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THE JURIDICAL SOCIETY:

ON THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF
DIFFERENT METHODS OF ELECTING REPRESENTATIVES. By H. R. DROOP, ESQ., BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

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personally concerned I am
willing to wait; but I don't
if I am just or con-
sistent with regard to justice
in withholding the testi-
mony of him which is
found in the statement
of facts within my own
knowledge.

He has been treated
by Grant & Fitz name
as a Englishman would
say. There is nothing
like it in our history!

Wool weavers of the Chronicles
of the middle ages

Co-operation - yes but not
excluding competition, not by
government.

Men are not silkworms. They
have no competition, for they
follow their brat instinct.

ON THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF
DIFFERENT METHODS OF ELECTING REPRESENTATIVES.—BY H. R. DROOP, ESQ., OF LINCOLN'S
INN, LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

[*Read March 10, 1869.*]

In a modern state the recognised mode of ascertaining the opinions of the people is to convene a representative assembly. This representative assembly has superseded the general assembly of all the citizens which we read of in classical and mediæval republics, and which still survives in the landsgemeinde of the most primitive Swiss cantons and in the parish vestry. Instead of the various questions of legislation and government being brought directly before the whole body of citizens to discuss and vote upon, a certain number of persons, fixed upon by some process of election, are deputed to represent the people, and the decisions of this representative assembly are accepted as equivalent to decisions of the whole body of electors.

In the present paper I propose to discuss some of the different methods of election by which representative assemblies may be formed, and the political and social effects produced by these different methods of election. Considering that our national representative assembly—the House of Commons—is the mainspring of our constitution, and accordingly legislation and the executive government alike depend upon the composition of that assembly; considering also that a representative assembly is at present the favourite mode of government adopted or recommended for every

institution, from a national church to a charitable association, from a municipality to a joint stock company, and that the different modes of forming representative assemblies and their probable operation has a material bearing upon several prominent questions of the day, such for instance, as the future constitution of the Irish Church, the formation of the metropolis into a single municipality, and the substitution of representative county boards for the assemblies of county magistrates; considering that in all these various ways the different modes of forming representative assemblies are interwoven with the present and future legislation of the United Kingdom, I venture to think that my present subject has strong claims upon a society which has for its principal object "to encourage and assist enquiry concerning the sources, forms, and results of the laws of the United Kingdom." To this I may add that the subject is in no sense a party question, and, indeed, has hardly emerged from the domain of theory into the region of practical politics, and that, from the light thrown upon it by comparing the working of representative institutions in different countries, it has an international character, specially adapted to a Juridical Society.

The usual mode of forming a representative assembly is as follows:—

(1.) A certain number of constituencies are formed, either by dividing the whole country into districts, or by selecting certain privileged places, and one, two, or more representatives are assigned to each of these constituencies.

(2.) Each elector in a constituency is allowed to vote for as many candidates as his constituency returns representatives, and thus the majority of the electors are enabled to elect all the representatives.

This process, as exemplified in the formation of the English House of Commons, is so familiar to all of us that I need not

stop to explain it further. I desire to direct the attention of the Society principally, if not exclusively, to the second part of this process, the mode in which the representatives of each constituency are usually elected. As this mode of election enables the majority of the constituency to return all the representatives, it may be properly termed "majority voting."

With this method of majority voting I propose to compare several new methods of election, all possessing the common property—that the election of any one of the several representatives of a constituency only depends upon the votes of a small fraction of the electors.

The simplest of these new methods is single voting, according to which an elector has only one vote, which he must give absolutely to a single candidate.

Whenever a constituency has several representatives, this method of single voting enables a fraction of the electors, less than the majority, to combine together and return a representative of their own selection. For instance, in a constituency of 4000 electors returning three members, any fraction exceeding one-fourth, say 1001 electors, can return a representative, as the remaining 2999 electors cannot possibly furnish the 3003 votes required to place three other candidates on a level with the candidate who has obtained these 1001 votes. Similarly with a constituency returning five members, any fraction exceeding one-sixth of the electors can return a member; and with a seven-membered constituency any fraction exceeding one-eighth can return one representative.

Among the other methods which share with single voting this property of making the election of each representative only dependent upon a small fraction of the constituency, those best known in England are cumulative voting and successive voting.

Cumulative voting gives each elector as many votes as

there are representatives to be elected, but allows him either to give all his votes to one candidate or to divide them among several candidates. In its practical operation this method will be found almost identical with single voting, and its chief recommendation is that, instead of having, like single voting, the false appearance of taking away part of an elector's voting power, its very form shows that it frees the voter from existing restrictions, and thus increases his power.

Successive voting is one of several methods devised to obviate a practical difficulty which would be experienced in working either single voting or cumulative voting. It would often happen that a party commanding a sufficient number of voters to return several representatives, would fail to obtain as many as it was entitled to, through too many of its votes being accumulated upon its most popular candidates. This difficulty can no doubt be in a great measure overcome by organisation, as the Liberals showed at the recent City election, where, although each elector was only allowed to vote for three candidates, they divided the Liberal vote between their four candidates so equally that the difference between the highest and lowest was less than ten per cent. However, this cannot be effected without an expensive organization and strict party discipline; and the difficulty of conducting an election with single or cumulative voting would increase with the size of the constituency and the number of the representatives to be elected.

As a remedy for this, it has been proposed by Mr. Hare and others, that each elector should be allowed to name on his voting paper several candidates, each of whom in succession should have the benefit of the vote, in case it should not be required for any of the candidates preceding him on the voting paper. This method, which I have called "successive voting," and which has also received the various designations of "contingent voting," "alternative voting," and "the electoral

quota," has been employed in Denmark since 1855, for constituencies with from three to seven representatives, and was in 1866 adopted into the new Constitution of that kingdom.*

Among other plans for remedying the accumulation of votes upon the more popular candidates of a party, I may mention that a French nobleman, Baron de Layre, in a pamphlet entitled "Les Minorités et le Suffrage Universel" (Dentu, Paris), has proposed, that after an election with single voting those candidates only should be declared elected who have obtained more than a certain proportion of the total number of votes polled, and that any seats which might thus be left vacant should be filled up out of the remaining candidates, at a second election held a week later, at which all the electors should be allowed to vote over again. This method, which is suggested by the present French practice, of having a second election whenever none of the candidates at the first election have obtained an absolute majority, seems not unlikely to work pretty well in practice in a constituency with a limited number of representatives.

