

Wits

THE GILDED AGE

A social matching game for 3 to 6 players. 52 cards. Machines, trusts, farmers and reformers, 1870 to 1914.

What is on a card

A picture and a fact. Nothing else. Every card belongs to one **camp** — Stalwart, Progressive, Populist, Industrialist. Every card is also about one **issue** — Who Leads, What They Want, Money and Business, How They Operate, Who Backs Them. The card tells you neither. Working out the camp is the game.

Setup

Deal 5 cards to each player. Turn one card face up to start the pile, and the dealer names its camp out loud. The rest becomes the draw pile. If the draw pile runs out, shuffle the discards back over, leaving the top card where it is.

Your turn – the camp is the thing

Play a card from the same camp as the top card, and say the camp out loud.

“Populist.”

That is the whole turn. You never have to name the issue. **If you cannot play, dig:** draw one card and play it if it fits. Still stuck, draw again — up to three cards — then your turn ends.

The crossover – how the camp changes

Stuck in a camp you do not hold? Play a card from a **different** camp that is about the **same issue** as the card on top — and say both.

“Industrialist. Same issue – money and business.”

The camp is now yours, and the next player has to match it. Apart from a Wild Wit, this is the only way the camp changes. It is the hardest move in the game and the one that wins it.

Challenge – the rule that makes it Wits

Any player, at any time, may challenge a declaration — a camp, or a claimed crossover. **Wrong** and the player takes the card back and draws 2. **Right** and the challenger draws 2. The teacher's key settles it. Nothing is printed on the cards, so you can bluff — and that is the point.

The question that sorts this deck

Four camps, four answers to **who should run the economy?** — **Stalwart:** the party, and it should pay its friends. **Industrialist:** whoever built it, and government should stay out. **Populist:** the farmers, through a government that owns the railroads. **Progressive:** experts and regulators, refereeing the whole thing.

Twin chain and Outwit

Hold a card matching the top card on **both camp and issue** and you may put it straight down, saying both. On your own turn it goes down as a **second card** after a legal play — the only way to shed two facts at once. Out of turn, slap it on the pile and play continues from you.

Winning

First player out of cards wins. At one card left, say **“Wit!”** Caught silent before the next player goes, draw 2. You cannot go out on a Wild Wit — your last card has to be a fact.

Action cards

Action cards are discarded onto the pile like any other card, but they carry no camp and no issue — so **the last fact card played is still what you match against**. Wild Wit is the one exception: the camp it names replaces the fact card's.

Wild Wit — play it on anything except a Devil's Advocate, then name the camp that comes next.

Quick Wit — this **is** your turn, and you need no legal play. Lay it down together with any card, even one that matches nothing. Name that card's camp, then argue the connection out loud. **The table judges.** Accepted, and you have shed two cards in one turn. Rejected, and you take both back and draw 2.

Devil's Advocate — the next player may not match the camp, and no action card will save them. Cross over on the issue, or take a flat draw of 2 — no digging.

Answer key

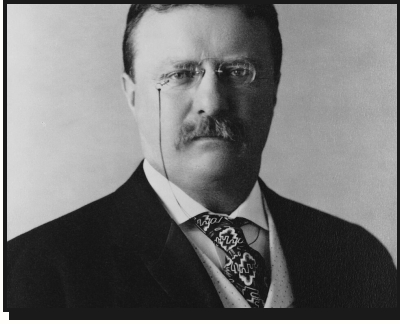
Teacher only. Settles challenges. Camps across, issues down.

	STALWART	PROGRESSIVE	POPULIST	INDUSTRIALIST
WHO LEADS	Roscoe Conkling Boss Tweed	Theodore Roosevelt Fighting Bob La Follette	William Jennings Bryan The Farmers' Alliance	Andrew Carnegie John D. Rockefeller
WHAT THEY WANT	The spoils system: jobs for the party faithful Party loyalty first, and reform is for losers	The Square Deal Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom	Free silver to lift the debtor You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold	The Gospel of Wealth: surplus wealth is a sacred trust Acres of Diamonds: no one is poor but by his own shortcomings
MONEY AND BUSINESS	The Credit Mobilier scandal Honest graft: I seen my opportunities and I took em	We cannot tolerate anything approaching a monopoly The income tax amendment	Nationalize the railroads Postal savings banks run by the government	J.P. Morgan: I owe the public nothing Sound money: the gold standard is the road to prosperity
HOW THEY OPERATE	Tammany Hall The ward boss who knew every voter by name	Muckraking journalism that forced Congress to act The Pendleton Act: federal jobs awarded on merit	The Grange Ran their own candidates as the People's Party	Cornelius Vanderbilt: the law is too slow, I will ruin you The trust: many companies placed under one board
WHO BACKS THEM	The immigrant voter who got coal, a job, and a funeral Chester A. Arthur, a customs-house man in the White House	Upton Sinclair's The Jungle William Howard Taft, who busted more trusts than Roosevelt	Munn v. Illinois let states regulate business The mortgaged farmer of Kansas and Nebraska	Inventors like Thomas Edison, whose patents built the fortunes Henry Ford: legislation cannot cure poverty



Roscoe Conkling

WITS



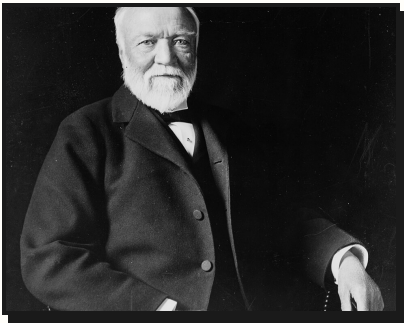
Theodore Roosevelt

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William Jennings Bryan

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Andrew Carnegie

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Boss Tweed

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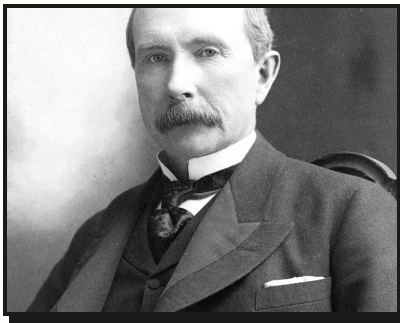
Fighting Bob La Follette

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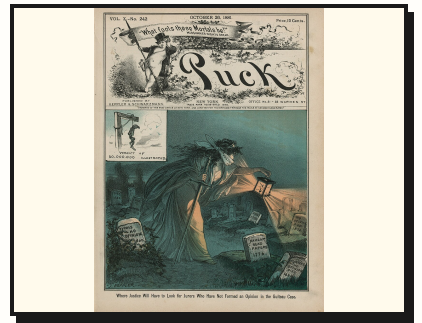
The Farmers' Alliance

WITS



John D. Rockefeller

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The spoils system: jobs for the party faithful

