

These died that we might claim a soil unstained,  
 Save by the blood of heroes; their bequests  
 A realm unsevered and a race unchained.  
 Has purer blood through Norman veins come down  
 From the rough knights that clutched the Saxon's crown  
 Than warmed the pulses in these faithful breasts?

These, too, shall live in history's deathless page,  
 High on the slow-wrought pedestals of fame,  
 Ranged with the heroes of remoter age;  
 They could not die who left their nation free,  
 Firm as the rock, unfettered as the sea,  
 Its heaven unshadowed by the cloud of shame.

While on the storied past our memory dwells,  
 Our grateful tribute shall not be denied, —  
 The wreath, the cross of rustling immortelles;  
 And willing hands shall clear each darkening bust,  
 As year by year sifts down the clinging dust  
 On Shirley's beauty and on Vassall's pride.

But for our own, our loved and lost, we bring  
 With throbbing hearts and tears that still must flow,  
 In full-heaped hands, the opening flowers of spring,  
 Lilies half-blown, and budding roses, red  
 As their young cheeks, before the blood was shed  
 That lent their morning bloom its generous glow.

Ah, who shall count a rescued Nation's debt,  
 Or sum in words our martyrs' silent claims?  
 Who shall our heroes' dread exchange forget, —  
 All life, youth, hope, could promise to allure  
 For all that soul could brave or flesh endure?  
 They shaped our future; we but carve their names.

*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

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### OUR NOMINATING MACHINES.

THE test question which decided the political supremacy of William M. Tweed, and gave him for a time absolute mastery of the first municipal government in America, arose in 1870, over the proposed new charter for the city of New York. Tweed owed his victory to his secret manipulation of the Republican senatorial caucus even more than to his control of his own party machinery. Whenever it was possible, — and with the resources at his command few things of the sort were impossible for him at that time, — his henchmen obtained access to the Republican district associations, which held, as they hold to-day, full disposition of the party nominations in the city, and elected del-

egates who were pledged to do the bidding of the Democratic boss.

The vast official "patronage" which lay at his disposal, the by-ways and back lanes to means of money-making *alivunde* of which he held the keys, were all used by him to accomplish what to fail of, he had declared, would be his ruin. Ostensibly active Republicans and ardent party men depended for their daily bread upon the salaries which, at a word from him, could be cut off. In one Republican association alone, sixty-three "workers" held office under Tammany Hall, whilst of the Republican general committee in 1870 thirty members out of one hundred and fifty-nine received pay from offices subject to the disposition of the Democratic chief. At the primaries of that year the "Tammany Republicans" massed their forces. Tweed sent for the Republican district leaders, and plied them with every inducement to sell out in his favor. Ex-Governor Cornell, chairman of the Republican state committee in 1871, declared that members of the general committee of the city of New York acknowledged that they had received large sums of money to place their committee under the secret control of Tammany. Men who were holding federal offices, the "gift" of some Republican politician, or the "reward for good Republican work," were "given" much more lucrative positions under the municipal government controlled by the Tammany sachen. The Republican convention was actually "run" by a Democratic minority, who packed the hall before the hour of meeting. The entrance was guarded by policemen, who, acting under instructions from Democratic headquarters, rejected or admitted delegates without the slightest regard to their credentials. So intolerable became the abuses in these little "nocturnal gatherings," where six thousand voters arrogated to themselves exclusive control of the nominations which fifty thousand

Republicans were held bound to ratify, that the state committee were forced to step in and manage the local campaign itself. Yet, in spite of their efforts, it was found, after the election, that in certain districts the presidents of Republican associations had issued and "peddled" the straight Democratic ticket all day long. But Tweed did not content himself with his control of the Republican organization of the city of New York alone. His next move was a conception of genius. He determined to extend his power to the Republican senatorial caucus as well, so as to secure the votes not only of those who were paid to do his bidding, but also of those who, however opposed to his mastery, would not dare fail to respond to the crack of the party whip. With rare humor and cynical frankness, the old man told the story of his shrewdness. It is a suggestive story, and well worth the study of him who claims that under any circumstances to bolt is a crime:—

"I suggested the caucus, and suggested that the Republicans should resolve in caucus to support me in this measure. I said, 'Here is a way of getting over it *if money matters are mentioned*. If you go in caucus, and if the resolution is arrived at, you can say, I was governed by the caucus, and had to do it because the caucus did, and I personally went against it.' . . . The result was, the caucus did pass the resolution that they would stand by the charter and agree to the caucus determination."<sup>1</sup>

The purchase of the Republican senators whose votes carried the Republican caucus cost Mr. Tweed, he declared on oath, at a time when it was less to his interest to lie than to tell the truth, some forty thousand dollars apiece; an amount agreed upon after much skillful haggling and neat diplomacy. And all through these delicate negotiations, he

