

the lunch suitable speeches were made by His Excellency, the president of the *Haras*, Mr. Desjardins, M.P., the Hon. Mr. Chapleau, the Hon. Mr. Taillon, Senator Cochrane, and Mr. Ed. Cochrane, M.P. for East Northumberland.

### PARTY GOVERNMENT.

During the last ten years a great deal has been said and written against the party system. In Great Britain men of character and experience like Lord Selborne have gravely asked whether the slavery of party government is not becoming intolerable. In the United States Messrs. Parkman, Seymour, Hall, and many others have inveighed against a machinery which dooms some of the best elements in the country to practical inactivity and helplessness in public affairs. In Canada Dr. Goldwin Smith has wielded his vigorous pen in denouncing a political device by which the morality both of politicians and of the public is so sadly lowered. These are only a few examples of the protests that have been uttered against the abuses of popular rule through party organization. The list could easily be multiplied, but the argument of one is the argument of all. When, however, we ask what remedies are proposed for the evils decried or what system should be substituted for that which is so defective, we receive but vague answers. It is also noteworthy that of the writers who have dealt with this question only a few have had any practical experience of political life. Those whose criticism was based on such experience condemned some misuse of the system or suggested some reform. Among these we find one English writer commending the caucus, which (after its trial) another English writer condemns, while American writers counsel the adoption of responsible government, or place their hope on the Australian (that is, the Canadian) plan of voting, which again, after test, some of them pronounce worthless. If there was any prize for which Canadian statesmen struggled valiantly, and which they prided themselves on securing as the essential of free popular rule, it was ministerial responsibility. Yet a journal of this province, the chief organ of an influential group, remonstrates against the despotism into which this boon of boons has degenerated as intolerable both to the people and their deputies.

In all this vague unrest and discontent we fail to find any reasonable solution of the problem. All admit that popular government has been disappointing. It is, in some respects, a tyranny as bad as that of crown or oligarchy. It necessarily gives the preëminence to demagogues, and even those who would serve their country honestly and faithfully must to a certain extent be demagogues if they would succeed. Then, once installed in office, a ministry is all powerful, so long as it can depend on a majority. One of the writers mentioned says that the only excuse for party is that it is the only scheme by which government under our elective system is possible. And then he adds that "a substitute for it will have to be found; and found the substitute must be. Society cannot rest forever on the irrational and immoral." To this it might be replied that society rested for many ages, and in portions of the world rests still, on systems more irrational and more immoral than that of party. Nor does the reformer suggest how the substitute is to be discovered.

Mr. Gladstone, in his remarkable elucidation of the practical working of the British Constitution,

written for the benefit of his "Kin beyond Sea," seems quite satisfied with the imperfect instrument by which popular sovereignty is asserted in England. Among his many reforms the abolition of party finds no place. More than one American writer has openly defended party as an agency in the political education of a people. It is a check on the influence of the illiterate voter, while by bringing the more public spirited elements of the nation into contact with each other it ensures a thorough agitation of public questions. And certainly there is no free country that is not more or less indebted to party organization for the blessings that it enjoys. This is brought out especially in the history of England and her colonies. This much we may surely admit without denying that the system is subject to grave abuses.

The practical question for us is whether it can be freed from those abuses without injury to parliamentary institutions.

*Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.*

While in England, the United States and Canada, we hear these indictments of party methods, in France, on the other hand, it is the absence of any organization deserving the name of party that is the ground of complaint. A number of isolated and conflicting groups, each devoted to the aims of a clique or a district, and hardly any two combining for a time save for the destruction of a common foe—that is not an edifying or a hopeful spectacle. If party is bad, particularism is worse. If we survey the other constitutionally governed States of Europe, we find the same lack of adhesion in the supporters or opponents of governments to a great extent prevailing. But in France we have the most glaring example of the results of party disruption. Twenty-five ministerial crises in less than as many years—that is the practical consequence, with the waste of energy and money, the constant apprehension of change, the necessary appeals to petty factions and the lack of any broad, stable or well sustained policy. Such is the picture drawn by a recent French writer of the condition to which the substitution of groups for parties has brought parliamentary administration in France. We are thereby warned against the Charybdis that may await us if we steer too far from the Scylla, which, to some of our pilots, is the only danger to be avoided. Perhaps it would be well to bear in mind that in Canada "responsible government" has been a comparatively short time in operation in conjunction with the federal régime, a combination which differentiates our constitution from both that of the Mother Country and that of our neighbours. It is too soon, surely, to despair. With patience, with conscientious and earnest effort to make the most of our advantages, may we not hope by degrees to attain as high a perfection as a system so generally excellent and so adaptable to various circumstances is capable of reaching?

### THE PALMER.

O solemn clime to which my spirit looks,  
No more will I the path to thee defer,—  
Worn here with search—a too sad wanderer,—  
The dance-tune spent, surpassed the sacred books,  
And spurned that city's walls where I did plan  
A thousand lives, unwitting I was pent :  
As though my thousand lives could be content  
With any vista in the bounds of man !  
Eternal clime, our exile is from thee !  
Flood o'er thy portals like the tender Morn !—  
Receive ! receive ! and let us new be born :  
We are thy substance—spirit of thy degree—  
Mist of thy bliss—fire, love, infinity !  
And only by some mischance from thee torn.