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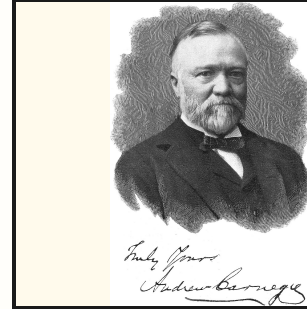
The Square Deal

WITS



Free silver to lift the debtor

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The Gospel of Wealth: surplus wealth is a sacred trust

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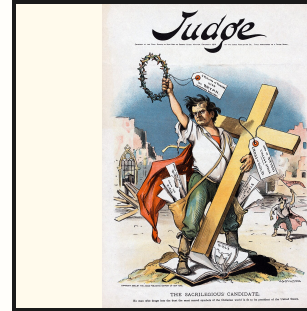
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Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom

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You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold

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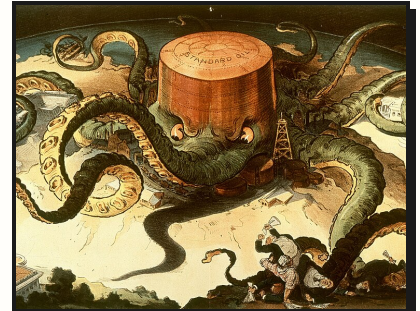
Acres of Diamonds: no one is poor but by his own shortcomings

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The Credit Mobilier scandal

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We cannot tolerate anything approaching a monopoly

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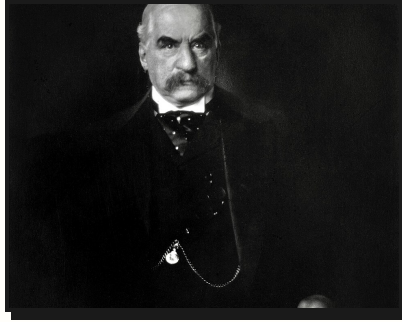
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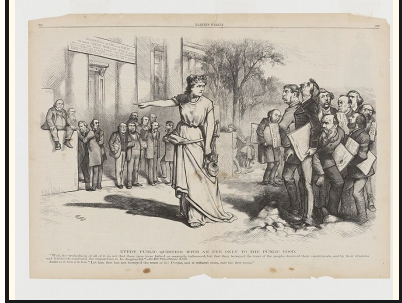
Nationalize the railroads

WITS



J.P. Morgan: I owe the public nothing

WITS



Honest graft: I seen my opportunities and I took em

WITS



The income tax amendment

WITS



Postal savings banks run by the government

WITS



Sound money: the gold standard is the road to prosperity

WITS



Tammany Hall

WITS



Muckraking journalism that forced Congress to act

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The Grange

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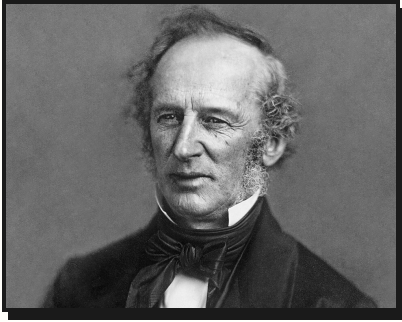
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Cornelius Vanderbilt: the law is too slow, I will ruin you

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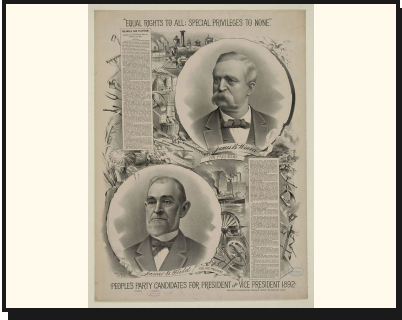
The ward boss who knew every voter by name

WITS



The Pendleton Act: federal jobs awarded on merit

WITS



Ran their own candidates as the People's Party

WITS



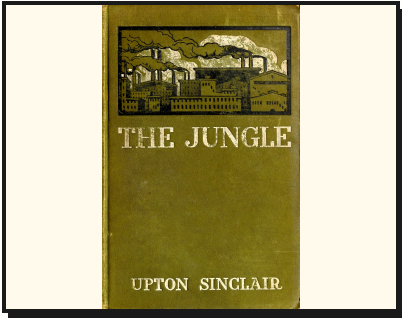
The trust: many companies placed under one board

WITS



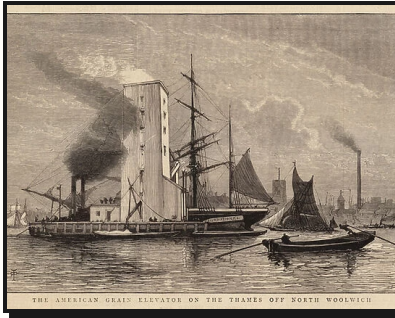
The immigrant voter who got coal, a job, and a funeral

WITS



Upton Sinclair's The Jungle

WITS



Munn v. Illinois let states regulate business

WITS



Inventors like Thomas Edison, whose patents built the fortunes

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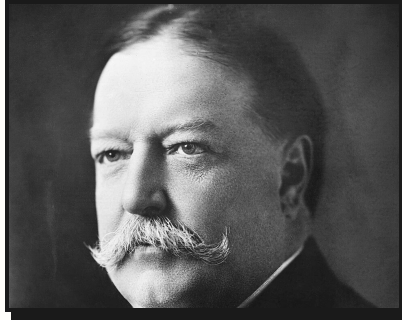
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Chester A. Arthur, a customs-house man in the White House

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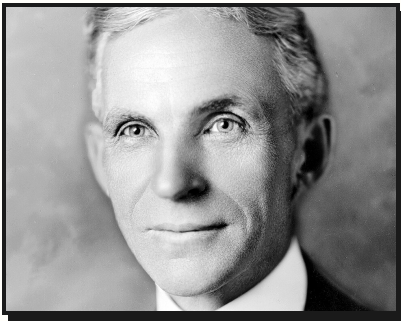
William Howard Taft, who busted more trusts than Roosevelt

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The mortgaged farmer of Kansas and Nebraska

WITS



Henry Ford: legislation cannot cure poverty

WITS

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Wild Wit

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Quick Wit

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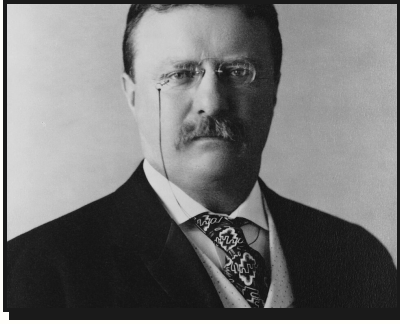
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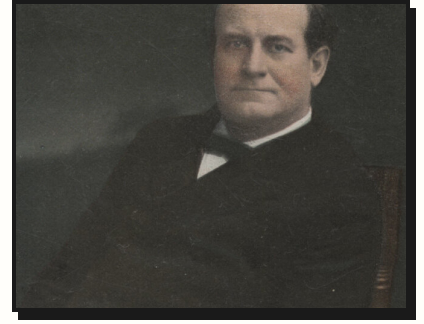
Roscoe Conkling