The New York Personal Representative Society, to meet the same difficulty, has proposed that a popular candidate receiving under single voting more votes than are required to secure a member's election, should have a voting power in the representative assembly, in proportion to the number of votes polled for him. Thus, if 1000 votes be sufficient to secure a member's being elected, a member who has polled 2000 votes is to have two votes in the Assembly, and one who has polled

* M. Ernest Naville in the *Geneva Reformiste* for Jan. 7, 1869, gives a history of the Danish system, derived, I believe, from M. Andræ, the author of the system. It was originally introduced in 1855 by a royal decree. In 1863 it was fully discussed in the Chambers, and an attempt to alter it was defeated by a large majority, and in 1866 the method was adopted without much opposition into the Constitution. This seems to prove that in the one country where successive voting has been practically tried, it has not been found impracticable or open to any serious objection.

3000 votes three votes, and so on. This plan of giving a representative additional voting power, in proportion to the votes polled for him, is also advocated by Mr. J. M. Ludlow, in combination with successive or, as he calls it, "alternative" voting, in the *Contemporary Review* for September, 1868.

The Association Réformiste of Geneva has proposed a method known as the method of free lists, which has the recommendation of combining great simplicity with considerable practical efficiency, especially when a large number of representatives, *e.g.*, fifteen or thirty, are to be elected by the same constituency. This method may be best described by saying that it is single voting for lists of candidates, instead of for individual candidates. Several lists of candidates are proposed, any thirty electors being allowed to propose a separate list, and then each elector votes for one of these lists, and in proportion to the number of votes polled for any list, one or more of the candidates at the top of that list are returned as representatives. Thus if 1000 votes be sufficient to secure the election of the first candidate on a list, any list which obtains 2000 votes, will have its first two candidates returned, and so on. According to the Geneva proposal, each list of candidates to be voted for, must contain as many names as there are representatives to be elected, but I do not see why the proposers of lists should not be left at liberty to propose either long or short lists. The proposers of each list would take care that it contained as many candidates as the votes to be polled for it could possibly return, for if their list was too short, they would lose part of their share of the representation.

All the methods I have described,* have the common property that a candidate to secure his election, only requires

* In the present paper I have only described the leading features of these different methods, so as to give a general idea of each, and to show that it belongs to the class. I have intentionally abstained from discussing the practical details of the different methods, or comparing their relative

the votes of a fraction of the constituency. In a constituency with three members one-fourth of the electors, in a five-membered constituency one-sixth, and in a seven-membered constituency one-eighth, will be sufficient to elect one representative. This fundamental difference between these methods (which I shall call "the single vote methods" after the simplest method of the class, or sometimes for brevity "single voting") and the method of majority voting, according to which a candidate must obtain more than half the votes polled, leads to almost all the differences between majority voting, and the single vote method, which I propose to bring before the Society.

It will be convenient to mention here that the limited vote introduced into three-cornered constituencies by Lord Cairns' minority clause has nothing in common with the single vote methods I have referred to, except that where parties are nearly equally divided it gives a certain share of the representation to the second strongest party, instead of allowing the majority to monopolise the whole,—thus making a first step towards that proportional representation of all parties and sections of parties, which is one of the chief results of the single vote methods. For all other purposes the limited vote belongs to the same class of methods as majority voting. If the representation of majorities in three-cornered constituencies had been carried in the form in which it was originally proposed in the House of Commons by Mr. Lowe, with cumulative voting instead of the limited vote, we should now have some experimental knowledge of the operation of one of the single vote methods, by which to check the theoretical conclusions I propose to lay before the Society.

But while thus cautioning my hearers that the limited vote

merits. I discussed some of these questions, and particularly the application of successive voting to constituencies with a limited number of representatives, in a pamphlet on "Methods of electing representatives," published for me last year by Messrs. Macmillan.

differs from majority voting only in securing a share of the representation to the minority, and does not possess the other properties I shall claim for the single vote methods, I would gratefully acknowledge the practical value of Lord Cairns' majority clause, as leading to the general recognition in England of the principle of proportional representation. After Mr. Gladstone's recent speech upon Mr. Stapleton's Representative Peers Bill, in which he spoke of the argument in favour of the Bill as irresistible, we may regard this principle as practically accepted by the leaders of all parties.

I shall assume that the constituencies to which the single vote methods will be applied have only a limited number of representatives a-piece, say from five to seven or nine. Indeed one of my secondary objects in this paper is to prove that almost all the advantages which, as Mr. Hare and Mr. Mill have shown, may be anticipated from the adoption of Mr. Hare's scheme (a scheme which practically amounts to uniting all the electors of the United Kingdom into a single constituency), may be also attained with constituencies each returning a limited number of representatives.

One result of substituting any of the single vote methods for majority voting would be greatly to diminish the effect upon elections of bribery and intimidation and other forms of corruption and undue influence.

At present a contested election is a struggle between two candidates or sets of candidates for the votes of a majority of the electors. Each candidate or set of candidates has a large number of supporters, more or less enthusiastic, who could not be easily induced to abstain from voting for their party, and whom it would be impossible, or almost impossible to induce to vote on the other side; but there is always a considerable number of electors who care little or nothing which candidate or set of candidates succeeds, and, when the

contest is at all close, the votes of these neutral or indifferent electors decide which side shall have the majority.

Many electors neither know nor care anything about any political question, while others may have matured and decided opinions upon some subjects, and yet care little or nothing about the particular questions upon which alone the rival candidates differ from each other. The different modes of influencing this margin of electors who have little, if any, political preference for either of the rival candidates or sets of candidates, forms a chief part of the business of electioneering. Many such electors vote for a particular candidate merely from a desire to please their landlord or employer, or some good customer; or because the public-house to which they habitually resort is engaged as a committee-room; or because a candidate has subscribed liberally to some local charity, or has promised to obtain some public benefit for the constituency; or because they have been flattered by a personal visit from a candidate; or because some friend is employed as agent or canvasser on behalf of that candidate. From influences such as these, which are a principal cause of the great expense of elections, but probably cannot be effectually restrained by law, the transition is easy to direct pressure for votes by landlords, masters, and customers, and to treating and bribery either under the pretence of paying for services or directly. Voters of a higher class who have little political preference for either party, may be effectually influenced, at least to the extent of preventing them from voting, by surrounding the polling booths with crowds of roughs.

With single voting, the power of these various non-political influences will be greatly diminished. As one-fourth of the electors can return one member out of three, and one-sixth can return one out of five, at least two of the members for a three-membered constituency, and at least four of those for a five-membered constituency will ordinarily be returned by the

votes of real adherents of the several members. The votes of the indifferent or neutral electors, who are amenable to non-political influences, will at the utmost decide between the rival candidates for the last seat for each constituency. This limitation of the power of non-political influences to a single seat would probably hold good, even if the number of politically neutral electors continued unaltered, but in fact, with single voting applied to constituencies returning five or more members a-piece, each elector will have at least six different candidates with six different sets of opinions to choose between; and, therefore, if he has any political opinions at all, he will be able to find at least one candidate whom he cares to vote for. This will materially diminish the number of electors amenable to non-political influences.

