

## WHAT IS PARTY GOVERNMENT?

BY J. EDMUND COLLINS.

**EVERY** one talks about "party" and about "party politics," and somehow or another there is an impression among a great many who do not think for themselves that both are evils. A great many able and high minded writers say they are evil, and the Canadian citizen who says this with greatest force is Goldwin Smith. But he does not mean that party and party politics are in their nature bad; he only means that they are too often used to unworthy ends. Let us see what party means.

Brown believes that the nation would become rich, and populous, and great, if Canada, say, had Free Trade. Before the elections he goes from platform to platform proclaiming his belief and giving his reasons. Presently several others are convinced by his arguments or already hold his views, and they gather around him, or "under his standard" as they put it. By and by his following is large and compact, and everyone calls it the "Free Trade Party." When the election hour arrives a candidate or more will appear in each riding or county declaring himself a Free Trader or a member of the Free Trade party. If elected he knows it is his duty to work for, vote with, and "stand in" with his party to the end that Free Trade may become the law of the land.

When the elected members all take their seats, if the Free Traders are stronger in numbers than any other party, their leader is usually chosen to form a government. This would be a party government, and it would proceed to make Free Trade the law.

Of course there are always more than one party. There are generally two, sometimes three or more, though "third parties" so called, hardly ever accomplish anything. Their leaders and rank-and-file as a rule are men who hold unsound public opinions though they are oftener what may be called political "sore heads," that is men who have failed to get what they expected from either of the two large parties.

The Free Trade party, which I have instanced, is of course opposed by another party called Protectionists, but they are in a minority, and are therefore called the Opposition. Whenever a division or vote occurs in the house on the policy of the government, each member votes with his own party, so that it may not be overthrown.

Somebody says, "It is all very well for the Protectionists to stand together, or the Free Traders to carry what they believe in, but why should a protectionist vote with his party on a hundred and one other things, just as the Free Trader follows his party through thick and thin? Why shouldn't they vote independently and according to their personal convictions, instead of doing what their leaders want?"

My reply is that very-often members do vote in this independent way, but not as often as they ought. They get into the way of following their chiefs and stifle private opinion. But in the main they are bound to vote with and support their party, otherwise it is overthrown, and the other party takes the reins.

Let me say here that those who decry party politics, as such, have not looked into the question of government. Under responsible government the party method is the only one that can be adopted. It simply means that the ruling power is put into the hands of the majority of the people, as comprising some party. And it is right that the majority, not the minority, should rule; for the views held by the greater number are apt

to be more accurate than the views held by the lesser number, the intelligence being equal in both cases.

There was a time in the history of Canada when there was no party but a body called the Family Compact. It held the power and scorned the people; but as soon as party government, in the sense that we have it now, came into being, Compactism was cloven to the earth. And it was well to cleave it.

But let me amplify briefly some allusions that I have made to the sins of partyism. It is one thing for a man to be loyal to his chief and his party, and it is a good thing; but who can excuse him for condoning political trickery, for supporting his chief when his chief does evil and betrays the trust that the country has put in him? There are some men who will follow their leaders into any political infamy, vote for any measure no matter how evil or injurious they believe it to be; and they try to soothe their consciences by saying, "It was my duty as a party man." I do not wish to uncover old sores now, but it is enough to make ones cheek burn to think of the large number of men who have, in Canada, indorsed the bad deeds of their leaders.

I have been absent for a few years from Canada, and I find on my return that some of the old-fashioned bad methods are still in "full swing."

This is why I think there is such a glorious opportunity coming for our younger men. The man who is patient and strong enough to purge Canadian politics of the evils which have grown into the party system will be a greater benefactor of the Canadian people than the man who first thought of Confederation. And let ambitious readers of THE YOUNG CANADIAN ponder this fact well.

## TO THE WEST WIND.

BY MARY B. PAGE.

I turn my face to the sweet west wind  
For I crave by its breath to be kissed,  
And I swear its caresses are sweeter to me  
Than the kisses a maid will resist,  
When wooed by a lover to yield him her lips—  
Most perfect and utter surrender.  
Ah! a thousand times would I choose the wind  
For my lover, kindly and tender.

In heaven or on earth could a lover be found  
More passionate in his suing,  
Than the wind that blows from the sun-set land,  
So strong in his princely wooing.  
In his mighty arms he can bear me away,  
Invisible, fleetier than death;  
And I—tho' I can not look on his face—  
Can drink of his perfumed breath.

Oh! wind that blows from the gate of heaven,  
From the splendid pitiless west,  
Where the sun-set clouds of centuries past  
Have lived and died on her breast.  
Oh! wind that has conquered the demons of storm,  
And scattered the driving mist;  
To you, my lover, I lift my face,  
As a child lifts its mouth to be kissed.