

The Good Government

by Ambrose Bierce

"What a happy land you are!" said a Republican Form of Government to a Sovereign State. "Be good enough to lie still while I walk upon you, singing the praises of universal suffrage and descanting upon the blessings of civil and religious liberty. In the meantime you can relieve your feelings by cursing the one-man power and the effete monarchies of Europe."

"My public servants have been fools and rogues from the date of your accession to power," replied the State; "my legislative bodies, both State and municipal, are bands of thieves; my taxes are insupportable; my courts are corrupt; my cities are a disgrace to civilisation; my corporations have their hands at the throats of every private interest--all my affairs are in disorder and criminal confusion."

"That is all very true," said the Republican Form of Government, putting on its hobnail shoes; "but consider how I thrill you every Fourth of July."