

PARTIES BREAKING UP?

Goldwin Smith, writing in his department in the Weekly Sun, draws the attention of his readers to what he takes for signs of the breaking up of the party system, both in England and in Canada. In England, he points out, the session opens with one section of the government party arrayed against the other section, while the other party is a total wreck.

In Canada, the Opposition has not only been numerically reduced, but it is left without a creed. "Conservative" the party organ calls itself, he says, "but what does it undertake to conserve? Its leader has accepted a salary at the hands of the government, and does nothing but preach general homilies or exhort to organization. The ship is without ballast, the machine has lost its governor. The consequence is the domination of an uncontrolled faction, with the results which last session displayed. Nor is it possible to guard against the recurrence of such a state of things. You cannot manufacture a succession of great questions to supply the parties with rational and moral bonds of cohesion. In time this will be seen, and minds will be turned to the creation of some other basis of government, though the process may be difficult, seeing how the machines are fortified, not only by inveterate custom and its Shibboleths, but by the spoils."

On this the Stratford Beacon comments: There is no doubt that the weakness of the party system is here exposed. So long as there are vital issues on which the electors may naturally divide, the party system works well enough, but such issues are not always available, nor is it possible always to manufacture them. There must come times when the parties are held together either by the bonds of faction or the influences of tradition. At such times the weakness of the system becomes apparent.

Under all circumstances the hope of the country lies in a free and intelligent electorate not hopelessly bound to any party. The party system will remain until something better adapted to the needs of the country has been found to take its place, and while it does remain it is the duty of the people to make the best use possible of it.

The table of contents for the March Fortnightly (Leonard Scott Publication Co., New York) shows the usual variety of interesting articles. The opening one is on "Mr. Balfour and the Unionist Party," then follow "Toryism and Tariffs," by W. B. Duffield; "Boston" by Henry James; "On the Scientific Attitude to Marvels," by Sir Oliver Lodge; "The Advent of Socialism," by E. Hume; "William Pitt," by J. A. R. Marriott; "Physical Deterioration," by The Countess of Warwick; "Mr. Bernard Shaw's Conterment: Presentment of Women," by Constance A. Barnicoat; and "The Sclero-Bulgarian Convention and its Results," by Alfred Stead. We give only a partial list of the contents, but sufficient to show the variety of subjects, and also the kind of writers this magazine offers its readers. Specially interesting is Katharine Tynan's discussion of the curious discovery that the late William Sharp and Fiona Macdonald are one and the same writer.

Although the people of Norway are the most democratic of any monarchical country in Europe, and will not even permit the existence of a nobility within their borders, yet they insist on their new king, Haakon, being solemnly crowned. The ceremony, which they choose to regard as equivalent to the sealing of their agreement with the king, will take place in June in the ancient cathedral of Trondheim, which, dating partly from the eleventh century, is the finest ecclesiastical building in Norway, and the place where Norwegian kings always have been crowned.

THE ROTHSCHILD ARTIZAN BUILDINGS.

The above is the title of an exceedingly interesting article in the March Studio (London, England). The dwellings referred to were designed by Augustin Rey and are here described by H. Frantz. The working people of Paris are very badly housed. "They continue living in court-yards that are virtually wells, the air of which remains constantly unchanged, or in narrow, ill-ventilated streets. From this, as is easily conceived, comes an augmented death-rate and an impoverishment of national physique."

"We must therefore gladly welcome every attempt to put an end to this pernicious state of things, and to provide the people with rational, healthy, and comfortable dwellings. It was this great idea which inspired Messrs. Rothschild when they resolved to devote a sum of ten million francs to the erection of workmen's dwellings. A competition was set on foot in furtherance of this object, and the first prize awarded to a Parisian architect, M. Augustin Rey, whose plans were thereupon adopted."

"We have here before us an important contribution to modern architecture, a real revolution which must profoundly influence feeling in general as regards the comfort, and hygiene of the block dwelling. 'Everyone will appreciate,' said one important journal of architecture at the time of the competition, 'the architectural knowledge, the balance of judgment, the entirely logical reasoning, and also the subtle ingenuity which have guided him in the elaboration of his work.'"