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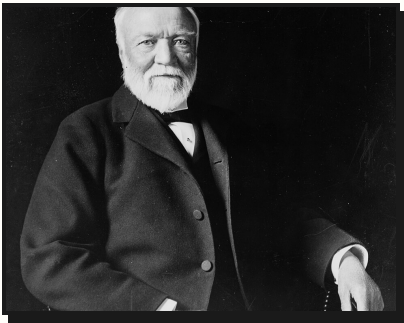
Theodore Roosevelt

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William Jennings Bryan

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Andrew Carnegie

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Boss Tweed

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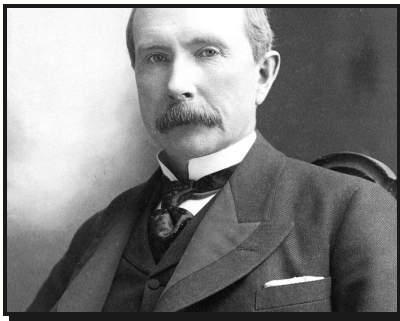
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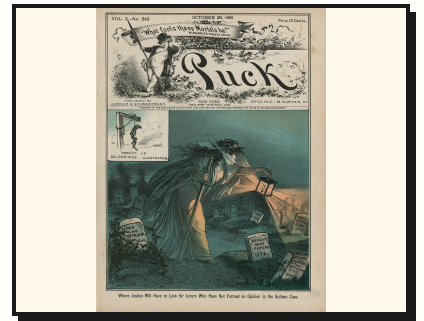
The Farmers' Alliance

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John D. Rockefeller

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The spoils system: jobs for the party faithful

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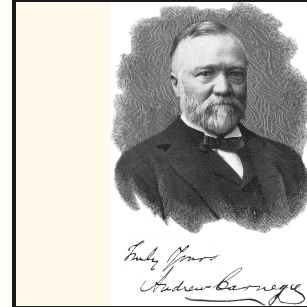
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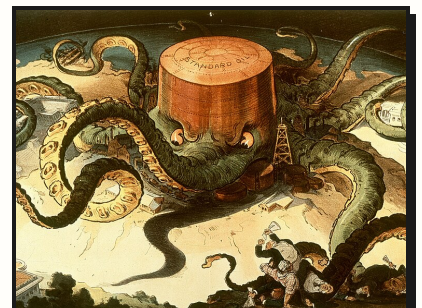
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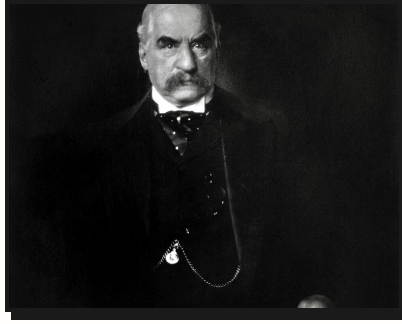
WITS GILDED AGE 2

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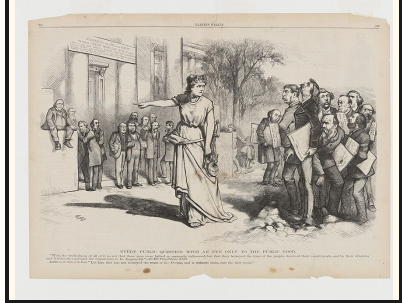
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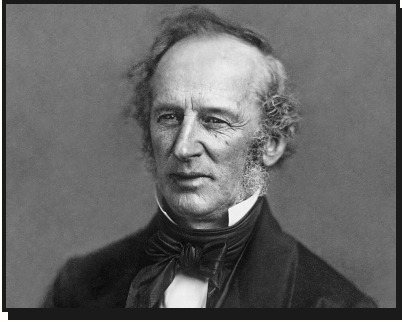
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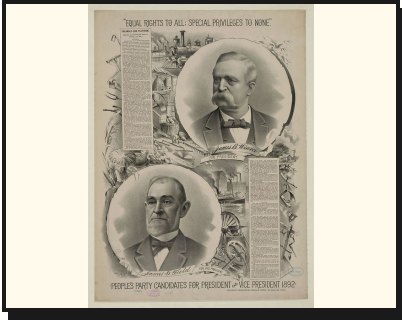
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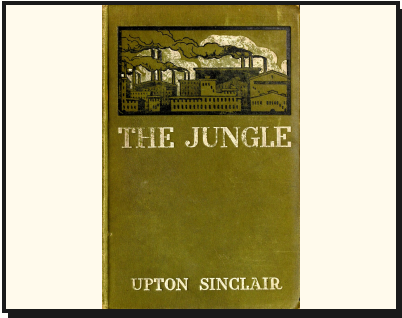
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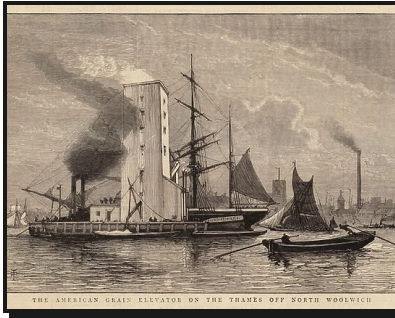
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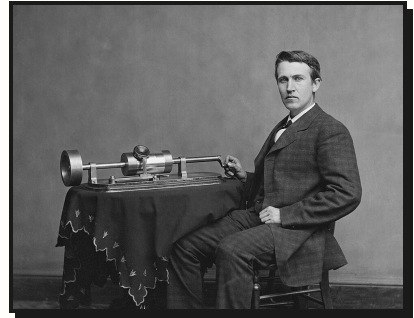
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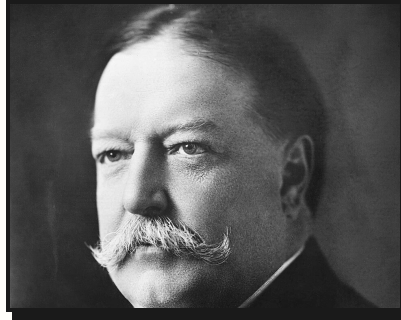
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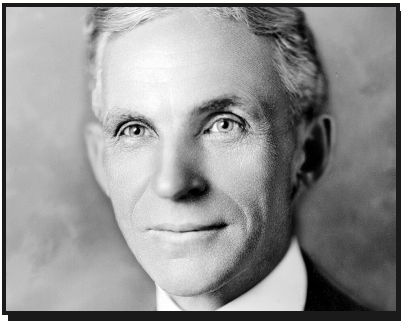
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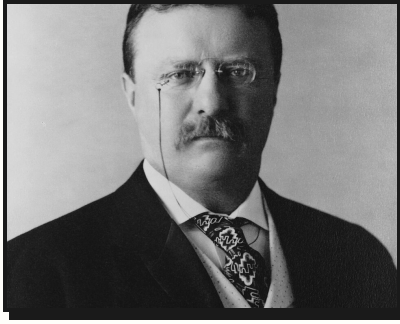
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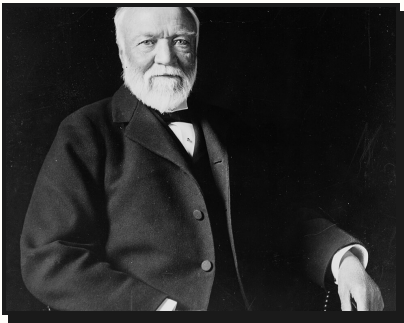
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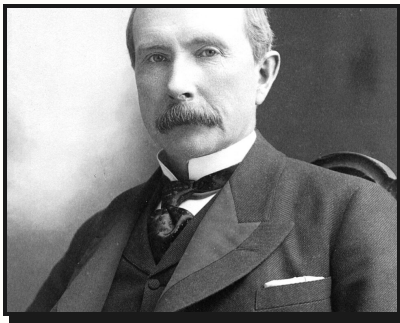
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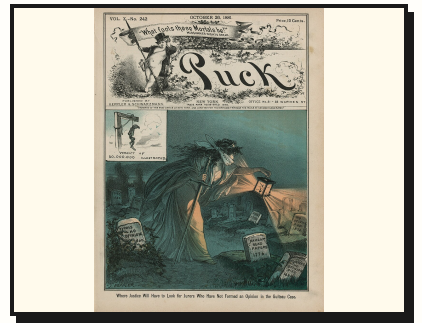
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WITS GILDED AGE 3