<sup>1</sup> Testimony taken before a Committee of New York Aldermen, 1877. Page 86.

said his trusted counselor, adviser, and go-between was the editor of a leading Republican journal! But disclosure came at last, and with disclosure one of those periodical convulsions which we have come to depend upon as the only means of purifying the disorders of our body politic. The honest element of both parties united to shake off the incubus, and when the work was done genuine Republicans began to bestir themselves for a real "reform within the party." The reorganization was entrusted by the state committee to Horace Greeley and William Orton; the place of the former, on his declining to serve, being filled by Jackson S. Schultz. Some idea of the abuses which they were called upon to correct may be inferred from what follows, for which vouchers could be given if space allowed:—

The sub-committee appointed to correct the roll of one district found it so hopelessly filled with non-residents, bogus names, and dead men that it was not capable of correction, but had to be cast aside, and a new one made. Of the seven hundred and fifty-one names, twenty-two, *as the roll itself showed*, lived out of the district; and of the rest, only two hundred and seventy-nine could be found by the census-taker. In another district two hundred and forty-seven of the alleged members were either Democrats, or unknown or fictitious persons; and this district was claimed to be "rather exceptionally free from irregularities"! It was proved by sworn testimony that at the Republican primaries, at the preceding election, some of the polls were taken possession of by policemen, who refused many prominent Republicans admittance, while they allowed Democrats to enroll, and vote upon the selection of delegates.

The reorganizing committee produced, as the result of their labors, the organization which has developed into the ex-

clusive political machine, which to-day dominates the party in the city of New York. The crying evil which the framers of the new system were called upon to meet was temporarily suppressed. Their scheme expressly provided (Art. XIV.) that no person holding office under Democratic control should be a member of the organization, and that all votes cast for such should be null and void. The gentlemen who undertook the work of reform either saw but one side of the great evil of "patronage," or did not feel called upon to denounce it, save where it bore heavily against their own party. That a Republican politician should hold office at the will of a Tammany sachem seemed an intolerable abuse; but that the same worker should be dependent for his living upon the nod of a Republican boss appeared to be only another bond to strengthen the party discipline. The new plan had but a temporary success. Indeed, its framers never claimed anything more for it. It was urged by many, at the time, that the evils had not been wholly rooted out, and that the seeds of the old abuses would in time sprout again. The condition of the organization to-day has justified their declarations. Mr. George Bliss, who in 1876 insisted that the fair expression of opinion was seldom prevented at the primaries and caucuses of the Republican party, and confidently declared that no abuse had failed of prompt correction, upon proper appeal in the manner provided, announced in 1879 that the system, for at least a year past, had been fairly honeycombed by a dry rat. "The rolls," he declared, in an open letter to President Arthur, then chairman of the Republican state committee, "are utterly deceptive." No annual revision was had, as the constitution required. Mr. Arthur's own association contained the names of many non-residents; in another district, out of six hundred names, the post-office officials

had been unable to reach more than one half; and of the thirteen thousand three hundred and thirty-five members on the rolls of the twenty-four associations, over half should have been stricken off. In 1878, it was claimed that the associations were again full of avowed Democrats, whilst good Republicans, who had an absolute right to become members, were refused admittance, either by direct rejection, or by referring the nominations to committees which never reported; "leaving no course but an appeal to the central committee, which is sure not to act against the henchmen." Elections conducted "with conspicuous unfairness," fraudulent enrollment, arbitrary exclusions, unfair expulsions, and other abuses as bad were the charges brought against the system which to-day controls the Republican party machinery of the great city of New York, by the gentleman who three years before was its warm advocate. Although it was not until 1879 that Mr. Bliss felt bound to demand a reform, yet Mr. Schultz himself asserted, as early as 1876, that the primary had come to be no place for any one but the professional politician; and it was generally admitted even then, and tacitly conceded by those who "ran" the machine themselves, that the district associations were very far from representing the great majority of the party. The Union League Club, assuming to speak for the educated and public-spirited element, resolved that the national convention, in considering candidates for the presidential election of 1876, should avoid selecting any man whose affiliations might suggest a reasonable doubt of the purity of his political methods. That resolution, though couched in the most temperate language, and backed by the highest public opinion of the city and State, gave offense to the arrogant masters of the machine, who would brook no suggestion of interference with their sovereignty; and within ten days these little evening

