

sengers a chance at least for safety in case of accident. The other is devices for regulating automatically the relation of the artificial bird to its medium under all circumstances of change. As yet we hear of no experiments looking toward life preservers, but the idea of automatic regulation of movement has been getting attention. Herbert Quick faced the latter problem in his "Virginia of the Air Lanes," and solved it, for fiction, with an ingenious adaptation of the gyroscope. Whether the gyroscope would work as well in the upper air as in a novel, or for aviation as for one-rail traction purposes, has yet to be demonstrated. But a French invention has just been reported which indicates successful experimentation in the direction of the automatic idea. The report appeared in the Paris dispatches of the 22d, crediting the invention to a Mr. Doure. Its reported effect is to maintain equilibrium automatically, so far at least as to prevent capsizing in the course of descent.

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The Future of Civilization.

France, says a Paris dispatch, is "at the height of a great wave" of vandalism incited by anarchistic-minded citizens. If this were true, the civilization we know would be presently submerged. When any such wave does come to its height in any large nation, representing our civilization, our civilization will be at its end. For better or for worse another will have begun. We do not believe that such conditions exist anywhere, not even in France. All the indications point to development of higher types of social life from the type that is, rather than to an overwhelming revolution and a fresh start. Yet this is probably the alternative.

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THE MAN WITHOUT A PARTY.

Party rule is supposed to be the only method through which people of a would-be republic can get laws made and public things done. And it cannot be denied that if the two leading parties really embodied the two eternally opposing principles, order and freedom, and could have sway alternately, the resultant would be about as much government as we could tolerate and as much freedom as we could have and "keep school."

But unhappily the human mind, trained for ages in quickness to seize its prey, moves as yet but slowly on the unaccustomed track of mass consciousness in collective action for the common good. For brief periods, when some supreme collective effort, some French or American Revolu-

tion, starts a whole people on the terrible road of justice long deferred, thought is fluid and progress rapid; but the high spirit of fiery patriotism that conquers, soon cools, runs slow, congeals, till the walls of custom, prejudice and self-interest bound it on all sides and it is a party tending by every condition to perpetuate itself indefinitely.

Parties are first radical, then conservative, and then rotten. The party that bursts into power through dire necessity and does the great deed will never do another; its vital Spirit is already taking flight. In vain the administrative officeholders try to conceal her departure by platitudes of honesty—with their hands behind their backs; it will leak out as a more radical party is seen already gathering strength. The party that wrote the "Declaration of Independence" had to go down defeated by the party that liberated slaves. The doom of this long entrenched party is likewise coming, on schedule time.

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Unhappily the defects in our representative laws prevent the growth of a third party into a second, slowly by littles. It must take its place as second at a bound. If it take time to build clean new walls of its own it is lost. Thus it may be driven to occupy the outside husk of a party from which the life principle has already fled. Hearst's epithet for Bryan, "hermit crab," was not inapt.

After desperate cleansing and the final purity inseparable from repeated defeat, no great party had been so clean for forty years as the Bryan Democracy at the last Presidential election. But how punctilious were the leaders on the opposing side suddenly grown! Themselves reeking with corruption they could not abide a speck of dust on their antagonists' banner! It was as though, wallowing in plunder themselves, they pointed out with great concern that such and such a constituent of Bryan was known to be on speaking terms with a city boss! Conscious of their sorry plight, multitudes among the ranks longed for reforms—for practically all, indeed, in their opponents' platform—but they would not cross the wall! They knew that their party had long ago left even conservatism behind and were plunging headlong on the new path of destruction; that Congress was but a calamity; that their easy-going fat-faced man was not only insolently selected but corruptly nominated; that he had no logical passports to their favor. And yet when the Interests emitted the miasmie idea that a really good candidate must be well tainted before you can safely

swallow him, these fellows obediently passed on the words "safe and sane." They sniffed at him, indeed, and looked wistfully at the candidate of unquestioned high purpose and ability, but they could not cross the wall.

