

somebody had scattered white quarter-dollars and red quarter-dollars all over the greenest grass in the world. Lookin' down at 'em 'minds a feller of the old English folksong aheraldin' of summer:

Zoomer ist a goomin' in,
and he feels fine in anticipation of
good times a comin'.

But if you want a flower jist a little ahead of the daisy, John—a flower for all purposes, up and a comin' and early on deck, affordin' joy and delight all around, and a jewelry store and chain works for the children—take my dandelion. In the first place, it's a better contrast with the grass. The only objection I ever had to paradise was that there wasn't any green among the golden streets. My dandelion is gold among the green. There's a whole lot of people that'll never get nearer Heaven than in seein' a green field a-laughin' with dandelions in 'spring; and some are satisfied to go no further in experimentin', but just stay right there, time and eternity.

After all, a feller likes the country. You mind old Horace, John. I don't know his other name. Wrote verses along about 40 and 10 B. C. Didn't know any English, and he had to write 'em all out in Latin. Well, Horace said some mighty nice things about the country. He had been out with Brutus in the battle of Philippi—Horace had—and got licked, and when he reached home the Romans had jumped his ranch, and they now laughed at him as a beaten and impoverished man. Well, he got a little place up in the mountains, and wrote verses about the country and country things. Listen to the old heathen, how dainty he did it two thousand years ago:

And Tibur's groves and orchards, dewed by
rills,
That dance their glad way down from Tibur's wooded hills.

Ain't that rather neat for a chap who never heard of Harvard College, or Oxford, or Cambridge, or Dan Chaucer? Nineteen hundred years ago, and better, John, if it's a week, and the rills ran then as they do now, and men admired 'em! Nature keeps on a repeatin' herself. Blamed if I don't turn up Tories now and then that I licked hard and fast in the Revolution, just as I used to turn up Indian flints with the plow! Seems to me my whole Republican party has turned tory and imperialistic. There's my boy, Taft, home from the Philippines. He's been lecturin' the law class down at Yale. On liberty, you guess? Nay, Sarah! Against the jury system. It's amazin' how popular the king business is with the kings,

and a judge who can hang a man on his own sayso is no slouch of a king.

"Now, I ain't a sayin', John, that the cadí system don't have its advantages. The cadí sees that the man ought to be executed, so what's the use of gettin' the consent of 12 other men, the jury of his peers, required under the Charter of John, which is your Charter and mine, and our protection?"

Taft says there wouldn't be so many lynchings, if men who commit crime were promptly arrested and convicted; an' I guess that's so. Likewise, two times two is four; but what's that got to do with the jury system? It's the judges that let out the rich and powerful criminals, not the juries. Do the juries quash indictments, and grant new trials, and impose light sentences? Nixie! The jury system is not perfect, but it's the best the world's got up to date; and it keeps fellows like Taft from doin' things without proper meditation' and reference to the Charter rules. Why, they tell me the "English State Trials" are big books full of trials after some rebellion or uprisin', when bloodthirsty British judges traveled circuit and murdered people right and left by abusin' the jury system. When the jury wouldn't bring a man in guilty, the judge sent 'em back till they did. No, the jury system is all right, and I'm a-thinkin' of extendin' it to women. Why should a woman be hanged without a jury of her peers? Why should a woman be hanged at all? Think of it! I'm ashamed of my boys in some things.

UNCLE SAM.

THE REVIVAL OF THE TOWN MEETING.

In his pulpit at the Vine Street Congregational church, Cincinnati, O., May 28, 1905, the pastor, Herbert S. Bigelow, discussed a plan for the revival of the old New England town meeting.

Before our ancestors conquered old England they had their home in the forests of Germany. Each clan dwelt in a community by itself, which was called the mark or the town. Each town had its folk-mote. This was an assembly of all the people, which met once a year or oftener. All laws were proposed, discussed and passed by this assembly. Each citizen had voice and vote, and the folk-mote was a pure democracy.

This system of popular government was transplanted into England. The English township corresponded to the mark, and each township had its popular assembly, or folk-mote, through which the people governed themselves directly.

In the course of time the liberties

of the English townships were encroached upon, but when the Pilgrim fathers arrived in the New World, they reestablished township government in its purity under the name of the town meeting.

In New England the township was the political unit. The people elected no law-makers. They came together in their town meetings and made their own laws. Each town was a little republic. Popular sovereignty was not merely a theory; it was a fact. The power to make laws was not delegated, as now, to a few. In New England the town council included all the citizens, and each man had a vote on the laws he was expected to obey.

John Fiske declared the New England town meeting to be "the most complete democracy in the world," and "the best political training school in existence." Thomas Jefferson said it was "the wisest invention ever devised by the wit of man for the perfect exercise of self-government, and for its preservation."

In the course of time these towns elected delegates to a general assembly, but, unlike our present State representatives, these delegates were under the direct control of their constituents. We petition our representatives. They instructed theirs. Speaking for the town meeting of Boston, in 1764, Samuel Adams delivered an address to the newly elected delegates to the Massachusetts legislature, informing them that the townsmen "have delegated to you the power of acting in their public concerns in general as your own prudence shall direct you," "always reserving to themselves the constitutional right of expressing their mind and giving you such instruction upon particular matters as they at any time shall judge proper."

Obviously, however, the town meeting was destined to disappear as population increased and voters became too numerous to be assembled in a legislative body. Thus direct legislation by the people gave way to the present representative system. Now the question is how to revive and adapt to the changed conditions the virtues of the old town meeting.

