

The Public

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The New York Mayoralty.

Senator Root's work for fusion in New York has a significance which should not escape the attention of democratic Democrats, either there or elsewhere. When the fusion movement for the coming municipal election was on the verge of collapse, Senator Root revived it, so at least the dispatches report. "Senator Elihu Root today exercised his authority as Republican State leader"—runs the dispatch of the 29th, which we take from the Record-Herald of the 30th—"to save the cause of fusion, and his intervention brought about order in the uncertain ranks of the anti-Tammany forces." How? By his making "clear the interest," as the same report explains, "of national party leaders in the outcome of the New York election"!

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That is the true significance of the present "fusion" in New York. It is not a fusion for good city government. It is not a fusion for non-partisan city government. It is a fusion for the benefit of Republican machine politics. Confessedly so in this instance, such fusions are actually so in nearly all instances. The Republican machine resorts to "goo-goo" fusions in Democratic cities, in order to put itself into power there. It has done it more than once in New York. It has done it in Chicago. And in both cities the best difference in result has been like the difference between an open cesspool so public in its offensive-

ness that it cannot long remain, and whited sepulchers full of all manner of uncleanness and emitting all kinds of odorless poisons. The fusion in New York this year is so plainly an enterprise of the Republican machine and its Big Business backers, that any democratic Democrats whom it may gather in are in need of guardians.

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Oh, but Tammany Hall! Well, what about Tammany Hall? It has such an unsavory record, don't you know? But hasn't the Republican machine an unsavory record? and is the savor of the assistant Republicans now co-operating with it altogether sweet? We are not speaking of Republicans with reference to their party doctrines. We allude to the Republican machine, with its Big Business ramifications. Neither do we sing any praises for Tammany Hall. But whom does the "fusion" against Tammany Hall, and in the interest of national Republican leaders as Senator Root has "made clear"—whom does this "fusion" put at the head of its ticket? Isn't its candidate a representative of the Interests? And whom does Tammany Hall put at the head of its ticket? Never mind about the necessity that forced it to. That is not the question, except as it hints at a better way than linking arms with the Republican machine of making Tammany Hall keep step to the drumbeats of democratic Democracy. Why it is that Tammany has nominated the right kind of man makes no difference. The point that concerns democratic Democrats is that he is the right kind of man.

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How can there be an instant's hesitation between those two candidates? As to a third candidate under existing circumstances, why not join the "fusion" and done with it? The contest is between Judge Gaynor and his Republican-machine adversary; between a representative of democratic Democracy whom Tammany has had to nominate or lose, and a representative of Big Business whom the Republican machine is steering into a place where he can serve the Interests. What objection is there to Judge Gaynor? None. Were he running on a hopeless third party venture, he would be ideal, if the dispatches are to be believed. Were he the candidate of the Republican-machine "fusionists," he would be acceptable. Had he declined Tammany Hall's nomination in endorsement of the nomination by the Municipal Democracy, he could have commanded all the enthusiasm of leadership in a forlorn hope. Does he rule himself out because he accepts Tammany's

nomination, though he hasn't yielded an iota of what he stands for? The only thing that makes him ineligible, then, is his acceptance of a nomination which insures his election! The objection would be absurd in almost any circumstances. Under the circumstances this year in New York it is worse than absurd. A candidate who declares in the convincing tone in which Judge Gaynor declares it and with the background of such a record as his, that with his accession to the New York mayoralty, government by the caprice of men shall give way to government by law, is the man for Mayor of New York, no matter whose nomination he refuses to spurn.

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The great indictment that democratic Democrats have made against Tammany Hall is that it has refused to nominate such men as Gaynor for offices of power. Shall they stultify that indictment now by refusing to support a Tammany candidate whom they acknowledge as one of their own leaders, merely because he does not spurn Tammany's nomination and throw the election over to the Republican machine? Judge Gaynor will doubtless be elected. But that is not enough. He ought to be made to feel when he comes into office that he has behind him, as against the Tammany machine as well as the Republican machine, the united and enthusiastic support of every genuine democrat in New York, whether of Republican or Democratic affiliations.

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An Ingenuous Advocate of Public Plunder.

There is a certain delicious ingenuousness about some of Mr. Taft's speeches on his "swing about the circle." Take his Seattle speech, for instance, the part of it in which he argued for ship subsidies against the objection that, to quote his own words, they would be "a contribution to private companies out of the treasury of the United States." A less ingenuous man would have dodged that objection. Or else he would have argued that subsidies are private gifts of public funds only in form and not in fact. But Mr. Taft was candid, as we may see from his reply as reported by the regular news dispatches: "We are contributing in various ways on similar principles in effect, both by our protective tariff laws, by our river and harbor bills, and by our reclamation service." All of which is perfectly true, and Mr. Taft's statement of it a charming admission that in these ways private interests are fostered at public expense. The reclamation service spends public funds to in-