Another way in which single voting will check bribery, intimidation, treating, and other mal-practices, is by enabling those supporters of a candidate or party who disapprove of such practices, to make their disapproval felt by transferring their votes to another candidate holding not very different opinions. Under majority voting, an elector, however dissatisfied with the mode in which his party are conducting an election, cannot manifest his disapproval without practically aiding the election of candidates holding opinions directly opposed to his own. This, I may observe, is only part of a more general truth that, inasmuch as with single voting and five or more members to a constituency, an elector will usually have a choice between two or three candidates holding his own opinions upon the principal question of the day, such considerations as the candidate's ability and personal character, and the mode in which the election is conducted, will have much more weight with the electors than at present under majority voting.

As the adoption of single voting will diminish the power of non-political influences, it will probably also put an end to

the present practice of selecting a candidate for a constituency, not because he will make a good representative, but because he can afford to spend a large sum of money on the contest, or because he or some of his friends can influence a certain number of votes. With majority voting, if a peer or large landowner or influential man of business can influence the votes of 10 per cent., or even 5 per cent., of the electors of a constituency, his party will often find it worth while to accept his nominee as their candidate or one of their candidates, as his holding aloof may lose them enough votes to turn the election. With single voting, the influence of a landowner or of a millionaire would be reduced to the number of votes he could actually command, and the other electors would be free to vote for the candidates they preferred.

This is not the only way in which the substitution of one of the single vote methods for majority voting would improve the personal composition of the House of Commons. After the last general election the press was almost unanimous in complaining of the paucity of statesmen and independent political thinkers in the new House of Commons, and of the preference for commonplace politicians manifested by large constituencies. If we look back to former parliaments we shall find that this preference of large constituencies for mediocrity is nothing new in England, while complaints of the same evil reach us from the United States and from Switzerland.

I believe that the principal cause of this apparent preference for commonplace candidates, is the system of majority voting, which obliges the managers of each party, in choosing their candidate, to look, not for the man who would make the best member of Parliament, but for the one who will get most votes. Now, if a candidate has devoted himself to the study of politics, and possesses the faculty of thinking for himself, and the courage to say what he thinks (all qualifications essential to a statesman, or indeed to any really useful

legislator), he can hardly fail to hold, and to be known to hold, some opinions unacceptable to some portions of his party; and, unless such a candidate possesses remarkable popular gifts, or some special prestige, he stands much less chance of success than a commonplace candidate, who has formed no opinions, or at least has propounded none, except upon the topics included in the party platform. This applies equally to every election by a large constituency, whatever the class to which the electors belong. The universities and the ten-pound householders have shown the same preference for commonplace representatives as the new working class constituencies.

But while a candidate of the statesman class is less likely than a commonplace candidate to secure the votes of a majority of a constituency, he can usually inspire a considerable portion of his supporters with a confidence and enthusiasm which no one feels for the commonplace candidate. Now, with single voting applied to a constituency returning five members, a candidate's success would depend upon his attracting to himself, in preference to any other candidate, either of his own party or of the other party, the support of one-sixth of the whole number of electors. What class of candidates would be most successful under this new mode of election? Surely the independent, thoughtful politician would be much more likely to find that a sixth of the electors preferred him to any other candidate, than the commonplace candidate, whose chief advantage under majority voting is, that he has not got too many or too definite opinions.

If we could ascertain what each of the Liberal electors who voted for Captain Grosvenor and Mr. Mill at the last Westminster election would have done if he had had only one vote, we should, I believe, find that a considerable majority of them would have given that vote to Mr. Mill in preference to Captain Grosvenor; but with the present mode of election,

Captain Grosvenor, by reason of his receiving the support of a larger proportion of the electors, though that support was much more lukewarm, necessarily prevailed over Mr. Mill.

Another effect of the substitution of any of the single vote methods for majority voting would be to render the tenure of seats in the representative assembly more secure. At present a large number of members obtain their seats after close contests, and, therefore, the shifting of a few votes at the next election may throw them out. This uncertainty of tenure will increase as our representative system becomes more democratic. Senator Buckalew* and Mr. Simon Stern† both complain of it as a very serious evil in the United States. Mr. Washburne is said to have been the "father" of the House of Representatives, as being the only member who had sat continuously since 1853. With single voting, four, or three at least, of the five members for each constituency would be certain of re-election, provided they had done nothing to estrange the bulk of their former supporters.

Up to this point, in tracing out the differences between the present state of things under majority voting, and what it would be under single voting, I have abstained from touching upon the most important result of the proposed change—namely, the substitution of the proportional representation of the different sections of both the majority and the minority of a constituency for the exclusive representation of the majority. I wished, in the first instance, to bring before the Society, in a simple form, apart from the more complicated question of proportional representation, some important col-

* Buckalew's Speech of July 11, 1867, p. 9.

† Report on personal representation, p. 18.

lateral results of the proposed reform, which had not, as I thought, received the attention they deserved. I shall now proceed to discuss proportional representation itself.

It will, I believe, hardly be disputed, that the claim of a representative assembly to have the decisions of a majority of its members accepted as the decisions of the whole country, depends upon the theory that these decisions do in general correspond to what the majority of the whole body of electors in the country would decide, if they had leisure sufficiently to investigate each of the questions to be decided, and an opportunity of voting upon it.

I may observe here that, in discussing this question theoretically, it is convenient to assume that the country to be represented is divided into electoral districts, each with a number of representatives proportional to the number of electors. Such a division into equal or proportional electoral districts practically exists in almost every country with a representative government except the United Kingdom, and our ancient constitution is being constantly modified in that direction. But it does not follow from this that the substitution of single voting for majority voting would necessarily involve replacing our present county and borough constituencies by equal or proportional electoral districts.

Now, does a representative assembly elected by majority voting fulfil the condition that the decisions of the majority of the assembly will ordinarily correspond with those of the majority of the whole body of electors? Even if a representative assembly were elected solely for the purpose of expressing the opinions of the electors upon a single question, majority voting would be a radically bad mode of election, as it can easily be shown that under that method it is theoretically possible for a minority of little more than one-fourth of the whole body of electors to return a majority of the repre-

sentatives.* This, moreover, is not merely theory, for the election of President Lincoln in 1860, which led to the secession of the Southern States, was the work of a minority of only two-fifths of the voters of the United States, majority voting having given to 1,860,000 voters only, out of 4,680,000, 180 representatives in the Electoral College out of 303.

