether from timidity or sloth or

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desire for selfish ease or desire for selfish gain, surrender themselves to the leadership of a boss are not really freemen. There is a serfage of the soul that is fully as degrading as any serfage of the body. The men who have surrendered their will and their judgment into the keeping of Mr. Barnes, or Mr. Penrose, or Mr. Murphy, or Mr. Sullivan are not fit to be free citizens in a free Republic.

Surely when we watch the dreadful tragedy that at this moment is being enacted before our eyes in Europe, we should be devoutly thankful that here on a territory as large as all Europe no man's hand can lawfully be raised against his brother; that peace does obtain, and that a measure of justice and fair dealing has been achieved, which though lamentably short of what ought to be achieved, yet in very fact represents a long advance on anything that has ever before been attained.

But the surest way to lose what we have already attained is to sit supine and slothful in our complacency, and, while boasting of our past achievements, to do nothing in the present day. It is not only liberty which must be attained at the price of eternal vigilance. Public honesty and the power to make public servants the genuine and efficient instruments of the popular will can be achieved and kept only on the same terms.