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## OUR OPPORTUNITY.

Our American system of government is not really a system of popular government in any other sense than that the people are the repositories of ultimate political power, and that as such the governing class, are quick to respond to their will whenever they can discern it. But our methods of getting at the popular will, and especially of submitting questions of national policy, are extremely clumsy and inefficient. Practically the business of government is with us in the hands of politicians, and as our elective and representative methods have the effect of discouraging statesmanship, these politicians as a class are men who have little concern for principle, and whose sole desire is to parcel out the offices and share in the profits of the governing business. These politicians are normally divided into two great camps or parties, and the law of conflict, the law which compels the opposition to one party to crystallize around another, make the parties who really contend with each other for the power and emoluments of office, save in rare contingencies, practically two. These parties are, by the necessities imposed by our elective system, great machines, requiring for their maintenance and efficiency, extensive and elaborate organization, much work and large amounts of money. Thus they naturally fall into the hands of politicians - the men who are willing to devote their time and money to working them - the men who make a business of this, and who expect to find their profit in it.

Signed: Henry George,  
April 14, 1888.