

business affairs would restore the balance and cure all industrial ills. But as the substitution of the higher for the lower principle is beyond the power of human legislation, this remedy is unavailable, beyond the limits within which it may be applied voluntarily by individuals and societies. It is to be deeply regretted that it has never yet been so reduced to practice by such individuals and societies as to afford the world, on any large scale, a demonstration of its superiority as a law for the regulation of the every-day affairs of life.

But is it clear, as almost all the world's great statesmen, including apparently those who now compose the British Government, have openly or tacitly affirmed, that the State, which means or should mean the concentrated political wisdom of the nation, can do nothing to promote a more equal distribution of both the opportunity for work and the products of work? How unequal this distribution is, is very strikingly brought out in an article in the December number of the *Political Science Quarterly*, by Mr. Holmes, of the National Census Bureau of the United States. According to Mr. Holmes's calculations, the sixty billions which constitute the wealth of the nation is distributed among a little more than twelve and a half millions of families as follows: One and a half millions farm-hiring families have \$200,000,000 (average wealth \$150); five million home-hiring families have \$2,500,000,000 (average wealth \$500); two and a half million families owning farms, (worth less than \$5,000) have \$6,500,000,000; two and a half million families owning homes (worth less than \$5,000) have \$8,000,000,000; while the remaining \$43,000,000,000 is owned by one and one-tenth million families. Mr. Holmes also quotes approvingly an estimate made by the *Tribune* some time since, according to which four thousand millionaires in the United States possess not less than twelve billion dollars, or about one-fifth of the total wealth of the sixty-five million citizens of the Republic. The inequality is probably somewhat less in Canada, but perhaps fully as great in England.

Can it be in accordance with the design of beneficent nature that such inequalities should exist in men's ability to procure the means of existence and enjoyment which she has so bountifully provided? If not, there must be something in the structure of civil society, or in the character of its legislation, which gives undue advantage to certain individuals or classes in the struggle. If that be not so, it becomes almost self-evident that it should be the business of organized legislatures to devise some check upon the acquisitiveness of the strong, or some protection for the natural rights of the weak. Yet that is what no Legislature has as yet succeeded in doing; we might almost say has as yet attempted to do. And it must be confessed that the objections to many or all of the plans which have as yet

been suggested, such as reduction of the hours of labour, state employment for the unemployed, etc., are so many and weighty, that it is hardly surprising that no Government has as yet seen its way clear to stake its existence upon the introduction of any radical measure looking to this end. The cynically disposed might, however, retort that both governments and legislatures have not hesitated to enact much legislation, from time to time, designed to produce the opposite effect from that so manifestly needed, such as protective tariffs, charters with exclusive privileges for close corporations, combinations, etc. It is becoming increasingly evident that not only the well-being but the safety, if not the very existence, of organized society in the future, will depend very largely upon its success in devising effective legislation of the kind whose need is so plainly indicated, and now so loudly demanded by large bodies of the working people.

PARTY IN POLITICS.

Rev. Principal Grant, in his series of very independent letters on the political situation, which have appeared in the *Globe*, deplors the spirit of party. Dr. Goldwin Smith, whose influence during his long period of residence in Canada was so potent, was constantly inveighing against the evils of the party system, and laying bare the mischief wrought by faction. All good men join in this view which is undoubtedly beyond debate.

I have seen no one, however, who has undertaken to deal with the task of defining the line between what is legitimate and useful in party politics and what is hurtful. That government by party is the best system available under popular institutions is scarcely too strong a statement to make. The most legitimate lines on which to divide parties are Liberal and Conservative, because in the struggle between these two forces a just equilibrium can be obtained. One half of the community urging change, progress, reform; the other half carefully and vigorously guarding the established institutions of the country. In the struggle between two such opposing forces ably led and wisely controlled, the British system of government has sprung up and grown to the state of perfection we now see it.

It may be safely affirmed that the full stature of popular government was never attained in England until the party system made its appearance. If party were eliminated from government in Great Britain, in the United States and in Canada, is it too much to say that the intelligence of the present generation has not yet devised a substitute which would produce equally satisfactory results? Amid all the evils of party, we have to recognize that it does secure the most searching discussion of public affairs, and the keenest criticism of public men. It sustains constant interest in public matters on the part of the mass of the people and thereby secures a wider popular intelligence. Eliminate party aims and party struggles and statecraft would degenerate into a mere routine, and statesmanship would give way to an effete bureaucracy. And foolish and blind as are the deeds done in the name of party, the game of party poli-

tics makes it absolutely essential that (a) good men and able men be put at the head of the organization. The people will never long worship rascality or mediocrity; (b) and that sound and patriotic measures be advocated as the basis of the organization. The people will never long support a foolish, unpatriotic or base policy.

Granting, then, that government of the people by the people is most effectively carried on under the fierce and surging conflicts of party strife, the problem of the day is how to eliminate from this system the elements which are palpably mischievous.

Certain features of the party system are manifestly evil. When it becomes a machine in the hands of one or more leaders or bosses, then it is a danger to the state. When party discipline is so maintained that the electorate are kept strictly in party lines, then again the welfare of the community is distinctly threatened. Under the party system whole families maintain with a sort of proud tradition an unbroken history as partisans for generations. This is unquestionably bad. In the name of party, every wrong which a weak or dishonest ruler can perpetrate is upheld and sustained by blind adherents. That the wrong is defended honestly does not mitigate the evil. Blindness is almost as dangerous as wickedness. The party organization in most of the counties or constituencies in Canada has been in the same hands for generations. If you visit a constituency after twenty years' absence, some changes will of course be found. Some leading men will have died, and some few may have changed their political faith. But a party convention will muster the same men and especially the same families it did twenty years before. Political issues may have changed, leaders may have changed and the party may have gone utterly wrong in the interval, it matters not. The old party traditions have gone on and its adherents have remained serenely blind.

Illustrations could be given without number. In my own constituency, as I was driving along during an election contest, I encountered a man whom I knew to be a political opponent. I stopped to speak with him for fun. "It is no use to canvass you, Mr. L—," I remarked. "You are always the one way." "Oh yes," he replied with the utmost frankness, "I do not bother much about politics. When an election comes on I find out if there are any Tories running and if so I go and vote for them."

Not only is this a condition of things actually present in connection with our political institutions, but it is persistently glorified as something noble, loyal and laudable. The man who says, "I have voted Grit for forty years and intend to vote Grit as long as I live," is slapped enthusiastically on the back and pronounced a fine fellow—a regular brick. Yet it would be treason against nature to argue that such a line of action is wrong, absurd and fatal to good citizenship. That is apparent. But how are you to get rid of this tendency of the party system? By what process can men be made to think, and reflect, and speak and vote according to the rights of the question every time?

There is such a thing as treason to a cause—perhaps, treason to a party. When the issue is clearly defined and a man has definitely made up his mind that one view of the question is right, he is bound to stick to that view, and duty calls upon him to exert every legitimate effort to accomplish