But usually a representative assembly, instead of its functions being limited, like those of the American Electoral College, to expressing the opinions of the electors upon a single question, has to investigate, and discuss, and legislate upon a great variety of different questions, and we therefore want an assembly which shall decide each of these different questions in accordance with the opinions of the majority of the whole body of electors. Now, majority voting is so far from attempting to give us such a representative assembly, that it does not give the electors any opportunity of expressing their opinions upon more than a single question at the same election.

Each elector has practically only a choice between two candidates or sets of candidates. As success depends upon obtaining a majority of the aggregate votes of all the electors, an election is usually reduced to a contest between the two most popular candidates or sets of candidates. Even if other candidates go to the poll, the electors usually find out that their votes will be thrown away, unless given in favour of one or other of the parties between whom the election really lies.

In choosing between the two candidates or sets of candidates to whom his choice is ordinarily limited, an elector is

* Suppose a country to be divided into 199 constituencies, each containing 201 electors. Then 10,100 electors, 101 in each of 100 constituencies, could return 100 of the 199 members, *i.e.*, a majority of the assembly, even if the remaining 100 electors in each of these 100 constituencies, and the 201 electors in each of the other 99 constituencies, $10,000 + 19,899 = 29,899$, only 110 less than three-fourths of the electors, were unanimous the other way.

theoretically supposed to decide according to the opinions of the several candidates upon the leading questions of the day. If an elector attempts to do this directly, by comparing his own opinions with those of the several candidates, he will often find that none of the candidates satisfactorily represent his opinions taken as a whole. If he agrees with one candidate upon the question which he considers of the first importance, he differs from him and agrees with his opponent upon some other question also of great importance; and, therefore, all he can do with his vote is to give it to the candidate who represents his own opinion upon the question which he regards as for the time of the greatest importance, disregarding his differences from this same candidate upon other subjects.

Comparatively few electors, it is true, really employ this direct mode of choosing a representative for their opinions. Most electors belong to the one or the other of the two great political parties into which countries with a representative government are ordinarily divided, or to some local modification of one of these parties, and accordingly they usually vote for the candidates of their party without caring much to analyse their opinions. But this does not affect the correctness of my allegation that, with majority voting, an elector has only an opportunity of expressing his opinions upon a single question. For, although a party platform may embrace opinions on a variety of subjects, an elector who attaches himself to the party, and thus practically adopts all the opinions included in the platform, is usually induced to do so (so far as he is influenced by his political opinions, and not by his feelings or his circumstances) by finding that he agrees with the party upon one or two questions which for the time appear of surpassing importance; and, for the sake of these one or two opinions, he swallows consciously or unconsciously any other party opinions which he does not agree with or is indifferent about. But, whatever the processes may be by

which different electors determine how they will vote, the fact remains that majority voting really only gives an elector an opportunity of expressing his opinion upon one single question among all those which the representative assembly may have to decide.

On the other hand, any of the single vote methods would enable an elector in a five-membered constituency to choose any one of six or more candidates holding different sets of opinions, and therefore ordinarily he would be able to find a representative whose opinions agreed with his own upon several independent questions. To simplify my argument I assume that the electors, in choosing between the candidates, will only attend to their political opinions. No doubt, as at present, many electors will attach as much or more importance to the characters, abilities, and social position of the different candidates, and to their connection with particular trades and classes, than to their political opinions, but the same difference between majority voting and single voting will exist as regards this class of electors, each of whom will be able to find a representative to vote for, possessing the two or three qualifications to which he attaches most importance, instead of being limited to a choice between only two candidates.

If the number of representatives allotted to each constituency were increased, there would be a corresponding increase in the number of different opinions or other qualifications an elector could take into account in choosing his representative; and, provided the electors continued to know as much of the different candidates, and of the differences between them, this increase in the number of representatives for each constituency would improve the representative character of the assembly. But most electors have only a limited number of political ideas, and, therefore, their power of apprehending the differences between different candidates is also

limited. Also, an increase in the number of representatives for each constituency would involve a corresponding increase in the sizes of the constituencies, and this would prevent the electors from seeing as much of the candidates, as they would do with smaller constituencies. For these reasons, after considering with all due deference the opinions to the contrary of Mr. Hare, Mr. Mill, and others, I have come to the conclusion that in England moderate-sized constituencies, each returning, as a rule, five representatives,* with perhaps a few larger constituencies in the metropolis and in other thickly-populated districts, would work better than more extensive constituencies with a larger number of representatives a-piece.

Although it cannot be proved directly that a representative assembly chosen by five-membered constituencies would truly represent the electors upon more than two or three leading questions, yet practically such an assembly would be found to represent the electors very fairly upon a variety of other questions. Even at present the opinion of the majority of the House of Commons does to a certain extent correspond to the opinion of the country upon a variety of questions, which few of the electors take into account in giving their votes. Exaggerated notions prevail as to the extent to which the opinions prevailing in the House of Commons on particular questions correspond to the state of opinion in the country, but unquestionably such a correspondence does exist. It is

* The single vote methods cannot well be applied to constituencies returning less than three members a-piece. Even with three-membered constituencies, single voting would in my opinion be a great improvement upon majority voting, but the beneficial results of the change could not fully develop themselves, except in constituencies returning at least five members a-piece. It has been objected that five-membered constituencies would be so large as to be unwieldy, but there are at present fourteen constituencies in England, besides others in Scotland and Ireland, which would be entitled to five or more members, if representatives were distributed according to population, and these include several which were closely contested last autumn. Besides, with successive voting or the free lists method, it would no longer be so important to thoroughly canvass the whole constituency.

not easy to trace out in detail the causes which produce this correspondence between the opinions of the electors and those of their representatives, but for the purposes of the present paper, it will be sufficient to say, that the fact that a member, after explaining his opinions to a certain number of electors, has persuaded them to vote for him, guarantees a certain harmony between their minds and his, so as to make it probable that, as a rule, the conclusions at which members arrive on the questions brought before them, will be acceptable to their respective constituents.

Under majority voting the causes which tend to produce this correspondence between the opinions of the electors and those of their representatives are greatly interfered with by the intolerance of exceptional opinions, which, as I have pointed out, is the principal cause of the commonplace character of most of our Members of Parliament, and also by the strict division into two parties, which, as I shall show presently, is another result of majority voting. With single voting these interfering causes would be removed. As a candidate would only require the votes of one-sixth of the constituency to secure his election, his holding some exceptional opinion would not prevent his succeeding, provided he was otherwise eligible. Also, instead of the attention of the whole country being concentrated upon a single question or upon the choice between two party platforms, each elector would be able to take into account two or three distinct questions, and it may reasonably be expected that the questions which would be regarded as important by different constituencies, and by different electors in the same constituency, would vary very much.