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The background features a dense, repeating pattern of the words "WITS GILDED AGE 3". The text is oriented diagonally from the top-left towards the bottom-right. Each repetition consists of three parts: "WITS" in dark green, "GILDED" in orange, and "AGE 3" in dark green. These are separated by small dots. The entire pattern covers the page like a watermark or decorative texture.

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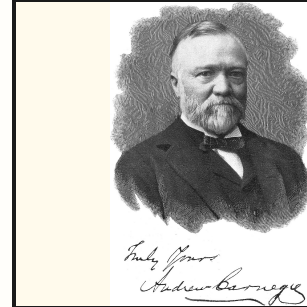
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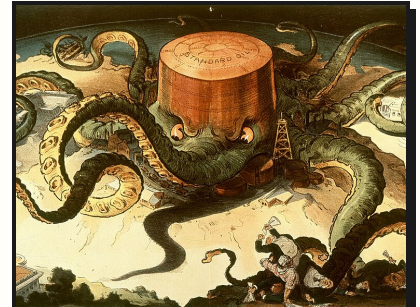
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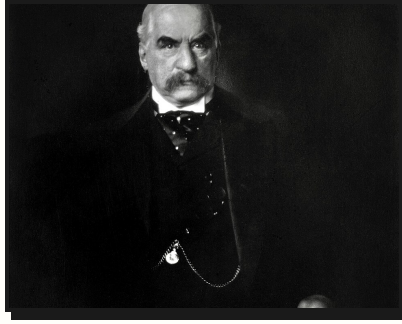
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WITS GILDED AGE 3



