

Allegiance to party is necessary, then; but we should not allow it to carry us too far. When we ally ourselves to any political organization, there ought to be good, substantial reasons for our doing so. So long as such reasons continue to exist, we are required to stand by the Shibboleth of that party; but not longer. We have a legal principle which says that "when the reason for the law ceases, the law itself ceases." Political societies, being human in their institution, are all liable to err. When a party falls into error, and persists in its heresy, we should not hesitate to leave its ranks. I am too well aware that the traditions, associations, and name of a party, hold a mighty sway over the minds of many people. This is just what makes the trouble I complain of, in the party system. When a party adopts a mistaken policy, or commits the less excusable mistake of adopting no policy, its adherents will at once feel that there is something wrong; some inaudible sound, like the cosmic harmony of the ancients, will gently admonish them not to swallow that wrong; but yet there is the party, the dear old party, how can they desert it? A strange feeling of unrest comes over them—like a pie-produced nightmare—but they cannot, or rather will not, tell what is the matter with them.

The *name* of a party is no passport to public confidence. We know our parties by their fruits, not by their names. For my own part, I could never see the application or actual significance of the various nomenclatures by which our contending political forces in this country are contradistinguished the one from the other. The terms Whig and Tory, if they meant anything in their origin, were designed to indicate certain qualities and characteristics, fortunately, hard to find in the parties of this country. Those terms were invented in another country, and in turbulent times; and if they were appropriate to the then and there state of things, they are evidently inapplicable in this colony to-day. There is neither rhyme nor reason in my identifying myself with one or other of the present Canadian parties, just because my great-great-grandfather was a Whig or loyal Tory, when it was a popular pastime to chop a King or a Queen's head off.