

"How," asked Mr. Gladstone, "is the time of the House of Commons to be economised?" The answer is simple: Let the House of Commons mind its own business—thoroughly and exclusively.—*Donisthorpe* "Individualism."

The individual may be both honest and prudent in himself, but as a member of the Assembly he is liable to be carried away by the passions of the crowd, and to consent to resolutions which, a short time before, he would have unhesitatingly rejected. The orator can only influence by playing upon the popular passions, and when once the storm has been raised no feeling of shame can check its violence. . . . The populace gives the rein to its evil passions; it envies and oppresses the nobler and better minority, whose existence is a standing reproach and protest against its own rule. The worst qualities of the *demos* come to the surface—pride, arbitrary caprice, the love of frequent and useless change, brutality: the less it rules itself, the more oppressive is its rule of others. Parties are formed whose mutual hatred is stronger than patriotism, and whose mutual struggles distract and ruin their common country. The State is endangered by incessant changes, and brought to ruin by the want of stability.—*Bluntschli*, "*Theory of the State*."

There is urgent need to form public opinion independent of Parliament and of all electoral machinery whatever. The fierce rivalry of parties, and the way in which party absorbs all political thought amongst us, is a growing danger. It may be argued that the healthy organization of party is an essential condition of parliamentary government. As practised with us, the organization of party tends to crush and stifle the free play of public opinion. Members of Parliament feel it a duty not to embarrass their party leaders by discussing any question which their leaders do not sanction, or even criticising anything they do or omit to do. Party men and politicians outside Parliament follow the same cue, and encourage the members in silent discipline. The journalists and publicists usually have their party side, and make it a point of honour to stir no awkward topic, but with their whole force to support the party side. Thus, as the whole political energy of our day runs into parliamentary channels, and is organized with military discipline to secure party victories (and the same thing is even more conspicuous in the United States), the free formation of public opinion is almost as difficult as under the despotism of a Czar or a Napoleon.—*Frederick Harrison*, "*Westminster Review*," 1886.

If, on the contrary, popular election hands over the people's government in their name to an agency of unprincipled chicanery and self-interested intrigue, the result must be popular corruption and governmental meanness. The people will be only debased by the flattery of solicitation, and national interests will be sacrificed to individual or party jobs.—*Lord Norton*, "*Nineteenth Century*," 1885.

It necessarily limits the field from which they are drawn to those who have promised absolute subservience to the party. Independence is thus excluded, but independence is certainly one of the qualities which the nation ought most anxiously to cherish. It cannot but be of evil consequence that the nation should ostracise its most original and honest thinkers in order to secure a voting-machine that can be trusted to give out whatever verdict its managers require.—*J. B. Kinnear*, "*Principles of Civil Government*."

It seems to me that party government has come to be a vehicle for self-seekers' ambition. It is a snare and an antiquated delusion. Political programmes of party are snares also. True men should owe allegiance to measures, not to party. . . . Government by brag and shout cannot be tolerated for ever. If that hateful fiend—"party"—could be slain, political warfare might be carried on under far less debasing conditions. In every political struggle there would be a nearer approach to true unity on either side, instead of a false and forced cohesion of chance particles. A party man discovers his advocacy is compelled to measures distasteful or even hateful to him. If he break with his party, and join the opposing camp, the same lot will be his fate. To be *minus* party is, under the present baneful system, to be *minus* political influence. Party allegiance results in a want of force and heartiness in political life. A man compelled against his will to vote and to think in the same way as his leader is a man robbed of the power to use his faculties. What is the result of this blighting influence but a political deadlock? Let us revert, as Sir Bartle Frere once said, to earlier, simpler, and purer methods. We have had enough of government by party. . . . Our present system of government is eating into the very marrow of our national life; it is making all men think, with the cynic, that the very words, "patriotism," "honour," "truth," "earnestness," and the like should be relegated to a glossary of obsolete phrases. Lifelong allegiance and subordination to a party or to a chief mean to the thinking man lifelong intellectual enslavement, for the thoughts of men are diverse. It is impossible to conceive of a man, not being a drone or a half-witted nonentity, who can find himself in accord with the views of any party or chief whatsoever upon all points. There must be some different planks in his platform. Political principle under the party system comes to mean political dishonesty. Smothered insubordination and half-hearted political action are the inevitable products of this accursed legacy of party government, seeing that no man can give heart-whole help to measures he secretly despises.—*The Circle*.

The word "politics" has gradually acquired a double signification, but nothing is more distinct than these two meanings. In the more vulgar sense politics is a struggle for personal power by party contests; they breathe defiance to opponents; the passions are stimulated by platform oratory and by party organisation; a short-lived social war rages through the land; wild theories are broached; false promises are made; and it would seem as if the most solemn and important act which the nation can be called upon to perform was to be accomplished by noise, excitement, and intemperate language. But the word "politics" has a higher import. It is not so much the conflict