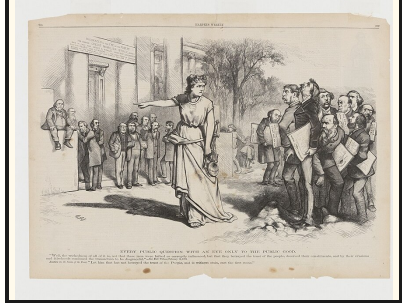
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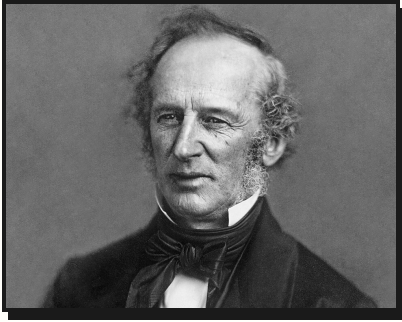
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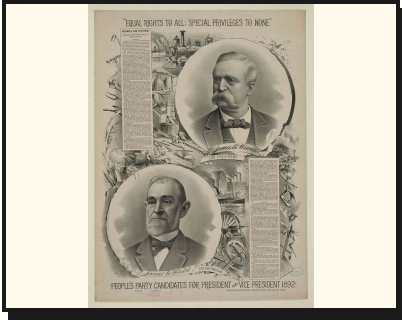
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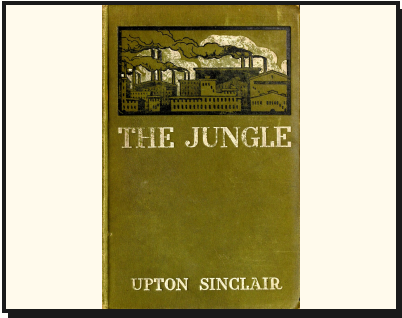
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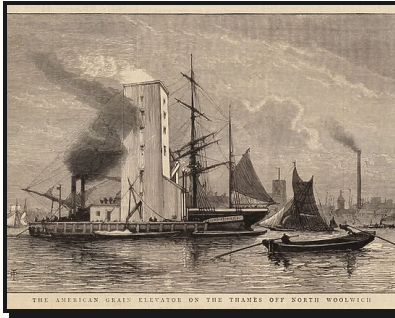
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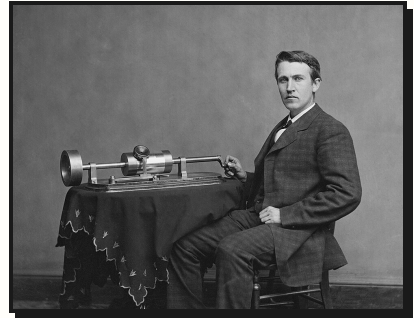
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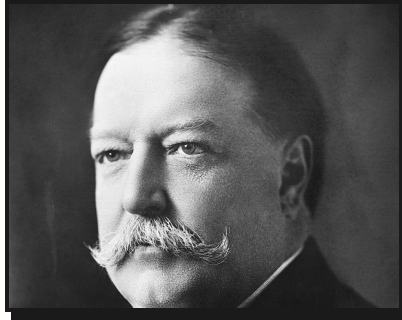
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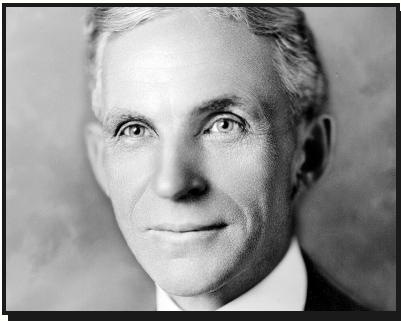
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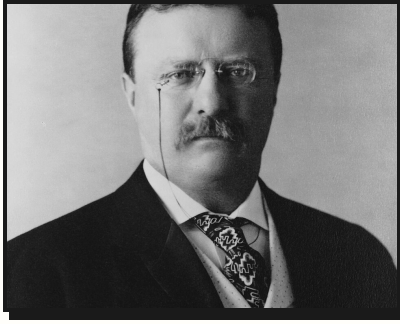
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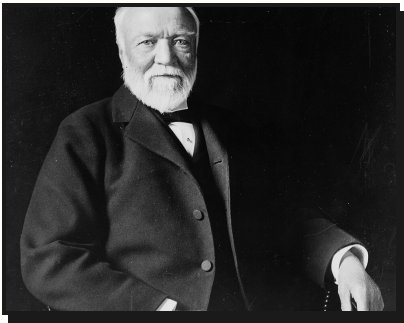
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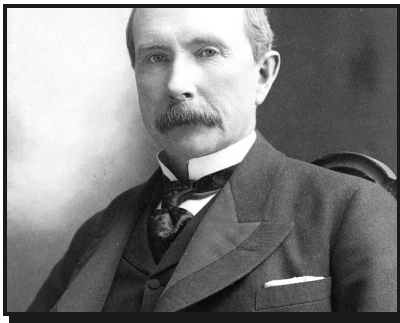
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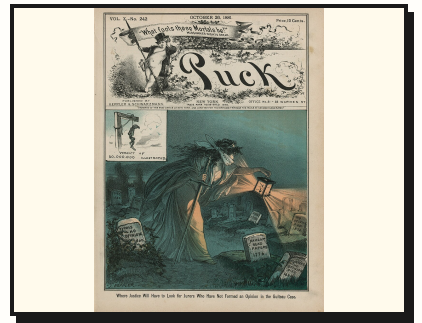
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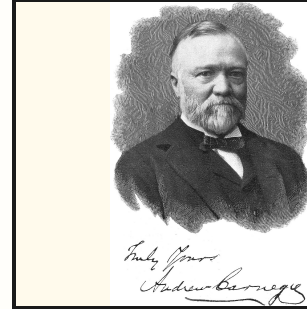
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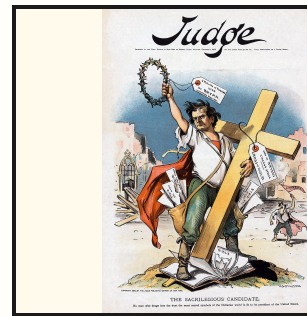
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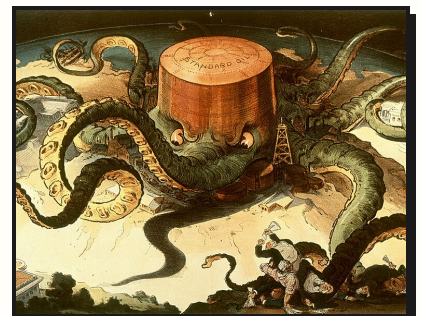
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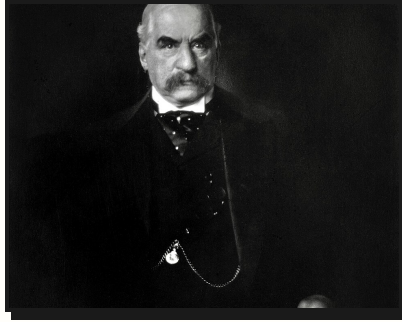
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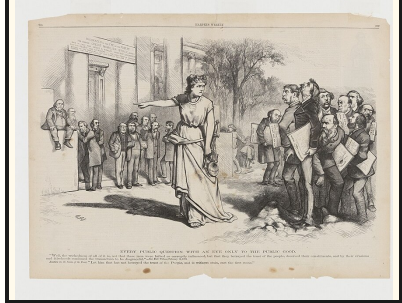
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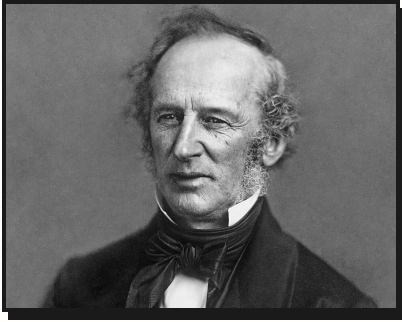


