

rates as \$5 to \$6 per day, or \$50 per month, but these presumably are silver, one-half the value of the gold.

The rug I ordered some weeks ago came Friday. It is a beauty—thick and soft like a covering of moss, and cheap—about \$28. An American told me the other evening that he got a rug at the same place for about \$28 and took it home with him, and a dealer in New York told him it should sell at retail for \$150 to \$200.

Walls and Roads.

One of the things which must impress one more here is the abundance and omnipresence of walls. A rural village has no real roads—none, that is, resulting from labor applied to that purpose; but every hamlet of half a dozen houses has its wall and closes its gate at night. When night comes on the gates of Peking are closed; a belated traveler may knock and shout in vain for admittance, unless perhaps he can show credentials. Any evening you may see the night watch marching out to guard the walls. (Against what?) As you go through the streets you see no houses—or seldom a glimpse—but on every side are walls. There seem to be no trees. Yet if you look down from a height—as the city wall—you look into courtyards planted with trees, and in some directions you seem to be looking upon a forest.

When I went out to the woolen mill the other day, I walked from the station and thus made acquaintance with Chinese country roads. They are like cow-paths, extending where people have happened to travel, an irregular net work which has never been paved or repaired; the wheels of carts cut deep ruts and in the course of centuries the soil has been washed out, so as to leave a deep ditch, which must become a torrent when there is a heavy rain. The ruts were so muddy in places (though there has not been much rain) that it took a terrible struggle for a pony to go through with a load of no weight. I thought I was lost. The chimney of the mill disappeared from sight as I walked through these ravines, but I happened to come out right.

On the return I came with a party of Chinese. There was no passenger train and it became necessary, since there were not donkeys enough to be had, for many of the party to walk, contrary to their habit. I walked the distance, more than six miles, without effort, while they were tired. The well-to-do Chinese are physically lazy; it is not quite dignified to walk when other means of transportation can be had. I was rather glad to impress them with the physical superiority of the foreigner—they need the lesson. At first they found the idea of physical exercise for its own sake hard to understand. Now, however, the students in the colleges are taking it up, quite in American fashion.

The streets of Peking, outside of legation quarters, are very dirty; that is, they are quite unpaved. Mere black earth, which has absorbed the filth of ages, frequently covered with many inches of dust or mud. This is the way we sprinkle the dusty streets in our town. Two men bring a large tub full of water, then one of them takes a woven basket about the size of a hen's nest fastened on the end of a stick and throws the water on the street;

when one space has been sprinkled they move on. As they are very patient, a considerable stretch of road is covered in course of time. Sometimes when there is water standing in the gutter the man throws this with his basket onto the dusty road. The gutter water is not clean. Yesterday I saw a man at a place near here, when the dust in the street was about six inches deep, smoothing the dust with some sort of a rake. Why he did this I do not know.

Children's Games.

I talked the other day with a young Chinaman about games he used to play when he was an urchin. It seems the Chinese boys play "Hide and Seek," "Blind Man's Buff" and "Fox in the Morning," alias "Pull-away," just as we did.

Postal Service.

Be careful about addressing letters to me. I do not know that they have gone wrong, but I suspect that the people who handle the mail do not know very much English. The Japanese, French, German and British maintain their own postoffices here. My mail from San Francisco crosses the ocean to Japan and is handled even here by the Japanese. My weekly Springfield Republican has not come for three weeks, and I suppose it has been sent wrong. So write plainly. The Chinese employ Englishmen in their postoffices to handle English mail; the Japanese try to read the English themselves.

W. M. E.

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THE BRITISH REFERENDUM.*

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

In explanation of the widely differing attitudes of the British and American democracies toward the principle of the Referendum, The Public of March 10 (page 220) states that while over here the referendum is a people's referendum, part of the fast spreading movement for the extension of people's power in government, the proposal in Great Britain is a House of Lords' referendum, part of the fast dying institution of hereditary power in government; or, as an earlier issue of the Public tersely put it, "The essential idea of the referendum is that the people shall control it." The essential idea of Balfour's referendum is that the House of Lords shall control it.

But the provisions of Lord Balfour of Burleigh's "Reference to the people bill" are more democratic than we have hitherto been led to expect.

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The measure deals with two classes of bills—(1) "Rejected bills," which have been passed by the House of Commons, but thrown out by the House of Lords, and (2) "Carried bills," which have been passed by both Houses of Parliament.