"The first questions to engage the attention of the architect in his general disposition of the property were those of lighting and ventilation—fundamental considerations affecting the general healthiness of the dwelling. M. Rey examined the effect of the winds chiefly prevalent upon the angular site with which the competitors had to deal, and arranged his buildings so as to allow every part to be ventilated by any wind, while being protected from those of the west and north. Following the currents of draught created by the wind either directly or by circulation, Mr. Rey arrived at the conclusion that the inner court-yard, where the air is never renewed, is the most favorable ground for the development of tuberculosis and other bacterial diseases. The first step, therefore, was radically to abolish these inner court-yards, and to replace them by real squares with wide openings on to the public highways, so that the air should circulate freely everywhere amongst the trees—for the creation of these open spaces is inseparably associated with the planting of trees, those great purifiers of the air, and we find plantations of wide spreading trees indicated throughout the plan, both in the court-yards and on the street frontages."

"The writer goes on to describe how light is obtained, light being considered even more important than air. 'Light makes its way everywhere, into the lower as well as the upper storeys, through large openings unobscured by any projection from above, and floods the whole interior, both floors and ceilings, with its beneficent rays.'"

After showing how the staircase is in every case open to the outer air the writer goes on to speak of the kitchen arrangements. "The kitchen of each flat has been thought out in every little detail, with especial care to prevent the escape of any odour into the dining rooms, these latter being cut off by a little private passage, which can be constantly ventilated by air from without, and is even arranged so as to be permanently open if the tenant so desire. . . . There is a shoot, available at any hour, for the removal of dust and refuse. Each shoot discharges into small boxes in the basement, which are conveyed every morning to two little stations at the end of the parallel corridors. A ce-

ment receptacle for soiled linen is also close at hand; and it has been found possible to instal a well-lighted and very economical douche-bath for adults, and a little cement bath in which the mistress of the establishment can bath her children. The arrangement has been made as economical as possible by the proximity of the water supply and waste-pipes. The stove to be heated by coal, the gas stove and the sink, all command a good light. One point which deserves special attention is the arrangement of the ladder. It is well known how little the ordinary ladder fulfils its end. Everything placed therein is rapidly contaminated by dust from without, so that working people cannot keep provisions from one day to the next. M. Rey places his ladder next to a shaft fed with fresh air filtered by a very inexpensive process. Provisions are thus kept under the most favorable conditions for their preservation."

It would be of interest to reproduce, practically, the whole of this article; but from the arrangements described for the kitchen may be judged what the rest of the rooms are like. The article is fully illustrated by plans which materially assist one in understanding the architect's ideas. We quote a concluding paragraph, in which the cost is discussed:

"People will say that all these amenities cost money and add considerably to the workmen's rent. Nothing of the sort. M. Rey's work proves satisfactorily that when carried out in even its smallest details by means of the most modern processes, and according to ideals as simple as those we have been expounding, the financial result surpasses all expectation. In fact M. Rey manages to fix the rent of a living-room with an average capacity of 36 cubic metres (equal to nearly 1,300 cubic feet) at 100f. (£4) a year, which is at the rate of 1 fr. 90c. (1s. 7d.) a week. The kitchen accommodation, including presses, cupboards, entrance hall, cellars, drying closets, with the use of all the common services, count for nothing in the rent. Thus a flat, containing three living-rooms, costing 100 fr. per room, is rented at 300 fr. (£12) a year. As to the net income from such buildings, if the ground rent is not too high, they may yield over 3 1/2 per cent."

In our Canadian cities, where greater attention is being paid to the planning and arranging of houses for all classes of the people, those contemplating building may be able to get a number of highly useful hints from this article in the March Studio, which may be purchased from any bookseller or newsdealer.

We have received "The International Journal of Ethics" for April (1415 Locust street, Philadelphia; price 55 cents). The following are some of the articles: Race Question and Prejudices, by J. Royce of Harvard University. Gustav Soeller provides us with "A Method of Dealing With the Labor Problem." A lady by the name of Mrs. M. S. Sturge Henderson of Kingham, Eng., contributes "Some Thoughts Underlying Meredith's Poems"; while the Rev. J. G. James of Yoevil, Eng., discusses "The Ethical Significance of Religious Revivals." There are also a number of well written book reviews.

The Biblot (printed for T. B. Mosher and published by him at 4 Exchange street, Portland, Maine) for April contains the following poems on Springtime: The Lassius and On the Cliffs, By the well known poet, Algernon Charles Swinburne.

The World Today for April maintains its usual high rate of excellence, both as to its illustrations and to its reading matter.

Pilgrim—a handsome monthly magazine—will be sent one year to any address for \$1.50. The Pilgrim is an illustrated high class publication, and once known will be a welcome visitor to your home. It is published at \$1.00 per year, or 10 cents per copy.