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WITS GILB

WITS GILDED AGE 4 • WITS



Cornelius Vanderbilt: the law is too slow, I will ruin you

WITS



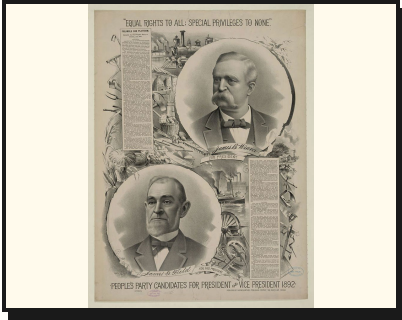
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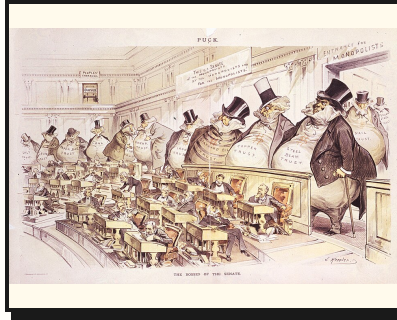
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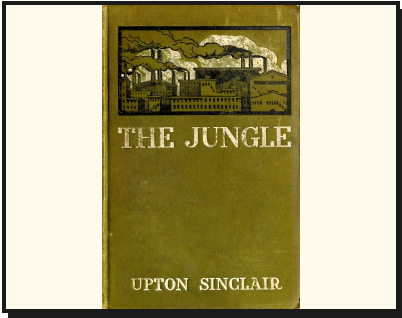
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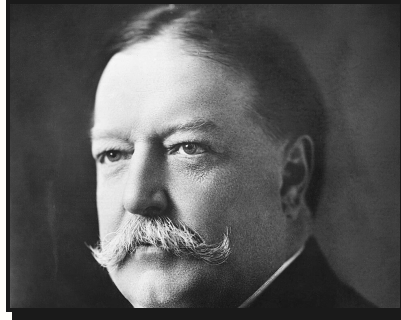
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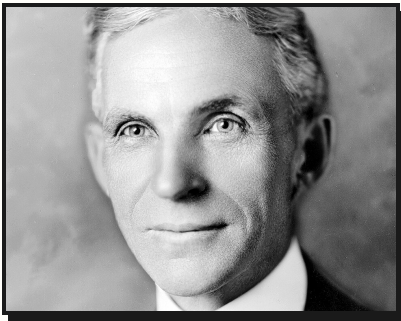
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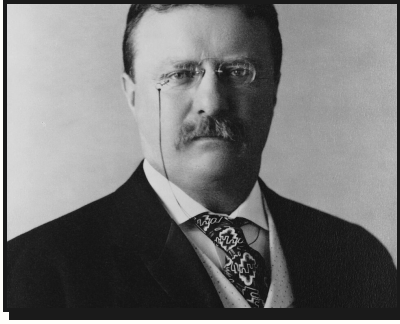
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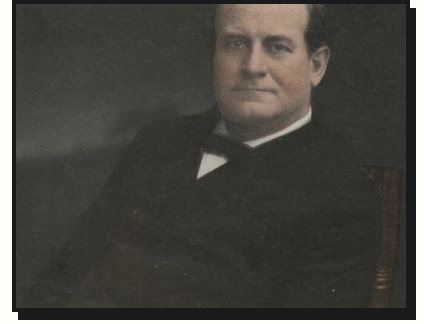
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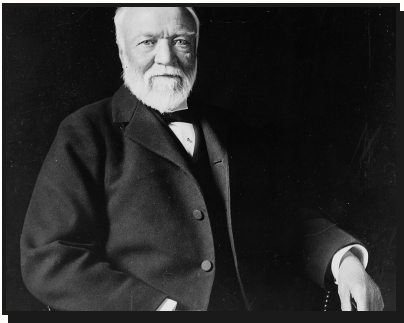
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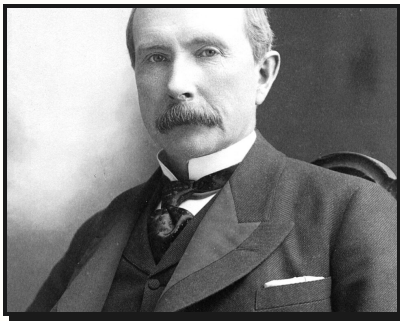
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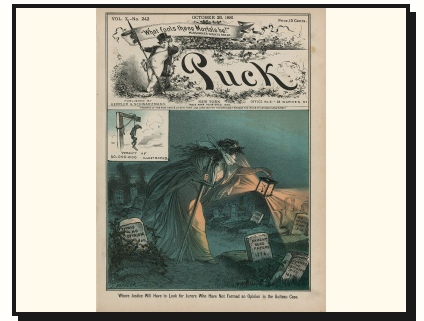
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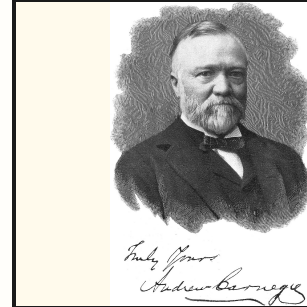
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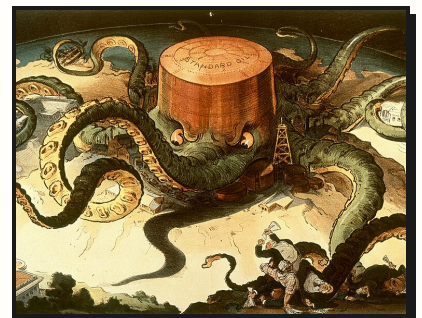
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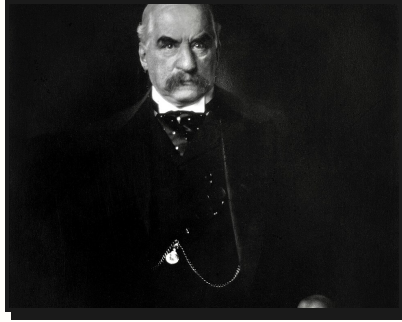
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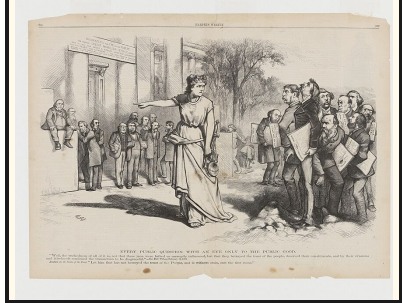
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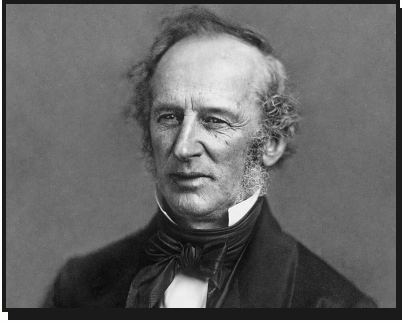
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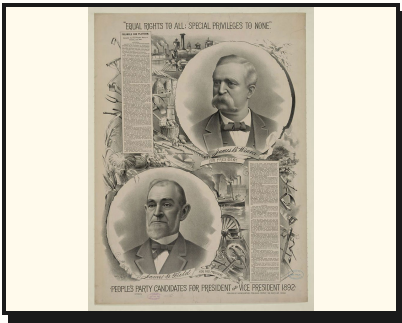
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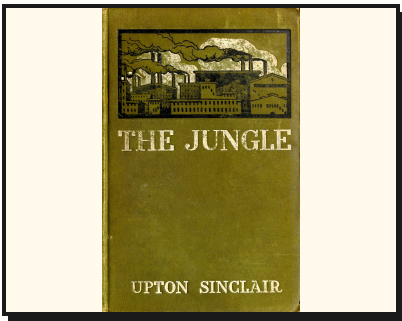
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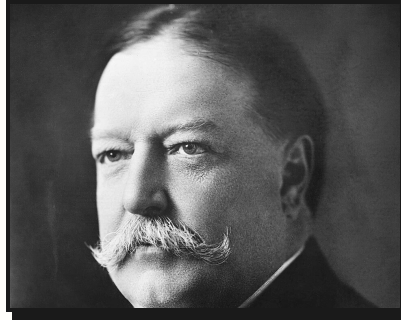
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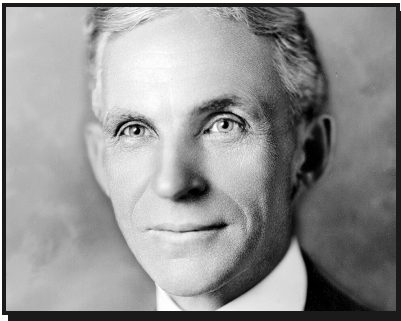
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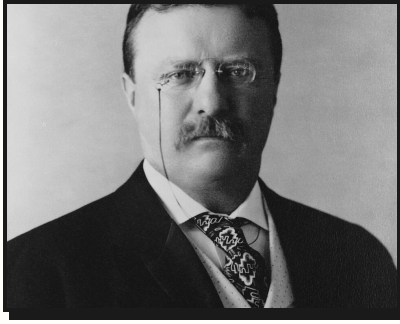
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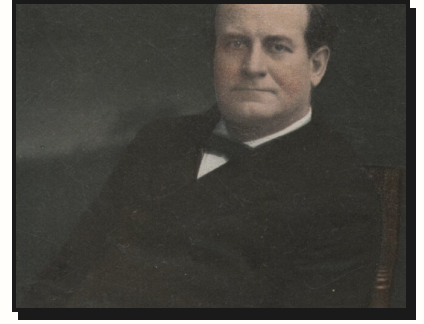
