Previous Systems of Voting
- Elections were won by mobilizing constituents instead of canvassing voters.
- No voter registration.
- Political Parties printed and distributed the ballots themselves.
- Candidates delivered ballots into the polling place.
- Candidates did not have to file a petition to run for office, just had to hand out ballots.
- Ballots were easily recognizable by parties, based on size or color.
- Voting in a ballot was easily recognizable which made it a public act.

New System: The Australian Ballot
Original Legislation: Saxton Bill 1888
- Vote in private.
- Voter registration.
- Ballots provided by the government.
- Candidates had to file a petition with constituents’ signatures in order to be a candidate.
- Ballots would be signed by two Ballot Clerks (determined by the two biggest political parties) to ensure the voter was eligible.

Governor Hill’s Issues:
- Discriminates against candidates.
- Would be difficult to become a candidate.
- Ballot Clerks would be easily corruptible since they were chosen by political parties.
- Funding the system.
- Functional issues with the ballot, such as illiterates not being able to read the ballot.

Saxton Bill Round 2: 1889
Saxton reintroduced after Governor Hill released a statement wanting reform in that year.
- Essentially the same bill except it created the Blanket Ballot. The proposed ballot would contain all of the names of each party’s candidate for each office instead of having a separate ballot containing the name of all the party’s candidates for every office.
- Governor Hill blocked this bill from reaching his desk.

Linson Bill: 1890
The Democrats of the Legislature created the Linson bill in response to the Saxton bill. The differences included:
- Vote in secret compartments.
- Forbids electioneering close to the polls.
- Candidates had to file sworn statements on their election expenses.
- Candidates can be removed from office if corruption could be proven.
- Provides official ballots along with unofficial ballots that could be prepared at home.
- Employers could not write political propaganda on pay envelopes.
- Voter registration for all voters.

Third times the Charm?: 1890
The Linson bill was blocked by parliamentary procedure.
Saxton bill was reintroduced for a 3rd time.
Governor Hill was backed into a corner. He made such a strong stance against the Saxton bill in 1888, but popularity across the country is growing. It is also assumed that Hill was considering a presidential bid.

Hill recommended sending the bill to Court of Appeals.

Court of Appeals: 1890
The legislature handled Hill’s sneaky move by sending the bill to the committee before being sent to the Court of Appeals.
“constitutional questions, like all other questions of law, are always decided in actions brought before the courts to which individuals or corporations are parties.”
Ultimately, all the republicans in the committee, which included Senator Saxton, agreed to not send the bill to the Court of Appeals.

Hill vetoed the bill for the third time and blamed it on the legislative committee for not sending it straight to the Court of Appeals.

Compromise
Senator Saxton reached out Prof. Collin, the legal advisor to Governor Hill, and to Mr. Horace Deming, of the Ballot-Reform League, to combine upon a compromising to the Republicans, Democrats, and the Governor.

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The new measure incorporated:
- Blanket ballot but separated them into strips, each strip containing the names of only one party’s nomination.
- A blank strip would be provided for people who wanted to write in their own names.
- There would be no other ballots allowed, which solidified the idea of the exclusive ballot.
- No party could provide ballots, however, they could supply pasters, which when pasted onto the official ballot, would be considered official. The pasters would benefit illiterates.

Final Showdown 1890
Senator Fassett, acting under orders of Republican party boss ordered a caucus to boycott the bill.
The Democrats insisted upon passing the compromised bill as it was originally agreed upon, while the Republicans advocated for amendments abolishing the pasters and permitting the illiterate voter to be accompanied in the booth. The Republicans were quick to recognize their error, and supported the compromise measure, which then passed the senate with a unanimous decision.

On May 2nd, 1890, Governor Hill approved the bill.

New York Times
The New York Times had interesting of evolution of biases in their articles. Between 1870-1871, the Times had a series of articles that brought down the corrupted Tweed Ring and ends their dominance of City Hall. At this same time, the Times started printing their newspaper in German to accommodate twenty-five percent of New York City’s population. In 1876, the editor moved the Times away from the Republican party. Then in 1883, the Times dropped its daily price to compete with other newspapers while officially shying away from their Republican reputation. Even though they supported the Democrat, below shows 3 of the many examples the paper wrote against Governor Hill’s position.

Immigrants
Immigrants were easily corruptible since they did not understand American traditions and no commitment to American institutions. They were so ill-paid, they needed the长得 money to survive.

Split of the Democratic Party in NYS
- County Democrats: Upstate voters, Governor Hill
- Tammany Hall Democrats: NYC voters

- With this hostility within the party, it was necessary for any democrat to “gain Tammany support while at the same time avoiding the impression of accepting it suzerainty.”
- Governor Hill favored party regularity, even with Tammany Hall.

Politicians in Agreement
would argue that County Democrats agreed with Republicans on this issue but were not able to express it because of party loyalty. To the right, the candidates were asked their opinion on the ideas below. County Democrats mostly supported or were undecided unlike Tammany.

References of Pictures in order:
- Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper, v. 2, no. 49 (1856 Nov. 19), p. 424.

Bibliography for primary and secondary sources available by request.