clubs, at which one tenth of the party assumed to speak with absolute authority for the other nine tenths, answered to their master's call, and all of them returned their quota of delegates to the state convention, pledged to his control. "This," said Mr. Cornell, in his dispatch to Senator Conkling, as one of Cæsar's lieutenants might have reported to his general the crushing of some barbarian revolt, — "this is the answer of the Republicans of New York to the impudent declarations of the Union League Club." But if matters were bad then, they are worse to-day. "Not over one in three of the presidents of the twenty-six Republican associations," said the New York Times, after a recent election of officers, "is a man of ordinary capacity for public affairs, or even of ordinary education; sixteen of the twenty-six hold city, state, or federal office; and of the remaining ten, one is said to have been selected for an office under the general government, and two are mere figure-heads for office-holders behind them. . . . From alderman to judge of the supreme court, no name appears on the party ticket which has not been selected by some of this band of office-holders and office-seekers. They send the delegates who assume to speak for the eighty thousand New York Republicans at a state convention, and save for the casual jurisdiction of the state committee, there is no authority in the party which they cannot set at defiance. Their representatives in the board of aldermen must do their bidding, under penalty of expulsion from the charmed circle. Republican members of the legislature take their cue from them in all matters pertaining to the government of the city. There is no power which has to dispose of public patronage, from the police board or the petty courts to the President of the United States, that cannot be made to feel the pressure of the organizations which regulate at its head the flow of the fountain of political

action in the first city of the United States."

Such is the development of the machine system of political nominations in the metropolis of America. The facts regarding one party are matched by those in another; and in any large city of the United States, a history of the evolution of the caucus from its prototype the "town meeting," of years gone by, consists simply of a wearisome repetition of similar details. In Baltimore it is the Democrats who have "run" their primaries with such shameful indifference to the protests of respectability that the intelligent element of the party have refused to attend and lend their countenance to the fraud and trickery by which the reckless and unscrupulous minority always carry the day. In Philadelphia, again, the Republican professional politicians have engaged for years past in dishonest practices, which the respectable majority have been absolutely powerless to prevent. Again and again the candidate who happened to secure control of the temporary chairman of a convention has, through the latter's aid, succeeded in ousting duly elected delegates by simply referring, *under the rules*, all questions relating to contested seats to the suitable committee packed in his interests. So that the nomination has come to depend far more upon "fixing" the temporary chairman than upon the mere question of a majority of duly elected delegates. To Philadelphia as well as New York may be applied what Mr. Bliss said in 1879: "It is the constant remark of the henchmen, 'What's the use of his fighting? We've got the inspectors.'" In Brooklyn, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, and San Francisco, the primary system operates with precisely similar results; and even in England, if we choose to go abroad for illustrations, the caucus, in the form of the "Birmingham six hundred," or the "Bradford three hundred," comes to the

same thing, — a development of the very abuses under which we labor here. The "Birmingham Model," which has been set up in Birmingham, Bradford, the metropolitan boroughs of Marylebone, Southwark, and Greenwich, and in many large towns, either preserves or has developed the essential features of our primary methods. The ward committees elect a general committee, which elects an executive committee, which elects a managing sub-committee. This machine selects candidates for Parliament and the school board. The out-and-out party men naturally praise it as an admirable means of massing and centralizing the party power. Mr. Chamberlain's laudation of the system has an oddly familiar sound to American ears, used to the stock arguments of the professional politician, to whom a "scratcher" or a "bolter" is more hateful than the Beast. The success of the liberals in Bradford, he argues, "would have been impossible to any but a strong and united party. . . . The only merit of the caucus is that it has enabled the party to develop its full strength. . . . Since the formation of the association, no man calling himself a liberal has ever been excluded from its meetings, or denied a voice and vote. . . . The only controlling force in our organization is the good sense of its members, who see that if the common cause is to be successful there must be some willingness to keep purely personal preferences in the background, and to subordinate petty details to great principles." But the "discipline" has already begun to tell, and more than one intelligent Englishman has felt the weight of a system which makes as little as possible of his individual voice and vote. No member who has failed of a nomination can offer himself as an independent at the hustings; and the committees already demand that the nominee shall submit his opinions to their dictation. Because of his course on the government education

bill in 1878, the Bradford liberal committee attempted to "discipline" Mr. Forster, a notoriously stiff-necked man; but he set them at defiance, and was elected with the aid, it is said, of some Tory votes. At the next general election he was offered the Bradford nomination, provided he would bind himself by "Rule 15," which prescribed that the nominee should in all things submit to the decisions of the committee, — a pledge which Mr. Forster refused to take. "Assessments," as a matter of course, follow in train. In 1878, the local politicians began to complain that the members of public boards did not contribute liberally enough to the association, and at one meeting it was demanded, with unmistakable emphasis, that the defaulters be "interviewed." How little these committees differ from the district associations of Brooklyn and New York, or the ward committees of Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, may be seen from the following description from the pen of an observant and intelligent Englishman: —