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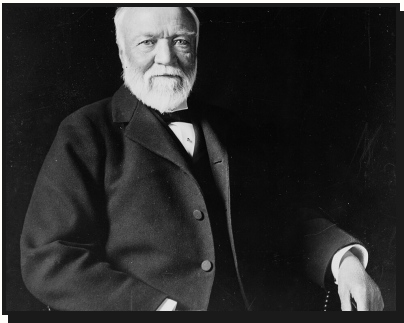
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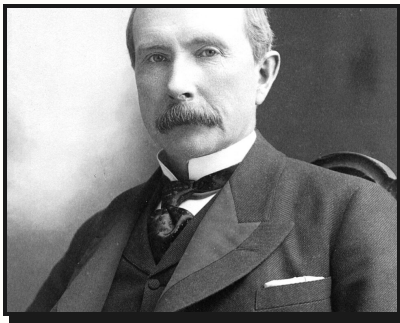
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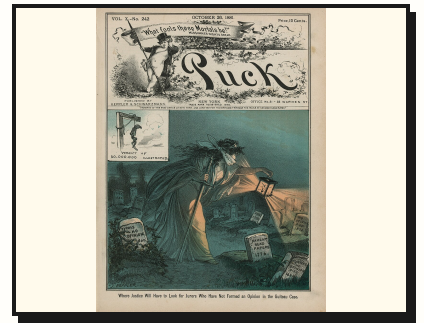
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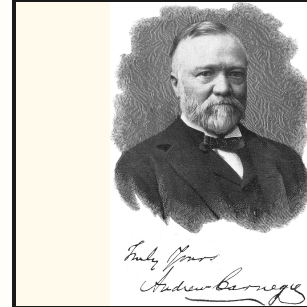
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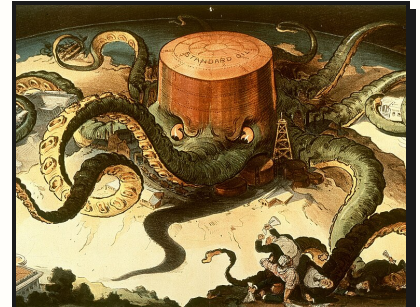
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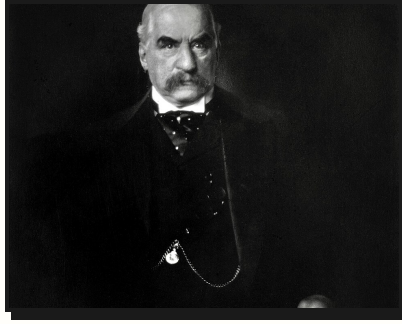
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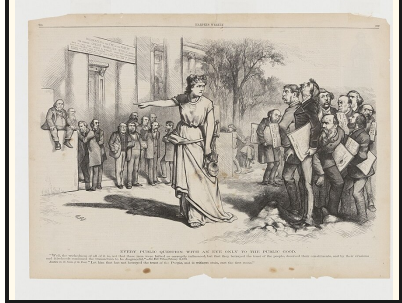
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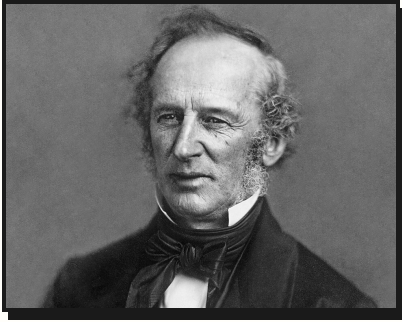
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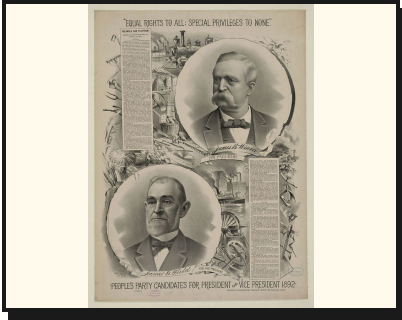
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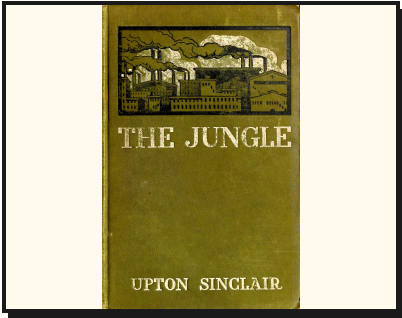
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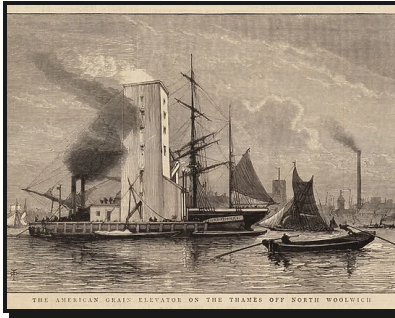
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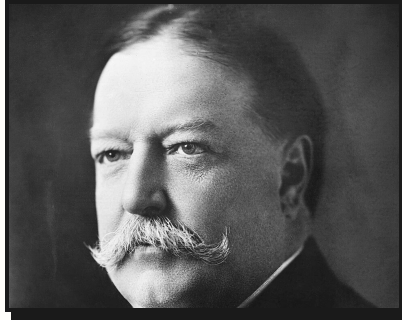
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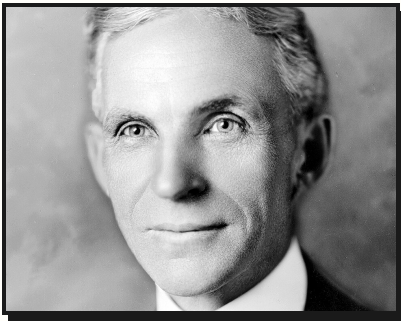
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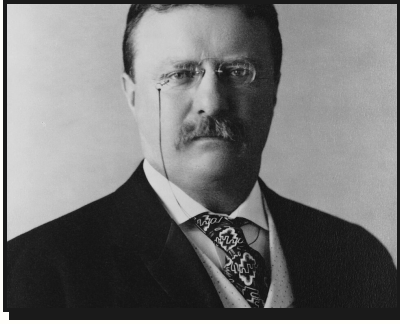
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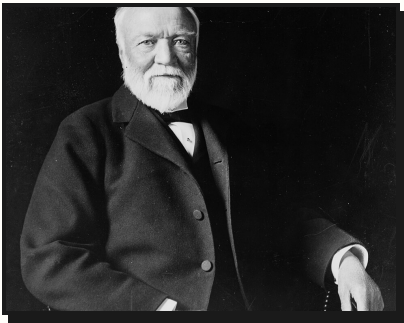
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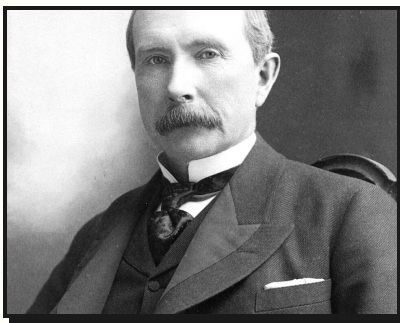
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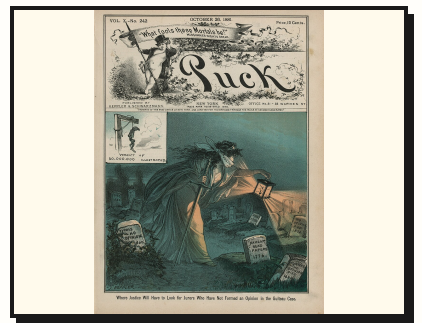
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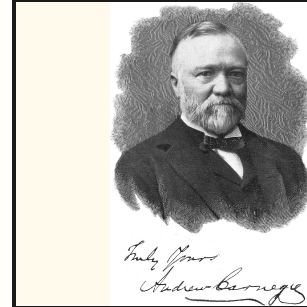
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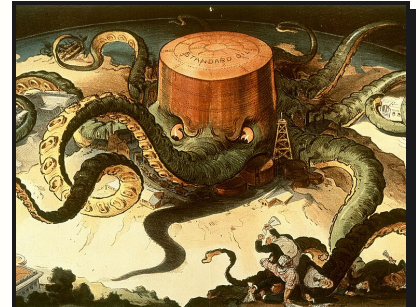
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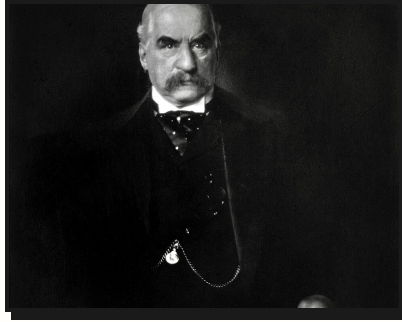
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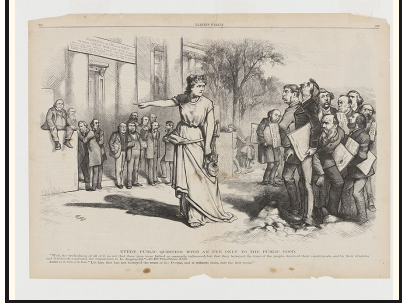
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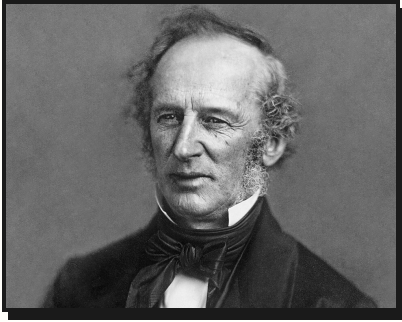


