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## “A GOOD FELLOW”

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When a young man of respectable parentage, fair education; good character, and honorable ambition, comes to the legislature of his State to represent a constituency, and begins a public career which he hopes will make him famous and bring glory to his family, he is at once sought by the lobbyists and the older members who are schooled in corruption, and is made to understand that if he would succeed in politics he must be “a good fellow.” On all sides he is flattered, directly and indirectly, and in most cases he yields to these seductive blandishments of his newly-found friends, and they take him under their protection and proceed to have a good time. He is invited to little dinners, to play cards, and to various other diversions; wine is free and cigars are plentiful. When he loses at the gaming-table he is given a loan of fifty dollars, and another, and another, until he is deeply in debt; but

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## *The Cost of Something for Nothing*

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he is told not to worry about that. There are easy ways of making money with which to recoup himself. From that moment the young man is doomed. He is in the power of the corruptionists, and must vote as they direct. In a short time he is a full-fledged boodler, hungry for money and ready for any iniquity.

In other cases, when it is found that a man cannot be enticed along a line of dissipation, he is approached in a different way. He is told that there is a great future for a man of his ability and acquirements, and that he can wield a powerful influence and earn large fees if he will but be tactful and not make himself obnoxious to the ruling faction of the legislature. He is promised the chairmanship of committees, is assured of future political promotion, is offered an interest in various schemes, and all that is asked in return is that he be "a good fellow." Too often the young man yields. He accepts the flattery as being

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simply the appreciation due to a superior man. He becomes inflated with a sense of his own importance. He grabs at the promised promotion, and is seized with a hunger for money; and then he is lost. He may last longer than the man who indulges in physical dissipation, but the moral dissipation is the same in both cases. Self-respect, noble aspirations, honor and manhood die, and only the wreck of a blighted life remains.

These two examples illustrate conditions that are only too common in American politics.

We all like the pleasant and agreeable good fellow, but the "good fellow" in politics is a different specimen of humanity.