Now in the first year and a half, Taft had "done for" himself in the minds of the country at large. He had filled the cabinet with corporation lawyers, mostly highwaymen aiding other robbers in Congress and out of it. Worst of all they were being found out! In the thick of the stampede from the Republican camp when not only Taft but the Senate and the House were loudly repudiated, one life-preserver was left.

Oh! if only Roosevelt were back from his elephant killing! Surely the man who gave us Taft could tell us what to do with him. They toss high the ready caps in air, cheering platitudes that on their merits would not win a newspaper job. Crowds, crowds, everywhere he goes!

And then this grand-stand hero of evasive "policies," after swinging around the West among adoring Insurgents to show his masters what an adversary he might make, turns tail and goes back to the Standpat fold, indorses Taft and all his accomplices!

So here were the Insurgents, high and dry, without a party to their names! Their bridges were burned behind them. The hope of Roosevelt's leadership in a purified party had vanished. They suspected he had killed the Republican elephant. They grimly faced the situation; they were men without a party.

Meanwhile, among Democrats, the curious "get-togethers" in various States showed unmistakable signs that some hungry hordes in this camp were not pounding the piles of principle more solidly under their platform; they were only bent on making Democratic hay while the sun shone through the Republican breach. Instead of hammering down their own copper-riveted principles to win Progressives, they began bidding for the Standpat contingency.

Surely the slimy Beast that Judge Lindsey has fought so long is doing its best to occupy both parties. While its head is in one party, its tail is in the other. It snubbed LaFollette, the great Republican, in the last national Republican convention at Chicago; it has baffled Bryan in Nebraska; it controls both parties in New York, Illinois and other States. Last fall's elections doubtless found thousands of Democrats as well as Republicans literally without a party.

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But right here, in what bids fair to be the

darkest place in our political history, is the dawning of a new era in popular government. The dyed-in-the-wool Republican and the tanned-in-the-hide Democrat are giving way under the constant battering of plain facts in the periodicals and the daily press. "Party whips" are in despair. How can they much longer hope to hold in check voters with their ear to the receiver?

The Denver election, two years ago, defeated the efforts of both old parties combined, and gained control of a municipal utility. The Milwaukee Socialist sweep was won by aid of Republican and Democratic votes in the interest of good city government. The Maine and Massachusetts Democratic victories were won by good Republican voters. The La Follette landslide could only have been achieved by the aid of Democratic and probably socialistic voters. Unmistakably, party walls are breaking down.

This medieval custom of governing by clans or parties, each following blindly the banners of the "White Rose" or the "Red," has long survived its companion-piece, the walled city which centuries ago yielded to the impact of powder. The invisible walls of political parties, though tougher than brick or stone, are at last beginning to give way. People are at last putting two and two together—the two of yesterday and the two of today. They are tired of voting for the man who will vote for the man who will vote for the man who, if his party wins, will vote *somehow* on the measures that vitally concern them. They are clamoring for Direct Nominations and Direct Legislation. They would write their desired measures on their ballots instead of in the platform of a party that may be defeated or whose representatives when in power may betray them. In ten States of the Union the Initiative, Referendum and Recall are either in the Constitutions or in amendments to be submitted, or have been indorsed at the primaries by both parties.

The whole fabric of party walls rests on the glacial slowness of public opinion. Moving an inch in fifty or a hundred years there was time for party politics to be transmitted from father to son. But electricity—rapid thought transmitter—has for some time been melting this sullen flow till the once dense minds of men are growing so fluid that one may now revise one's opinions every few years without fear of ridicule; or vote outside of one's party without shame. Even changing one's party is not an indictable offense.

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A hypochondriac was urged by a friend to come

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out for a walk in the sunshine. "I know what you want to do," the invalid replied, "you want to take me out in the middle of that field and then leave me." Timid mankind, fearful of being left out in a wild field of choice and responsibility, but yesterday sighed and sought for a king, emperor, president or party to lead them by the hand to political and economic safety. But they are learning that the only true safety is in themselves; that trusting to a party is like hitching to a derelict. They would fain pass from party rule to People's Rule.

