

his place to the organization of either the new Republican or Democratic party, says: "Among the proximate causes of the reaction against the Republican party in America, the scandalous persistence of the leaders in keeping up the system of political assessments on public officers must be reckoned as the chief. The machine theory on the subject is simple enough. The office-holders owe their places to their party; therefore they ought to contribute from their pay to the campaign funds. Control of these funds gives the *bosses* their chief power. . . . The machine methods have failed this time. But that, the *bosses* will say to the reformers, is because you chose to be disgusted with them. You thwarted us, no doubt; but you have still to show that you can lead on the lines of purity, the masses that we controlled by corruption." "Boss" in this passage is correctly used as an American word for a purely American practice, though it is to be hoped neither the word nor the thing will ever become naturalized in this country. "Boss," or "to boss," was, according to some philologists, originally introduced into the New World by Irish or Scottish immigrants, from the Gaelic *bos*, the head. But this is erroneous. The word is derived from the Dutch settlers who first colonized New Amsterdam, first called New York by the English when the colony changed masters by coming into possession of the British government. *Baas* in the Dutch language signifies a master, or the foreman of a workshop. Perhaps even the English-speaking population of the States, if they had known that "boss" was no other than Dutch for master, might in their republican pride have repudiated the word and invented another.

The constant and rapidly increasing intercourse between Great Britain

and the United States, the growing influence and enterprise of American newspapers, and the consequent circulation in this country of the most important among them, together with the ample quotations which are made from them in the London and provincial press, tend, imperceptibly perhaps, but very effectually, to Americanize the style as well as the language of newspaper writers in this country, especially of those who do not stand in the foremost rank of scholarship. Fifty, or even forty, years ago what are called "leading articles" were much fewer and better written than they are now. One really good leading article was considered sufficient editorial comment for one day, but at the present time it seems to be a rule with all the principal journals of the metropolis to publish at least four such articles every morning, even though the subjects really worthy of comment do not amount to half the number. The provincial journals, too, often follow the unnecessary example, and instead of filling their columns with news, which their readers require, fill them with stale opinions and vapid commentaries which nobody cares about. So careless and slipshod, for the most part, is the style of these articles, that cultivated and busy men are often compelled to pass them over unread. A learned man, who filled the position of sub-editor to the *Morning Advertiser*, was, a few years ago, called to account by the committee of management, composed of licensed victuallers, for inserting a paragraph of news one day which had appeared in its columns on the day previous. The sub-editor denied the fact. The indignant committee thereupon produced the paragraph in question—which had been quoted and commented upon in a "leading" article—and asked for an explanation. "I never read the leading articles," replied the peccant sub-editor; "I