

### The Election in Maine.

Comparing the election of the 12th in Maine with the primaries of the 6th in Wisconsin, the significance of the former is clear; and while it affords no solid ground for Democratic enthusiasm of the partisan sort, it is in the highest degree encouraging to democratic Democrats. Also to democratic Republicans. The Democratic victory in Maine is not in the slightest degree indicative of a popular demand for the return of the Democratic party to power, with its top-heavy load of spoils-hunting Sullivans and reactionary Harmons. Yet it is significant of a political tendency of national scope.

Considered nationally it means precisely what the La Follette victory at the Wisconsin primaries means. In Wisconsin, democratic Republicans could speak through the primaries, and the mass of democratic Democrats joined them there. In Maine, Republican insurgents, using the only electoral mechanism at their command, spoke through the election. The election result is simply another impressive sign of a general movement in American politics. It takes different forms in different places, according to local conditions, but the same sign comes from Wisconsin, California, Kansas and Maine; and everywhere it means, as we believe, not that the Democratic party is wanted in power, but that democratic Democrats and democratic Republicans are getting together,—getting together against plutocracy, with its bourbons, spoilsmen, big business, and standpatters. The Changing Order is beginning to realize Itself.

Possibly these indications will not continue; possibly there will be another reaction, even more than one, before the leap forward; possibly this wave will recede; possibly the pendulum will swing back once more, or twice, or thrice; but there can be no doubt that the pendulum is swinging forward now, that the wave is rising toward a crest now, that the point for the forward leap is now almost in sight.

### Mr. Roosevelt's Progressive Leadership.

Republican insurgents, in looking forward with hope as they naturally do to Theodore Roosevelt's leadership, are likely to be disappointed. Men who rise to the top under the conditions that precede political revolution, are not likely to lead the revolution when it comes; and that which is now called Insurgency is either revolution or a spasm. If Insurgency is not revolution, it will soon subside

and pass into history along with the Granger, Populist and other movements of the past thirty years, as another expression of the irrepressible conflict which some time or other will burst into real revolution. If it is revolution, the Roosevelt vogue will probably very soon go the way of the Billiken fad.

That Roosevelt neither belongs to nor is needed by the Insurgent movement, in so far as that has revolutionary reality, is evident enough from the La Follette victory in Wisconsin. Roosevelt kept out of that fight. He timed his Wisconsin date so as to follow the primaries, not to precede them. He helped not an iota. Yet no other Insurgent victory has equaled La Follette's. Neither has any other so completely merged the progressive elements of both parties, without which, as Senator Bourne has so well said, there can be no recovery by the people of their rights from the Interests. Republican insurgents and democratic Democrats must get together in one party or the other, or a new one, in order to fight the Interests effectively. This they have done in Wisconsin. And they have done it there without Roosevelt's aid,—aye, in spite of his aforesaid hostility and his recent coldness.

### The Lorimer Episode.

It is with great reluctance that we differ from those many friends of Mr. Roosevelt who applaud his conduct regarding the Hamilton Club dinner. In their good political purposes we have unshaken confidence; but it seems impossible to account for their judgment in this matter on any other basis than blind partisanship—a holy partisanship, if you please; a partisanship which seeks good ends instead of bad ones, which clings to affiliations of good men instead of wicked men; but partisanship, nevertheless, instead of that regard for fair dealing and decent behavior in personal intercourse without which the purest purposes may be stultified and the best of ends be frustrated.

That Mr. Roosevelt might properly have refused to sit at table with Senator Lorimer, we freely concede; though we should not therefore agree with the Methodist preacher who described him as "one sent of God." Sunday school memories remind us that He whose shoe latched the one of whom that description was first used was unworthy to unloose, did not object to sitting at table with sinners. But as Mr. Roosevelt is in training for reelection to the Presidency, his sitting at table

publicly with Senator Lorimer might have been prejudicial to his aspirations in that respect. Some hostile partisan might have pointed at him the finger of scorn to the confusion of delicate admirers. Probably not, for Mr. Roosevelt's facility in turning all things into political capital for himself—from least to greatest, from worst to best,—is almost without parallel. But it was for him to say whether he would sit at table with Senator Lorimer, and he said No. So far, no criticism applies; except perhaps that he ought to have saved his hosts embarrassment by being alert enough to object before Lorimer—a Senator and member of the club not likely to be ignored in the invitations—had been urged by the committee to accept the invitation he had at first neglected and according to his friends was disposed to decline.