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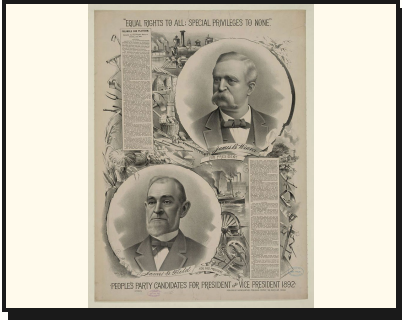
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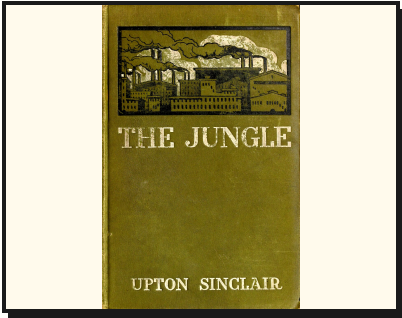
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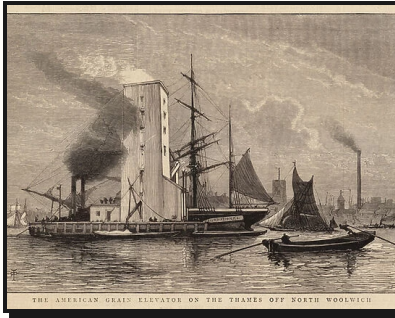
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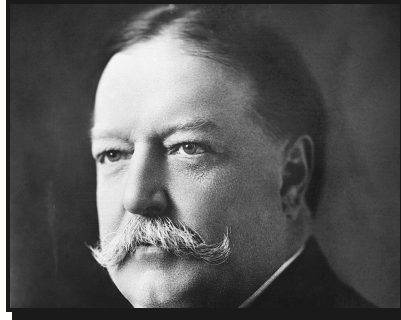
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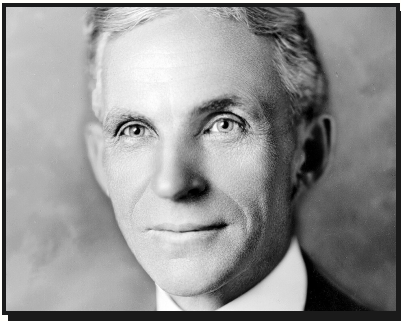
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The next player may not match the camp, and no action card will save them. Cross over on the issue, or draw 2.

ACTION

Wild Wit

Play it on anything except a Devil's Advocate. Then name the camp that comes next.

ACTION

Quick Wit

Your whole turn. Play it with any card, even one that matches nothing. Name that card's camp and argue the connection. The table judges.

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