Already in Oregon, which elects Democratic reform Senators by Republican votes, the platforms of candidates and the arguments on measures to be voted upon are mailed to each elector and brought to his very door. This new method not only breaks down party walls but threatens to keep them down. Every election must be practically a new alignment. Even the House of Representatives has adopted a bill to nominate Senators by popular vote, and many States are preparing to enact some of Oregon's other reforms. This indicates that one day every election will be as every election should be, up to date, and show practically a new party alignment.

Will not the shells of the old parties fly then? Will it be so very bad then to be a man without a party? The truth is, parties, usually, are like breakfast eggs: the only good party is the fresh one, and the fresher the better.

LONA INGHAM ROBINSON.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

BRYAN, NEBRASKA AND THE INTERESTS.

St. Louis City, Ia., July 27.

It was my privilege to attend the Democratic State convention of Nebraska, held at Fremont on July 25. The duly advertised repudiation of Mr. Bryan's leadership and the indorsement of Judson Harmon for President failed to materialize, although the plutocratic Eastern press had confidently predicted that both were bound to happen.

An effort is being made now to make much of the "failure" of the convention to indorse Mr. Bryan. But Mr. Bryan asked for no indorsement at the hands of the convention. He did not even attend it. He is a candidate for no office, and an indorsement is not necessary to him.

Nobody doubts seriously that he will head the Nebraska delegation to the next national convention, and that he will have a delegation in sympathy with him. An effort will be made by the Dahlman faction of Omaha either to indorse Harmon or to prevent Mr. Bryan's election as a delegate, but either effort is doomed to failure.

In view of the present effort of his enemies to prove that Mr. Bryan has lost the leadership of his party in his home State, a plain recital of a few facts in connection with the situation in Nebraska may be of interest.

In 1909 the Democratic legislature failed, through the machinations of the Omaha brewers, to submit a Direct Legislation amendment, to which the party was pledged in its platform. After the regular session had adjourned, Mr. Bryan secured pledges from enough members to submit the amendment if an extra session were called. Ashton C. Shallenberger, then Governor, refused to call the extra session. It was subserviency to the brewers that actuated Governor Shallenberger (for he had signed an 8 o'clock closing law over their violent protest), as it was a temperamental failure to rise to the occasion.

Failing to have the amendment submitted, Mr. Bryan declared that it was necessary to drive the brewers out of politics, not so much on their own account, although they were bad enough, but because for years they had been part of a railroad and corporation combination which had sought to throttle all progressive legislation. He allied himself, therefore, with the temperance people, who were advocating county option. The Republican State convention indorsed county option, and the Democratic convention did not.

Governor Shallenberger, with the support of most of Mr. Bryan's friends, was a candidate for renomination. Opposed to him, as the candidate of all the vicious elements in the State, was Mayor Dahlman of Omaha. Dahlman was nominated, but it will not be seriously claimed that he won fairly. The Democratic primaries in Omaha were invaded by Republicans interested in the defeat of all liquor legislation, and this element gave to Mr. Dahlman considerably more than the narrow margin of a few hundred votes by which he was nominated over Shallenberger.

Mr. Bryan refused to support Dahlman at the polls. He was absolved from giving him support for two reasons. The first one was the unfair and fraudulent manner in which he secured his nomination. The second was that Dahlman defiantly proclaimed from every stump in the State that he would not only veto any new liquor legislation, but that he would not enforce the laws already on the statute books.

Dahlman's character was fully demonstrated in a speech which he made on a public street in Omaha the night of the election. Early returns mistakenly indicated his election, and he was highly jubilant. He invited a ribald crowd to attend a free beer barbecue which he declared he would give on the State House grounds at Lincoln on the day of his inauguration. Lincoln was then "dry," and the laws of Nebraska forbade the sale or giving away of liquor within its corporate limits; but Mr. Dahlman averred that if the people of Lincoln didn't like the idea of his proposed beer orgy, "they knew what they could do."

This sterling patriot, who is now being hailed as the redeemer of the Nebraska Democracy from the incendiary dictatorship of Mr. Bryan, did not stop there. He informed the applauding multitude, recruited from Omaha's notorious Third ward, that "if any member of the W. C. T. U. tries to tell me how to run the office of Governor of Nebraska, I'll kick her out of my office."