

always been a notorious evil, and the partisan way in which they are passed upon is still a gross blemish upon the constitutional system of the United States, and one which is likely never to be removed until the principle of judicial determination of electoral contests has been adopted in this country as it has been in England. The truth of the matter appears to be that the public paid no attention to the merits of the bill. It was viewed simply as a continuation of the radical reconstruction policy, the practical results of which had become intolerable. However great the actual evils of the situation might be, public opinion held that it would be wiser to leave them to be dealt with by state authority than by such incompetent statesmanship as had been common in Washington. Moreover, the man in the street resented the indifference of politicians to all issues save those derived from the Civil War.

Viscount Bryce in his *American Commonwealth*, the most complete and penetrating examination of American political conditions written during this period, gives this account of the party situation:

The great parties are the Republicans and the Democrats. What are their principles, their distinctive tenets, their tendencies? Which of them is for tar:?