

“Bagehot’s gift of double-mindedness appears strikingly in his short work *Physics and Politics*, which William James called a ‘golden little book.’ It undertakes to apply Darwin to politics, but Bagehot is no Social Darwinist. He begins indeed by showing ‘Natural Selection’ in the early stages of the march of civilization. . . . But then more and more other qualities, initiatives, and ideas – liberty, free discussion, written law, habits of calm reflection, of tolerance and generosity – conduce to survival, because they make for an ever higher degree of cohesion. These virtues are the strength of the national state. . . .”
Jacques Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence*, 2000

Physics and Politics

Walter Bagehot

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