

principle the great and admitted evils which permeate our political system. I am not blind to those faults, nor am I blind to the fact that the excess of party zeal tends largely to produce them. I see—we have all seen—incapacity and even crime condoned; I have seen fraud justified; I have seen a loose code of morality embraced; I have seen legislative iniquities—such, for example, as the Gerrymander Act of last session—(loud applause) approved and applauded; and I have seen all these things done largely in the name and for the interest of party. (Applause.) But I say that these are not inseparable from the principle of party government. (Applause.) I say that such things as these are, some of which might have been paralleled in the history of English representative institutions, would be impossible in the England of to-day. Notwithstanding the severity of party strife, notwithstanding the acrimony and bitterness which unhappily prevail, and have for the last few years, prevailed in England, the things to which I have referred are impossible there. If you want proof of it take the Redistribution Act now or shortly to be placed before the English Parliament and the Redistribution Act—so-called—passed in the Canadian Parliament of 1882. Look at the principle of action prevailing in one case and in the other. Look at the fact that in one case the power of

A PARTISAN MAJORITY

was deliberately used in order, if possible, to crush the minority out of existence, while in the other the principles of redistribution were agreed upon by the mutual assent of the two great parties (loud applause), and you will see that in a country in which party government prevails, justice and equity, and honor, and liberal notions may yet also prevail. So with reference to the general code of political morality. Contrast the English code with that observed in Canada. Contrast even the code of the United States with that observed here—far inferior as that is to the English. Look at the case of Colfax; look at even later and larger cases which I might name, and see for yourselves once again that party spirit does not necessarily annihilate the sense of honor or justice. And, after all said, party government I believe to be inevitable, for the reason that you will have an organization at any rate on the side of the Government. The Government of the day, to whatever views it may adhere, is the nucleus of an organization. It holds place, power, patronage, and has the machinery for consolidating its adherents, and it does not seem to me possible that there should be any effective check upon the course of government unless there be an organized party in opposition. Nor am I able to advise any better means for the ascertainment of a true, and sound, and reasonable

view of things than that discussion which goes on when measures are treated from opposite points of view by a Government and an Opposition. But I say that the thing has its evils and grave evils, that it is liable to abuse and great abuse, and that the young who are entering upon the discussion of political affairs, and are taking their part, should recognize that, and, in the spirit which you, Sir, intimated a few moments ago, engage in the discussion of political questions, from an independent standpoint, and with an earnest desire to reach the true, the sound, the just conclusion. For my own part, I have been some seventeen or eighteen years in public life. I have sat for some three or four and twenty sessions in one House or the other, and I have never given a vote or pronounced an opinion which I would ask my constituents or my fellow-countrymen to approve of or condone because it was a party vote or opinion. [Loud cheers.] It is upon the merits of those votes and opinions that I have attempted, and ever will attempt, to vindicate their soundness. I rejoice, I need hardly say, in the establishment of this club. I hope that its membership, large though it be, as you have just mentioned, will be more than doubled within a short space. [Loud applause.] It ought to be, in a city of this magnitude, more than doubled. I hope you will proceed to justify by your activity your existence. You have to

SET AN EXAMPLE.

There are many other places in which Young Men's Liberal Clubs may well be established. There are places in the country in which it is better to adhere to the old system of old and young going together, in which it is difficult to get sufficient members conveniently close to one another to establish different organizations. No such difficulty exists here. There are many other places in which no such difficulty exists, and where numbers, and convenience, proximity are such as to enable different organizations to be formed, and in these places I favor the formation of numerous organizations. You have work before you, studying the public questions of the day, preparing yourselves by practice for the discussion of those questions upon the platform; you have the practical work of carrying your opinions and convictions to a successful issue by taking that part which knowledge and trained activity can take in the organization of your party—in seeing to the registration of the votes, seeing to getting out the votes, seeing to the formation of a sound public opinion amongst the masses of your fellow-citizens and electors. There is in this city, Conservative though it be, a great Liberal force. (Loud applause.) There is a Liberal force sufficiently strong to do great things

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