Unquestionably the initiative and referendum do this. The State of Oregon has solved the problem. A petition of five per cent. of the voters is sufficient to force a popular referendum upon any act of the legislature.

A petition of eight per cent. is sufficient to propose a new measure, and if a majority of the people vote for it, the measure is law. Thus the people of Oregon have the power to veto the

acts of their representatives, and also to pass laws independently of their representatives. They have as much control over their public servants as the New England town meetings. Moreover, the Oregon plan is an improvement on the other. The people of Oregon do not attempt to make laws in an emotional or unwieldy mass meeting. They secure the right to vote upon any measure by petition. Then they may discuss it in their clubs and homes, and read about it in their papers, and go to the polls and vote with deliberation.

The phenomenal progress of this principle of direct legislation by the initiative and referendum is the most hopeful sign of the times.

PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRACY.

Portions of a speech delivered by Thomas M. Osborne, Mayor of Auburn, N. Y., at a banquet given by the Democratic Club of Brooklyn on May 4, 1905, as reported in the Auburn Bulletin.

Democracy means a love for, and a trust in the people; a belief that the unobstructed rule of the people is the only safe and sound political system which has ever been devised; the only one founded on the eternal verities; the only one that is the political embodiment of the golden rule. All other systems—the imperial, founded in its essence on the brutal relation between master and slave; the feudal, founded on the unnatural relation between lord and vassal; the paternal, founded on the absurd relation between claimant to divine right and his servant; the aristocratic, founded on the false relations between an assumed knowledge and an assumed ignorance—all these systems have been tested and have been found wanting; and from the soil enriched by the ashes of these dead and dying systems and watered by the tears of their victims throughout the ages, has sprung the flower of modern democracy which is now unfolding.

It was to guard this precious growth that our ancestors crossed the ocean to breathe a purer, fresher air, where natural development could be untrammelled; and it is because I believe that the Democratic party with all its faults is truer to the cause of democracy than its rival that I am a Democrat.

Democracy is no perfect system—it is by no means so superficially impressive as imperialism; it is certainly not so severely logical as feudalism; it is not so simple as paternalism; nor so satisfying—to the aristocrats—as aristocracy. Its results are often crude and unlovely.

as has been often noted; but it is a living system—living in all its parts. Liberty often tends to license, as is only natural; but it is only through mistakes that we learn the truth. And those mistakes come about more often because we do not live up to our democratic ideals, than because we indulge them too freely. Sometimes men who call themselves Democrats fear to trust democracy because they fear it is not practical. Every day I meet men who will not trust the Golden Rule because they fear it is not practical; while every day's experience of life tells us if we are not deaf, that it is the only social guide that is practical.

What is true and progressive democracy as applied to the City, the State and the Nation?

The democratic doctrine as applied to the city is the clear understanding that the city is a municipal corporation to be run along the lines of honest business—not politics; that the model of its government should be not a diminished state but an enlarged business system; that the real problem of the city lies not in legislation but administration, that there is perhaps less for a Common Council to do than for a Mayor; that responsibility for its government should be concentrated so far as possible, and its system made as simple as possible; that the people should understand and know its home affairs first of all, as there is the source of good government, or the source of corruption.

Progressive democracy in the State—what is that?

As compared with the city, political considerations in the State are somewhat reversed. In the city the most important questions are administrative, in the State the most important are legislative. I hope you will pardon my presumption if I refer briefly to some that from my point of view are amongst the most important State problems which progressive democracy must assist in solving.

First and foremost—Home rule for cities. I am one of those up-State Democrats who believe that you here in New York know your own needs better than we do, and that you can manage them better than we can. I even go so far as to deny that New York City should be ruled from Albany. But New York is not the only sufferer. When I came into office as Mayor of Auburn the city could not make a \$25 raise in the salary of the State Superintendent; we could not spend in the fire department more than a specified sum each year; we could not build a

new schoolhouse; we could not add an officer to the police force; we could not borrow a dollar on the city's credit without running to the Legislature for permission. Talk of home rule for New York! The cities of the third class have needed it as well as those of the first.

Second—A better and more equitable tax system. I fear that upon this matter I am a radical. I am so impressed with the ills we have that I am almost ready to fly to those that we know not of. I should not even be afraid to give serious consideration to the Single Tax, that theory which gives some of my neighbors and friends such shivers of fear; (although I have almost invariably found that those who are most fearful are those who have carefully refrained from reading or learning anything about the subject.)

But of one thing I am certain—that our present system is vicious because inequitable, and that some system must be found which will be fair and even in its distribution. I believe, moreover, that the Republican party is so weighted down by "special privilege" in one form, or another that it is wholly unable to handle the question of taxation with fairness to the people. A righteous system of taxation must be the work of a progressive democracy.

Third—We must have an enlightened system of prison discipline. There must be places to send the unfortunate men whose conduct shows that they cannot get along in organized society, where they can learn how to adapt themselves to society; where they will be taught to earn an honest living not by being forced to work by brute force, but through choice; where they will learn the essential nature and the meaning of the laws which they have broken, and which they must understand before they can obey; where they will acquire a sense of citizenship before they are again turned loose on society. Had our prison system been designed expressly to prevent such reformation it could hardly have been better done.

And if our prisons need reform, what shall be said of our county jails, where tramps and vagabonds loaf in idleness through the winter months, only to prey upon society during warm weather and return again to jail in the Autumn; where the young boy arrested for his first offense spends months of degrading idleness in the associations of the loafer, the drunkard, the thief, and the gambler?

Here is a problem well worthy of progressive democracy, to build up the State by strengthening the weakest