ISIS.

### BLISS CARMAN.

Mr. Douglas Sladen writes as follows of the late and new literary editors of the *Independent*: The following paragraph from the *Toronto Empire* will interest the numerous Americans resident in Japan:—"It is understood in St. John, N.B., that Bliss Carman has been appointed editor of the *New York Independent* in succession to Mr. Bowen. Mr. Carman is a Fredericton man who, though still young, has acquired some reputation in the literary world. The *Century Magazine* has published many poems from his pen. He is a first cousin of Professor C. G. D. Roberts, the poet. The editorship of the *Independent* is one of the finest prizes open to literary journalists." The paragraph must be in a degree incorrect, because Dr. Bowen—poor John Eliot Bowen was a Columbia University doctor, though a Yale A.M.—was not editor of the *Independent* but literary editor. Indeed his father, Henry C. Bowen, proprietor of the journal, retains the editorship-in-chief himself and has several associates. But that he has succeeded Dr. Bowen as literary editor is highly likely, because Bliss Carman is a man of exceptional gifts. None of the younger Canadian poets impressed me more highly, and he has made quite a mark in the literary world with his "Death in April"—an elegy on Matthew Arnold, which in spite of its great length, nearly 300 lines, was published in the columns of the *Atlantic Monthly*. His poetry is very pregnant,—full of suggestiveness and subtle depths. It has quite a Coleridge quality—the weird picturesque—"The Rape of the Red Swan" especially, and he is very happy and musical in his dimeters. His fault lies in valuing the intelligence of the average reader too highly. Except for the scholar he is sometimes not sufficiently explicit. It is fortunate that the *Independent* has secured such a good substitute for Dr. Bowen. Its enormous circulation, about half a million weekly, its history, its position in the Republican party, combine to give it an unique position among American weeklies, and Dr. Bowen was not an easy man to replace. A literary man of rare promise himself, as witness his translations of Carmen Sylva's poems in their own metres, and his own original poems in the *Century* and *Harper's*, he is an admirable judge of the literary work of others, and a most punctual and conscientious editor. He was a faithful and warm-hearted friend, and there are many much more prominent men that American literature could have spared much better than John Eliot Bowen. His successor, though a Canadian by birth and earlier education, is a Harvard graduate. Bliss Carman was born at Fredericton, N.B., and like Roberts, the Canadian Laureate, is a lineal descendant of Bliss, one of the leaders of the Loyalists, who founded St. John, N.B.—the Fathers of Canada. He is one of the best birch bark canoeists in America.—*Japan Gazette*, March 28.

### HIMALAYAN BEARS.

In localities where oak forests abound, says Gen. Macintyre, perhaps the pleasantest if not the best time for shooting these bears is in the month of December, when they are fed on acorns, which are then ripe. They generally commence feeding about sunset, when they climb up the oak trees and gorge themselves with acorns all night, often not betaking themselves to their lairs—which are generally either caves or thickets near their feeding ground—until some time after sunrise. Their whereabouts is easily discovered from the broken branches showing distinctly against the dark foliage of the trees, the back of the leaf of the Himalayan oak being white. At the commencement of the acorn season their attention is so much engaged with their feast that usually they are easily approached. But on suddenly finding themselves "treed," their astonishment is ludicrous to behold. A bear, he adds, when up a tree, even if only slightly wounded, never attempts to clamber down. It invariably flops straight on to the ground from any height whatsoever. I once saw a bear I had shot at roll over and over like a ball down an almost perpendicular declivity for several hundred feet, and seemingly without much inconvenience from its tumble, as it was nowhere to be found at the bottom.

An odd peculiarity of bears is that when two or more of them are found together, and one of them happens to get wounded, the wounded one will sometimes manifest its resentment by savagely attacking one of its companions. A good story in this connection is told of another sportsman. He had stalked a large she bear feeding in some open ground, with a half grown cub at its side. From the bear's position he could not get a shot at a vital place, and so, instead of waiting as he ought to have done, he fired and hit the animal behind. He might just as well have hit her with a lady's riding whip. The animal on being struck turned round to see what was the matter, and perceiving nothing but her cub feeding quietly by her side came to the conclusion apparently that the cub had bitten her. Consequently, she at once rushed at the cub to punish it for its presumption, and the two rolled over and over and disappeared in the jungle. The sportsman was too much amused at the incident to get another shot. Another remarkable peculiarity of bears noted by Gen. Macintyre is that when a bear attacks a man it almost invariably goes for the face, whereas a tiger or leopard usually seizes a limb first. Hence it is that in the Himalayas native villagers are not unfrequently to be seen with their faces fearfully disfigured by bear's claws. This they are liable to when protecting their crops from destruction by the bears.—*Chambers's Journal*.