Bills in the first category are to be, on the demand of either House of Parliament, submitted to a poll of the electors in the manner provided by the bill. Bills of the second class are to be "referended" in the same way if a petition is presented by not less than 200 members of the House of Commons.

*See The Public, vol. XIII, page 1153; this volume, pages 220, 229.

Bills in the first class have to be sent up to the Lords before the first day of July, and the measures will come into force if the Lords do not pass them within 40 days, or pass them with such amendments as the House of Commons will not agree to. A "carried bill" shall not be presented to His Majesty for assent until the poll has been taken, if such poll has been demanded.

Writs for taking the poll of the electors are to be issued to the returning officers of the constituencies by the King in Council, and the poll is to be taken in the same way as for the election of members of Parliament. No person is to vote in more than one constituency, and consequently plural voting will be abolished.

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This is the form of Ballot Paper under the bill:

Poll of the Parliamentary Electors of the United Kingdom Ballot Paper.			
Counterfoil No.	If you wish the Bill, the short title of which is "....." to become law, place a cross under the word "Yes." If not, place a cross under the word "No."	YES	NO

It will be seen that a Liberal House of Commons would have the power, by referring to the people a bill rejected by the House of Lords, of forcing that bill into law, and that objectionable bills passed by both Houses can be held up for referendum by a minority of the House of Commons.

Of course, it is not the "whole hog" by any means, but it would be a great stride forward, and would inevitably result in further extension of the principle, so soon as the people found its worth.

Further, as was pointed out in The Public of March 10, the "responsible ministry" system in British government has a remarkable tendency to make representative government truly representative of the people. Hence a referendum called by a minority in the House of Commons would approximate a referendum called by a stated percentage of the voters.

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Lord Balfour's bill further provides that "If the total affirmative vote in the United Kingdom shall exceed the total negative vote by not less than two per cent of the total negative vote, the bill shall forthwith be presented to His Majesty for assent in the form in which it was presented to the electors." Surely, a not inconsiderable extension of people's power this.

Yet, strange to say, the more radical the average Britisher the more bitterly he opposes the whole idea.

Even so advanced a journal as the Daily Chronicle spurns the proposal as "a device alien to the spirit of our representative institutions." "It would undermine the responsibility of the House of Commons; it would transfer authority from ministers to the man in the street, and, associated with the Initiative, it could be used as a short, sharp and terribly effective method of redistributing wealth by means of taxation; it is passing strange that prudent men should be so rash as to give countenance to this attempt to remove the seat of authority from the wisdom of the senate to the ignorance of the street." Thus the radical Chronicle. No fear of

the power of privilege there; all fear of the power of the people!

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Truth to tell, the evolution of British democracy has been a remarkably slow process. They, the people, have not yet shed their insularity, their love of a lord, their reverence for the "gentry." Yet British government today is nearer to true democracy than that of many a republic. Like a butterfly newly emerged from its chrysalis, British democracy has not yet discovered its powers. It has grown so accustomed to its silken wrappings that it is nervously afraid of trying its wings. Some day, and perhaps some day soon, it will open its eyes to the astounding fact that a Tory peer had offered it one of the most radical concessions ever devised for the transference of political power from Privilege to People. Meanwhile, insularity and party prejudice render it blind to its opportunities.

SEYMOUR J. FARMER.

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LUCINDA B. CHANDLER.*

Denver, Colo.

On her 60th birthday, nearly 25 years ago, she exclaimed: "Congratulate me! I am 60 years old today. How fast I am leaving the years behind me." At that time she and I were patients at Dr. Jackson's Sanitarium in Dansville, N. Y., and it was my good fortune to have many an hour of conversation with her, for neither of us was too sick to talk or think. To know her was an inspiration to a broader, higher life—a life consecrated to human service. Mrs. Chandler was a democrat in the largest meaning of the word. Her pamphlet entitled "Subsistence and Justice" seemed to me to contain the best possible summing up in small space of the economic injustices which give much to the few and little to the many. I gave away several of these pamphlets and have none left. Who knows where a copy could be found?

CELIA BALDWIN WHITEHEAD.

*See The Public, vol. xiv, p. 245.

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of The Public for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Tuesday, April 11, 1911.

Death of Tom L. Johnson.

In Cleveland on the 10th, at 8:47 in the evening, Tom L. Johnson died. [See vol. xiv, pp. 322, 325.]

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A full account of his career down to the close of 1905, accompanied with a supplement portrait taken in the prime of life, will be found in The Public of January 6, 1906.