It is true that, with majority voting, we find the same question monopolising public attention and deciding the elections in almost every constituency throughout the United Kingdom, but this is because majority voting compels each

elector to fix his attention upon some one question. It would be impossible for any two political questions at the same time, not to speak of any three or more such questions, to acquire anything like an exclusive possession of the public mind; and if, through the adoption of any of the single-vote methods, each elector were set at liberty to choose freely between six or more different candidates, and to take into account two, three or more distinct questions, different electors would direct their attention to a variety of different questions, and thus upon each of these questions the different opinions prevailing among the electors would be represented proportionally in the House of Commons.

It is impossible to form more than a rough estimate of the operation of the causes I have indicated, but it is my belief that single voting in constituencies with five or seven representatives a-piece would produce an assembly representing proportionally the various opinions of the electors, upon all the different questions which interest them, with as close an approach to completeness as would be attainable with constituencies each returning a larger number of representatives, or even with the whole country voting as one constituency according to Mr. Hare's scheme.

Before proceeding further, it seems worth while to point out that when I say that majority voting only gives an elector an opportunity of expressing his opinion upon one single question among all those which the representative assembly may have to decide, I am understating the argument against majority voting; for when a question involves several distinct issues, or admits of several distinct solutions, majority voting only enables the electors to decide one of these issues or to choose between two of these solutions.

For instance, the recently elected Spanish Cortes will have to decide (1) whether the future government is to be monarchical or republican, and (2) who is to be the new king; but

the Spanish electors have been obliged to confine their attention exclusively to the first of these questions, and in consequence the decision of the Cortes upon the second equally important question, the choice of their new king, will really be the decision of the individual members of the Cortes and not that of the electors.

Again, the Irish Church question was last year capable of three solutions; (1) the maintenance of the present Protestant establishment as a privileged State Church; (2) religious equality to be produced by disestablishment; (3) religious equality to be produced by establishing and endowing the Roman Catholic and Presbyterian Churches side by side with the present Episcopal Church.

If the House of Commons had been elected by any of the single vote methods, the electors would have had an opportunity of choosing freely between the advocates of these three policies, and the House, containing in various proportions representatives of all these three policies, would have had to decide whether any one of them, in its entirety, or some compromise between them should be adopted. Majority voting, however, restricted the electors to a choice between two alternatives, and in consequence the advocates of the endowment of all three denominations were forced to range themselves on the side of the one or the other of the two remaining policies.

Majority voting, therefore, does not enable the electors to elect an assembly, which shall, without fail, carry out their wishes, even as regards one single question.

The importance of having a representative assembly, which will correctly represent the opinions and wishes of the electors upon all the principal questions of the day, instead of only upon the one question which at the time of the election happens to be uppermost in the minds of the electors, cannot be fully understood, unless we realise that the relative impor-

tance of different political questions, is always liable to be suddenly altered by unforeseen events, or through the machinations of party managers.

At the general election of 1852, the question uppermost in the minds of the electors was free trade, and few cared to inquire about a candidate's opinions on foreign policy; yet the principal tasks of the Parliament elected in 1852, ultimately proved to be the carrying on of the Crimean War, and superintending the negotiations for bringing that war to a conclusion. Certain large constituencies which had elected zealous and able advocates of free trade as their representatives, without considering whether they approved of their extremely pacific foreign policy, had the mortification of finding that on the great practical question of the day, they were altogether misrepresented. Again, at the general election in 1859, the principal question before the electors was Parliamentary Reform, but though the Parliament then elected sat till 1865, it never seriously attempted to settle that question. In 1865 again, the most influential cry at the general election was confidence in Lord Palmerston; but before the new Parliament met, Lord Palmerston was dead, and a new spirit and new opinions were dominant among his surviving colleagues. Still more recently, the Irish Church question obtained in a few days a prominence which few had anticipated for it, and in consequence has had almost exclusive possession of the public attention during the last general election.

Most electors, indeed, as I have already explained, give their votes according to the party to which they have permanently attached themselves, rather than according to their individual opinions upon any particular question; but there are always a great many exceptions to this rule, far more indeed in many constituencies than would be sufficient to turn the scale between the two rival parties, and, therefore, the success of one party or the other in a general election

often depends in a great measure upon the nature of the question which for the time is uppermost in the minds of the electors. Accordingly, to attract attention to certain questions, or to divert it from others, form an important part of the functions of the leaders and managers of parties, and their manœuvres for this purpose are a great hindrance to practical legislation.

In fact, of the various questions which ought to receive the attention of the Legislature, only a few admit of being made the subject of popular agitation. The others are too intricate to be readily understood by the general body of electors, or only involve points of practical expediency. The consequence is, that the greater part of the time of the Legislature is taken up with a few questions which, from their turning upon some simple principle within the comprehension of every elector, are capable of being popularly agitated, while many other most important subjects are entirely neglected or discussed for two or three days in a session. This is often attributed to the ambition and self-seeking of our party leaders, but the Church Rates and Maynooth Grant agitations prove that the leaders are comparatively powerless in the matter. These questions, important only as matters of principle, have been discussed both in the Legislature and in the constituencies to an extent altogether disproportionate to the small amounts of money actually involved, in spite of every discouragement from the chiefs of our parliamentary parties. Therefore, when we find, as we do, that the practical issues which, from time to time, divide our two great parties, are usually such as can be reduced to questions of abstract principle, we must attribute this mainly to the great influence which such questions of principle exercise over constituencies under majority voting.

This concentration of the attention of parliament and of the electors upon questions capable of being agitated, to the exclusion of other equally important questions, appears to me

a very serious evil, pregnant with grave danger to our present political and social system. We are living in a highly artificial state, surrounded by a variety of complicated institutions of which some are the results of recent legislation, while others have grown up gradually in the course of centuries and adapted themselves to the wants of the people. All these institutions, the new no less than the old, require occasional reforms to adopt them to the changing circumstances of the time, and in many cases comparatively slight reforms would be sufficient, if effected in time. But such reforms as these involve questions of detail which would not be appreciated by the constituencies, and, therefore, most of our legislators pass by such questions altogether, and fasten instead upon some institution, the existence of which involves or is supposed to involve some general principle, and make that the subject of constant party fights. In the meantime other institutions of equal or greater importance are allowed to grow more and more unsuited to present circumstances, until, for each institution in its turn, the time comes for discovering that its continued existence is opposed to some principle likely to be understood and accepted by the electors; and then the defects, which have been allowed to remain unremedied and to develop themselves, are used to prove that the institution is, and always has been, altogether an abuse.

