

Make W EXHIBITION

July 13th - 23rd

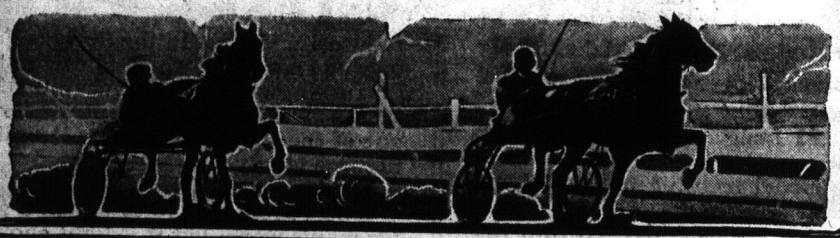
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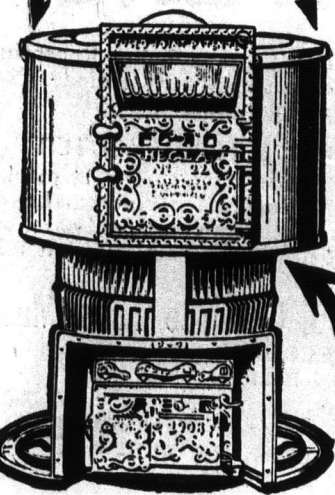
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Commons. The election over, the members returned to the House divide themselves into two bodies. The one body votes invariably and mechanically in favor of whatever the team which has obtained its majority may propose, no matter whether the proposals put before them be wholly novel and hitherto unheard of, no matter whether these proposals be to the common knowledge of every member grossly distasteful to the mass of the people of England. Conversely, members returned in support of the other team vote against the successful team.

The outstanding feature of the Party System, from the point of view of the representative theory, is that it is a direct negation of that theory. It has many other features, pleasant and unpleasant; it is comic, it is charlatan, it is corrupt, and sometimes, though not often, it is dangerous to the State: but so far as a Democrat who really believes in representation is concerned, its chief feature is that it destroys representation. It is common enough to hear some old gentleman pleading plaintively in the House of Commons to be allowed to vote as his conscience dictates. He begs the Government to 'take off the Whips' on that particular division, but by the very method of this pleading he admits that it will be his first business to obey the orders of his half of the Front Benches and not the known desires of his constituents.

That is the Party System. The electorate of England runs through a whole range of degrees, from the ordinary professional man in London (who knows all about the Party System and regards it with a complete, though usually tolerant, contempt as humbug from beginning to end,) to the honest but isolated provincial farmer or shopkeeper who is sincerely convinced that the one team is composed of good men fulfilling the intentions of their Maker, and the other of Demons. Nay, there is even a proportion (though how large it is difficult to say) who regard the one team and the other as standing for certain fixed and definable principles, and as representing two adverse philosophies. This illusion is chiefly produced in the very young, and is discoverable in the youth even of the wealthiest classes of the community. Now, though the degrees of this illusion are various, and though an increasing number of men smile at or despise the Party System, yet it must be conceded that the effect of any play upon its audience is always considerable. Perhaps some who read these lines will, like the writer of them, have recently passed through an electoral contest; if so he will be amused to remember how interested he got in the party cries and the party nonsense. It was like watching a good game of poker; one could not help taking sides to some extent even though one heard one man describing the Lords as a mass of blood-thirsty ruffians and another solemnly assuring great gatherings that his own first cousin or his brother-in-law was a man of the vilest turpitude. I say this force, the force which makes a man vote 'Tory' or 'Liberal' without much caring for the spurious policies put forward, is, though the vaguest, the strongest force of all the forces that support the Party System.

It may here be asked with some justice (and the greater part of educated Englishmen do so ask themselves), 'After all, what is the harm of it? The Government of the country continues, and it is efficiently carried on; the little clique which separates itself into the two teams is composed for the most part of very distinguished and very able men; they have behind them (when the fortunes of the game have given one or the other of them office) a large number of highly trained, experienced and carefully chosen permanent officials. They are patriotic men, as are almost invariably the members of an oligarchy, and they will not allow their pastime, lucrative and absorbing as it is, very gravely to interfere with the prime necessities of the nation? Why then should one complain?'

There are three immediate and direct ways in which the party system can be proved dangerous. It promotes useless

legislation, it permits bad legislation, and it renders impossible good legislation upon which all men are at heart agreed.

It promotes bad legislation because it is in the essence of the Party System to invent a cry. And that cry must of its nature not touch and very serious or very real issue; for if it did the pack of cards would come tumbling down. You must have a cry and it must be a cry upon which people are to get excited and it must be continually renewed. The result is a mass of legislation most of it quite empty and hollow and useless, diverting and corrupting the political conscience of the people.

It permits bad legislation: for when a proposed piece of legislation has not been made a party business, it passes as automatically and as much of necessity as the most wanton caprice of the most absolute despot. A little measure is introduced which brings in some tyrannical abomination into the lives of the poor, to inspect this or that or to torture them in this or that more drastic fashion if they offend the rich. Such a measure has but to get the support of a crank in one of the teams, to be allowed its little discussion by the other team (as a thing beneath notice), and nothing on earth can prevent its becoming law. Finally, the Party System prevents good legislation. Thus all men are not agreed whether Ireland should be governed by an efficient foreign bureaucracy or by a native Government. But there is not one man of experience who is not thoroughly sickened by the complete breakdown of decent government in that country. There is not one thoughtful man who does not wish to see things changed, and now that the moneylenders have their security under the last Land Act the only obstacle to change is this inheritance of a few old party cries. Seeds sown in a merely party interest to secure salaries and places for certain men are now grown up in a very stubborn harvest, which bars the way of the very honest reformer towards his goal in this prime department of our public life. It is exactly the same with the little education difficulty and with the big drink difficulty. It is the same with every single point of real importance in our policy. The Party System has made real action and real reform impossible.

New Train on Grand Trunk Pacific.

General Passenger Agent Hintin issued the statement today that commencing with the month of April the Grand Trunk Pacific would operate a train out of Winnipeg twice a month, on Thursdays, during April and May, the dates being: Thursday, April 7th and 21st; Thursday, May 5th and 19th.

This new train will leave Winnipeg at 2.00 p.m. and will run through to Wainwright on the same schedule as the regular train now running out of Winnipeg on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays at that hour. The train is put on chiefly to serve the large number of homeseekers who arrive in Winnipeg on Thursday mornings, due to reduced fares to points in Western Canada given on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from many points in the United States. If the business between Wainwright and Edmonton will warrant, this train will be run through to Edmonton. It is also possible that the traffic will make it necessary to operate this train on June 9th and 23rd, but the general passenger office state that a definite announcement on this point will not be made until later.

While this train is being operated to give close train connections to homeseekers arriving from the United States and Eastern Canada on Thursdays, it will doubtless also be appreciated by the travelling public of Western Canada. In discussing the necessity for additional train service it was stated that a very heavy rush of land seekers was expected as the number of inquiries with respect to the rich new land opened up by the Grand Trunk Pacific had been very large during the winter.