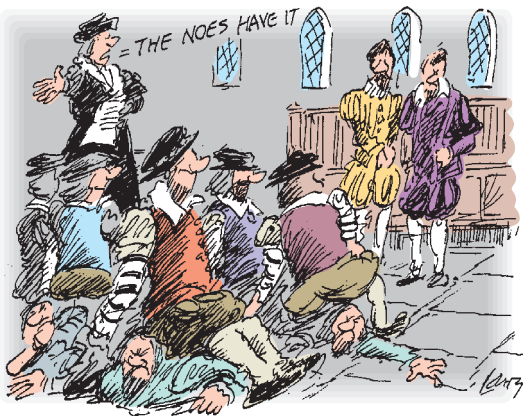


Divisions in the House



Voting is society's way of making an organised and formal decision. Early tribes and groups proceeded on the basis that the noisiest side won and until the 16th century even the mother of parliaments, Westminster, took the vote by members shouting yes or no

From 1532, if the noise level was in doubt, the House of Commons had to divide with the '**noes**' sitting still and the '**ayes**' standing in a group. In 1836 they began filing through two separate corridors to enable a record of names to be kept. This time-consuming method is still in use, taking an average of ten minutes per vote, or **division** as it is called