In making this general complaint, I am bound to acknowledge that a considerable number of useful reforms have been introduced into old institutions during the last few years; but any one who has watched the making of any such reforms will admit that they are due rather to the perseverance of individual politicians than to the House of Commons at large, and that they have been greatly hindered by the indifference of the great body of members, and by the immense amount of time devoted to party debates. I may add that, as a rule, almost all important recent reforms in our institutions,

excluding a few great party measures, have been founded on the recommendations of Royal Commissions, constituted on the principle of representing each in its due proportion all the principal interests and opinions entitled to a hearing on the subject, the very principle of proportional representation, which I contend should be applied to the House of Commons itself.

The next point I have to discuss, is the effect which the substitution of single voting for majority voting will have upon government by party.

In the course of the preceding observations, I have repeatedly assumed that in an election by single voting in a constituency returning (say) five members, the present division into two parties will be superseded by a division into several smaller sections of parties. There is, I am aware, a widespread belief that our English division into two parties, one clinging to the institutions of the past, the other looking forward to the future, the one insisting mainly on order, the other on progress, is not due to artificial causes, but to a natural difference in mental constitution between one man and another. Taking English history alone, appearances are a good deal in favour of this theory, as our present parties can trace back not only their names, but to some extent their present principles, to Charles II.'s reign; but as soon as we look beyond our own shores, we find phenomena altogether irreconcilable with this theory. In the United States, for instance, among a people of English descent, we find a fully developed division into two parties, Republicans and Democrats, the differences between whose respective tenets do not in any way resemble the differences between our English Liberals and Conservatives. The alleged natural division into Liberals and Conservatives is unknown in France, where Legitimists, Republicans, and Independent Imperialists combine to oppose the nominees of the government. At Geneva,

again, the dominant party, the Independents, consists of men holding every variety of political opinion combined together to stop the misgovernment of the Radical leader, M. James Fazy. Also, if we take any persons whose political opinions happen to be known to us in detail, whether these persons be public men or private friends, provided only they do to a certain extent think for themselves, we shall almost invariably find on examination that the opinions of these persons are not either purely Liberal or purely Conservative, but a mixture of Liberalism upon some points with Conservatism upon others.

The true state of the case is very clearly explained by M. Ernest Naville,* the President of the Geneva Association Réformiste, in the following extract, translated from his address entitled "*La Patrie et les Parties*," p. 17 :—" When " the majority alone chooses the representatives of all, the " electors inevitably group themselves into two camps, be- " cause, to arrive at representation, it is necessary to obtain " the majority. But the division of a people into two parties " only is not true, except at certain times when the nation " is passing through a violent convulsion. Under ordi- " nary circumstances, a nation, great or small, comprises " three, four, five sets of electors, with " different political views. It comprises, moreover, a number " of citizens who have no definite political line, but wish for " honest, disinterested representatives, sufficiently intelligent " to understand the questions which come before them, " sufficiently conscientious to decide them with a single view " to realising the good of the country." "

When the connection between election by majority and the division into two parties is once pointed out, the mode in which the electors in each constituency have been forced to

* See also a lucid article by M. Naville in the *Bibliothèque Universelle* for March, 1869, on the theory of representative elections, pp. 331, 335.

divide themselves into two parties, by the necessity of obtaining a majority of the whole body of electors to ensure success, appears so simple and obvious, that it is difficult to understand how this explanation of the division into two parties should have been completely overlooked until lately.

But it may be apprehended that if the division into two parties should cease to exist, what is commonly known as party government, *i.e.*, government by a cabinet approved by the majority of the House of Commons, would become impracticable. But so far as I can see, there is no ground for this apprehension. In fact, although our present system of cabinet government was originally introduced by William III. (Macaulay's History of England, vol. iii., p. 434), as the only mode of getting on with a House of Commons divided into two parties violently opposed to each other; yet, during a great part of the period for which cabinet government has existed, namely, from the accession of George I. to the Reform Bill of 1832, the division into two parties did not exist to a greater degree than it would have done under single voting.

The old Tory party of Queen Anne's reign was deprived of all power and prospect of power on the accession of the House of Hanover, and was practically broken up as a parliamentary party, and the increase in corruption and undue influence in the smaller boroughs, and the great differences in the composition of the different constituencies, prevented any fresh division into two permanent parties, pervading the whole nation and the whole legislature, from manifesting itself.

Instead of cabinet government being only possible with a House of Commons strictly divided into two parties, there are, it seems to me, good grounds for believing that cabinet government would work better with an assembly in which the different political opinions prevailing in the country were represented proportionally. With a House of Commons divided into two, and only two parties, there is only one pos-

sible cabinet which will fulfil the condition, essential to a strong government, of commanding a majority in the House—viz., the recognised leaders of the majority party. If these ministers mismanage public affairs or fall out among themselves, we must accept as a ministry either the leaders of the minority party or one section of the leaders of the majority party, and in either case we shall have a weak government. The formation of a coalition between the minority party and a section of the majority party, has been of late years found impracticable, except so far as it may consist in a few leading politicians transferring themselves from one side to the other; and I believe this will always be the case with a representative assembly elected by majority voting by large constituencies. With a truly representative House of Commons, on the other hand, the different sections of parties would shade off into each other, and there would always be several possible ways of forming a cabinet which would command a majority in the House.

But while government by a cabinet approved by the majority of the House of Commons would work better with a House elected by one of the single vote methods, it would no longer be the only possible mode of reconciling monarchical and representative government.

If the French legislative assembly were elected by one of the single vote methods, so as to represent proportionally the different opinions prevailing among the electors, the Emperor would be able to use such an assembly as a consultative assembly to advise him as to what measures he should adopt, while retaining the initiative in his own hands.

So long as the legislative assembly is elected by majority voting the Emperor's attempts to use it as a consultative assembly must always be in a great measure failures, as the electors can only vote on one question, and the elections therefore usually turn mainly upon the issue, whether the

candidates approve of or oppose the paternal government the Emperor has established—a very simple and obvious issue, but one which the assembly will never be asked to advise the Emperor upon. Accordingly, the representatives who are elected to maintain the paternal government represent nothing but loyalty and obedience. They may have opinions of their own upon other subjects, but it is not known for certain how far these are also the opinions of their constituents, and, therefore, as regards these opinions they are not properly representatives. On the other hand, the local majorities which elect Republicans, Orleanists, and Legitimists for certain districts, consist to a considerable extent of Imperialists who are only anxious for some additional liberty and better government; but, as majority voting does not allow these moderate Imperialists to be represented separately, they contribute to produce an impression of more extensive dissatisfaction with imperialism than really exists.