"It simulates an elective system, and pretends to the authority derived from popular majorities. In theory every liberal elector has a right to be enrolled on the ward lists, and when enrolled to take part in the ward meetings which choose the representatives which make up the central committees. . . . But as a matter of fact the semblance of popular election is of the slightest kind. . . . At the ward meetings which choose the representatives on the central committee . . . there is no keen excitement. . . . Yet when the thing is done the necessity of yielding to the principles of representation is urged, and any signs of troublesome independence are repressed by the argument that those who failed to carry their candidates at the ward meetings, and so find themselves unrepresented on the committee, must be in a minority. . . . These meetings fall inevitably into the hands of the

professional politicians. A few energetic persons, who know what it is to pull the wires effectively, appear at these gatherings with a sufficient contingent of followers, and obtain the sanction of popular election for the 'tickets' they promptly propose. Politics are thus made prominent in municipal affairs, and Englishmen now ask, Why should a body chosen to give expression to the political voice of the borough meddle with the selection of representatives, whose duty it is to decide between rival schemes of drainage and lighting, or to appoint school-masters and school-mistresses, or to strike an equitable balance between indoor and outdoor relief?"

It is folly for us to talk about the duty of the patriotic and intelligent citizen to attend the caucus of his party, and insist by his presence and his vote that only proper candidates shall be nominated. With the absence of legal safeguards, the polls of the primary of to-day are absolutely at the mercy of the dishonest minority.

It pays the professional politician to give his whole time to the work of "running his district." He has a "stake" in the work; it means to him his bread and butter. "Practical" politics require practiced hands; so he makes it his business; and as Fisher Ames is said to have declared long ago, "one man making a business of politics can have more influence than half a dozen who do not." With ten thousand municipal offices in the city of New York subordinate to the elective offices, and whose salaries aggregate over ten million dollars, it pays a Democratic "heeler" to know his district, and to "run" it at any cost and by any means. With the federal patronage of the same city dividing up two and a half millions of dollars among two thousand five hundred offices, it is easy to understand why "Barney" and "Jake" and "Tom" and "Mike" aspire to be district leaders, and why they invariably beat the honest gentle-

men who innocently fancy that a numerical majority is any obstacle to a determined minority who know what they want and are bound to get it by hook or by crook. What chance has an honorable man, who would not stoop to the tricks of the machine to secure his ends, with patriotism and perhaps a laudable ambition to distinguish himself in public service as his only motives, against men whose business is to "fix" primaries and "pack" conventions by stuffing ballot boxes and ejecting duly elected delegates? No; the remedy is not to be found at the caucus of to-day. The present primary system is, and so long as it lasts always will be, subject to the control of the worst element in each party. But the patient people have stood it about long enough. We have at last begun to fret against gross misrepresentation. The civil service reform bill was the result of public opinion as expressed in the *state* elections; it was not left for a national contest to put life into that issue; and in the States where the caucus has been most abused are to be heard those mutterings of discontent which to the observant student of American public affairs mean so much. Within a short time the people

of Pennsylvania have demanded, and secured, laws regulating their primary elections. The people of Maryland have made the same demand, and will get what they ask. The "leaders" on one side of the game of New York politics have begun to hold out offers of "reorganization" as a sop to allay the effects of their refusal in the past to permit the passage of such a law, while their opponents have recently been forced by an insistent public opinion to extend the provisions of a local statute controlling primaries in the city of Brooklyn to other cities in the State.

But beyond the enactment of statutes which shall protect the primary as fully as the general election, the people have begun to insist that the State, as well as the nation, shall take its offices out of politics, so as to make it pay as little as possible for the political "worker" to "fix" things at the caucus. We are beginning to understand that so long as we allow official patronage to lie at the disposal of this leader or that, as a reward for "controlling his district," for just so long we shall furnish a corruption fund for him to draw upon to pay for the dirty work by which he wins and holds his place.

*George Walton Green.*

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## POETS AND BIRDS: A CRITICISM.

"Plato, anticipating the reviewers,  
From his Republic banished without pity  
The Poets."

*The Birds of Killingworth.*

THE author of three articles recently published, *The Poets' Birds* (*Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1882), *Foreign Birds and English Poets* (*Contemporary Review*, October, 1882), and *Our Birds and their Poets* (*Harper's Magazine*, February, 1883) brings against British poets the charge that they are almost

entirely \*destitute of that "universal kindness toward the speechless world," that "sympathy co-extensive with nature," which he "finds common to all the poets of America." This is proved, he says, by their ignorance of ornithology, their injustice to birds, and their general neglect of the bird-world.

For any one to be justified in making this charge, he must himself have a knowledge of ornithology sufficient to enable him to approach accuracy in the