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The criticism that does apply, is Mr. Roosevelt's insistence upon taking advantage of the opportunity for "a grand stand play." Lest there be objection to our use of this phrase, let us explain, as Mr. Roosevelt might, that we are "using it merely scientifically and descriptively, and because no other terms express the fact with the necessary precision." It was in truth a "grand stand play." Whether for his own benefit, or further to popularize reforms that he rather immodestly even if not wholly without warrant labels "my policies," or to crush a political corruptionist, we need not now discuss. It was "a grand stand play" for one or another of those purposes; for Mr. Roosevelt refused to allow Senator Lorimer to withdraw quietly, but insisted that the affair have the fullest possible publicity.

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That Mr. Roosevelt's insistence upon publicity for such an affair—no matter how hateful to him the other party might be, nor how justly so—was discourteous to the point of social indecency, even the warmest of Mr. Roosevelt's admirers will hardly dispute. They would not defend or excuse it in any one else. Do they find justification for it, then, in Mr. Roosevelt's much advertised sensitiveness to political corruption? Does he act under the influence of some sort of moral hysteria blinding him for the moment to the ordinary courtesies of human intercourse, when odors of public corruption assail his moral olfactories? That explanation of Mr. Roosevelt's idiosyncratic manners would hardly bear the test of the fact that certain other fragrant presences were at the very table from which Lorimer was driven under a blaze of limelight. Nor can it be reconciled with Mr. Roosevelt's toleration of "Boss" Cox as a member

of the Roosevelt reception committee in Cincinnati only twenty-four hours after the Lorimer episode—"Boss" Cox whose notorious and brazen political corruption makes that of which Lorimer is accused seem almost virtuous, and is comparable only with Tweed's. All that can be said for Mr. Roosevelt in this connection is that his son-in-law needs "Boss" Cox's support as a candidate for Congress, and Cox is therefore a political friend, whereas Lorimer is a political enemy. This is a more convincing explanation, at all events, than one of Mr. Roosevelt's, namely, that Lorimer is in office and Cox is not,—as if it could make any difference, morally or politically or socially, whether a corrupter of politics is a Boss or a Senator. We might call that his only explanation. To accept his addendum, that "Boss" Cox is not suspected of corruption so far as he knows, would be a gratuitous reflection upon Mr. Roosevelt's intelligence.

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What Mr. Roosevelt can be credited with, and all he can be credited with, for his otherwise inexcusable "grand stand play" regarding Lorimer, is the advertising somewhat more widely of the manifest corruption in the Illinois legislature, of which Lorimer is a beneficiary and not improbably one of the promoters. But the advertising of iniquities and the iniquitous in that manner, while it may possibly serve a useful partisan or personal purpose temporarily, can have no lasting favorable influence upon civic progress. More likely its influence will be neither favorable nor lasting.

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### The Acquittal of Browne.

For admission to the penitentiary as a felon, proof of guilt beyond reasonable doubt should be exacted. This is the law, and it is righteous law. But for election to the legislature, the reverse holds true: it is then not guilt to exclude but innocence to admit, that should be proved beyond the reasonable doubt.

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That is the reason for our judgment that Lee O'Neil Browne, the Democratic legislative leader charged with bribery in connection with the election of William Lorimer to the United States Senate from Illinois (pp. 614, 698), was rightly acquitted in the criminal court but should be convicted at the polls.

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We know of no reason for believing that the jury which tried Mr. Browne did not decide with good judgment and good conscience in finding the