With single voting the Republicans, Orleanists, and Legitimists would only have their fair share of the representation, and the assembly would contain a large majority—nay, if the majorities obtained in favour of the popular votes ratifying the *coup d'état* and the establishment of the empire, afford any criterion of the present state of opinion in France, a very large majority—in favour of maintaining the empire; but this large majority would also represent definite views held by the electors upon the various questions of the day, and would therefore be able to indicate to the Emperor and to the country what the prevailing wishes and opinions of the electors really were.

In fact, whether as a consultative assembly or a governing assembly or otherwise, a representative assembly in which all parties and sections of parties and all diversities of opinions are represented proportionally, will be much easier to deal with, than an assembly in which the particular differences of

opinion upon which the division into two parties is founded are represented to an exaggerated degree, while subordinate divisions of parties and the various opinions existing upon other questions are only represented by the chance opinions of individual members, and not by members authorised to speak upon these points in the name of their constituents; just as an individual who has definite opinions on a variety of subjects, and a due sense of the relative importance of these different subjects, is much more easy to get on with, than one whose mind is altogether possessed with exaggerated opinions upon one or two subjects, and who has very indefinite views upon other points.

In countries like England, where the representative assembly is practically the supreme governing body, we escape many of the prominent evils which the narrow-mindedness and party spirit generated by majority voting produce in countries where the representative assembly is either merely a consultative body, or has only a concurrent share in the government—evils which were very conspicuously developed during the recent contest between the President and Congress of the United States. But I have said enough both as to the practicability of cabinet government with a representative assembly elected by single voting, and as to the capabilities of such an assembly to serve as a consultative assembly to a paternal government.

There are still two or three other points connected with the division into two parties produced by majority voting to which I have not yet adverted.

(1.) As every representative is elected to represent one of these two parties, the nation, as represented in the assembly, appears to consist only of these two parties, each bent on carrying out its own programme. But, in fact, a large proportion of the electors who vote for the candidates of the one party or the other really care much more about the country

being honestly and wisely governed than about the particular points at issue between the two parties ; and if this moderate non-partisan section of the electors had their separate representatives in the assembly, they would be able to mediate between the opposing parties, and to prevent the one party from pushing their advantage too far, and the other from prolonging a factious opposition. With majority voting they can only intervene at general elections, and even then cannot punish one party for excessive partisanship, without giving a lease of uncontrolled power to their rivals.

The want of separate representatives, both for the moderate men who stand between the two parties, and for the minority party in each constituency, is specially felt when the particular questions upon which the two national parties are at issue happen to be questions as to which the local interests of one set of constituencies are opposed to the local interests of another set of constituencies—such questions, for instance, as protection in England, and slavery in the United States. In such cases the representative assembly will contain an excessive number of ardent partisans of each of the opposite opinions. In each constituency the majority will ordinarily choose only strong supporters of their local interests ; while, not only the minority, who, from their opinions being opposed to their local interests and sympathies, are well fitted for mediators between their fellow electors and their own party, but even the more moderate section of the majority, are left altogether unrepresented. With proportional representation of all the different sections of each constituency, the difficulties and dangers which are now to be apprehended from questions like protection and slavery, upon which one set of constituencies are opposed to the rest, will no longer have any existence.

In connection with the question, how far majority voting aggravated the recent contest about slavery in the United

States? I shall venture to quote a passage from Mr. Simon Stern's "Report to the New York Personal Representation Society," p. 19, which, however, it will be seen, lays the chief stress upon another property of the single vote methods—viz., that by securing for the holders of each opinion a representation proportional to their numbers for the time being, it enables every one to see the gradual progress made by public opinion upon different questions. Mr. Stern says:—

"Let us suppose for a moment that the system of personal representation had prevailed over the whole United States when the anti-slavery agitation first commenced. The violent upheaving resulting from the defeat of the Democratic party, and elevation to power of the Republican, would probably never have taken place. The steadily and constantly increasing number and power of anti-slavery representatives would have shown to the Southern people the inevitable tendency of popular opinion, and they probably would have assented peaceably to conform themselves to the changing tide. Sudden changes of policy are as dangerous to the body politic as sudden transitions of condition are to the personal constitution; and our system of great parties contending with varying success for mastery, results inevitably in such sudden changes of policy from one extreme to another."

(2.) Among other evils traceable to majority voting, and the division into two parties which it produces, I must not omit to mention a practice which is so common in the United States as to have acquired the distinctive name of "gerrymandering." With majority voting, when the two parties

* Mr. Sydney George Fisher in his "Trial of the Constitution," Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1862, after examining the opinions of the different parties in the United States, pronounces, p. 344, that the war between the North and South was "caused by the politicians acting against the wishes of the people," and justly says that this "must be attributed to some defect in the electoral machinery of the government, by which it fails to represent and carry out promptly and truly the enlightened opinion of the nation."

are nearly equally balanced, a small addition to the voters of one party, or a small diminution in those of the other party, may transfer the whole representation of a constituency from one party to the other. In the United States—where the constituencies for the State legislature and the Congress are equal electoral districts, (that is) districts, each of which contained the same population at the last census—the boundaries of these districts require to be periodically adjusted, and this is of course done under the direction of the dominant party in the State for the time being. Gerrymandering consists in so adjusting the boundaries of the different districts as to give the representation of as many districts as possible to the party under whose directions the readjustment is effected. If this party, the Republican party say, finds itself in a slight minority in a particular district, the boundary is shifted so as to include some town or village in which the Republicans predominate, or to exclude some area yielding an excess of votes to the Democrats. Of course, the districts from which the required Republican votes are taken, or to which the excess of Democratic votes is transferred, is usually one in which either the one party or the other has a decided predominance, so that a few votes more or less will not affect the representation. Accordingly, the result of the readjustment is the clear gain to the dominant party of the representation of the district operated on.

As evidence of the extent to which gerrymandering has been practised I may add that Senator Buckalew of Pennsylvania, in a speech made in the United States Senate on the 11th of July, 1867, asserted that “from Maine westward to the Pacific Ocean, in the last ten years, in no state whatever had there been an honest and fair district apportionment bill passed for the election of members of Congress.” The only exception Senator Buckalew allows is “where two branches of a legislature were divided in political opinion, and one checked the other.”

In France, which also has equal electoral districts, we find similar complaints of gerrymandering. The Baron de Layre, in his pamphlet entitled "*Les Minorités et le Suffrage Universel*," complains (p. 13) of an Imperial decree of the 28th of December, 1867, which has altered the contents of 102 districts out of 292. He alleges that only 30 of these 102 alterations could be attributed to changes in the population, and insinuates that the remaining 72 alterations must have been for the purpose of influencing the elections. As an instance of the unfair division of districts, Baron de Layre mentions that the city of Lille, a stronghold of the liberal party with 26,000 electors, is divided between two districts which contain, besides these city electors, 46,000 rural electors, the result being that in each district the city liberals are outvoted by the imperialists of the rural cantons.*

In England we have not yet arrived at equal electoral districts, and therefore the framers of our Reform Bills are obliged to adhere for the most part to previously established boundaries of boroughs and counties and county divisions; but, nevertheless, the last few years have afforded repeated instances of sharp party contests upon issues which derived their chief importance from their affecting the balance of parties in particular constituencies. The contest last session on the Boundary Bill, whether the suburbs of certain large boroughs should be included in the borough constituencies or left outside to vote for the same representatives as the rural parts of the counties, was one conspicuous instance of such a contest. As subjects of similar contests I may mention (1) the question whether a freehold in a borough should confer a vote for the county according to the present law, or for the borough as proposed by Lord Derby's Government in 1859;

* Bordeaux has been gerrymandered, in the same way as Lille, to such an extent that the municipal council have resigned by way of protest (*Times*, March 29, 1869), an article fully confirming Baron de Layre's general statements.

(2) the question whether copyholders or lessees of property within a borough should be allowed to vote for the county, although the same property conferred a vote for the borough; (3) the question whether the county occupation franchise should include any lands, or only lands with buildings upon them; (4) the question whether the occupants of rooms in colleges should have borough votes or not.

If single voting were introduced with five or more members for each constituency, no practicable amount of gerrymandering could well affect more than one seat in five, even if the present division into two and only two parties continued, which, as I have endeavoured to show, would not be the case.

(3.) Another result of majority voting and the division into two parties it produces, which I must not leave unnoticed, is that where several elections are held for different purposes in the same constituency, they frequently turn upon the same division of parties. With reference to the United States, Mr. S. S. Nicholas states ("Conservative Essays," p. 466, Lappincott, Philadelphia, 1863), that "the qualifications and fitness of applicants for seats in the State Legislature, the two houses of Congress, the Gubernatorial Chairs, seats on the bench, and every other state office, down to the lowest, has been and is everywhere tested by the one universal standard of the applicants predilections for the aspirants to the presidency. City, Town, County, and Corporation offices and employments are all bestowed in the same way."*

Even in England, in many boroughs the municipal elections turn altogether upon the differences between the two Parliamentary parties, the Liberals and Conservatives. This is only a natural result of the present system of voting. Each election, whether state or federal, municipal, or parliamentary, must

* This passage is taken from some "Letters on the Presidency" originally written in 1840, but republished by Mr. Nicholas, without any qualification, in 1859 and 1863.

be a contest between two parties, and those who are interested in the different elections, find it convenient to combine together and use the same organisation. Mr. Nicholas ("Conservative Essays," p. 466), relates that they "once had in Kentucky (his own state), during an interval of Presidential contests, as fierce a party warfare as ever was waged between what at first were termed Relief and Anti-Relief, and afterwards the Old Court and New Court parties. Every man in the State was of the one or the other of those parties; and after the contest had been carried on long enough to make them as inveterate towards each other as two parties could well be, the final contest between General Jackson and Mr. Adams ensued, and they were both immediately absorbed in the great national parties that rose out of that contest, and have never since been heard of. The New Court party almost to a man, was wheeled by its leaders into the ranks of Jackson, and of course, with nearly equal unanimity, the Old Court party was wheeled by its leaders into the ranks of Adams; and there the mass of both parties have ever since remained, taking the bias of their national politics for the last twelve years [1828—1840] from the accident of their being so arranged by the personal predilections of the leaders under whom they had waged the war about state politics."

The mixing different elections together and making them all contests between the same two parties, necessarily frustrates the main object for the sake of which these different elections were instituted—viz., that the electors might at each election choose the persons who would best represent them, or best serve them, in the offices to be filled up. It is absurd to elect an alderman or a town councillor, not according to his qualifications to act as a magistrate or administrator, but on account of his opinions on the franchise or the Irish Church, or because of his preference for Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli. Moreover, the existence of a party organisation, whose busi-

ness it is to look after all elections, municipal or parliamentary, state or federal, in the particular constituency, makes it much more difficult to check bribery and treating and other malpractices. An election may be declared void on account of bribery at a municipal election a fortnight before, but it would be difficult to extend this to bribery at an election six months earlier, and yet that might be a very effectual mode of attaching electors to a party. Besides the existence of a permanent party organisation, kept up for the annual municipal election, tends to draw the management of the parliamentary elections out of the hands of the candidates and their regular agents into those of the local party managers; and this makes it more difficult to fix candidates with such corruption by themselves or their agents, as may properly be punished with the loss of their seats.

With single voting, the present connection between municipal and parliamentary, or between state and federal elections, would be altogether broken up. The parliamentary election would be a contest between six or more different candidates, independent of each other, and the municipal election would be of the same description, except that probably each ward would have rather more than five representatives. Persons who had made themselves popular by their attention to local affairs, would no doubt have considerable influence on the parliamentary election, and probably there would sometimes be a coalition between a parliamentary and a municipal candidate; but as the municipal electors would now be able to take several different things into account in determining which candidate to vote for, they would usually be influenced in their choice principally by local and personal considerations with which the parliamentary candidates would have nothing in common, and, therefore, no permanent connection could well grow up between the respective supporters of the municipal and parliamentary candidates, and whatever organisation

might be employed for securing the election of a particular candidate, parliamentary or municipal, would be formed altogether for that one candidate, and therefore it would not be so difficult to make him responsible for its proceedings.

I have now concluded my comparison of the respective results of majority voting and the single vote methods. The Society will not have forgotten that this term, the single vote methods, includes not only single voting, but cumulative voting, successive voting, the method of free lists, and every other method which will give each elector a free choice among several candidates, and enable any section of the electors, sufficiently numerous to be entitled to one of the representatives of the constituency, to combine together and elect a representative of their own choosing, independently of all the other electors. The principal points I have endeavoured to establish are—(1.) That majority voting gives to bribery and all kinds of undue influence a power which they would not have under single voting; (2.) That majority voting promotes the election of commonplace representatives without independent opinions, in preference to statesmen and political thinkers; and (3.) That majority voting produces an unnatural division of all active politicians, and, to a certain extent, of all electors, into two and only two parties, and concentrates the attention of Parliament and of the country almost exclusively upon certain questions which either are or are likely to become party questions, while single voting would restore both the combinations of politicians and the course of public opinion to their natural state of freedom.

I have also endeavoured to show incidentally that almost all the beneficial results of the single vote methods may be obtained as completely with constituencies returning, as a rule, only five members a-piece as with the whole country voting as one constituency, according to Mr. Hare's scheme.

Mr. Hare's scheme has been of great service not only to this country, but to the cause of free government throughout the world, by attracting public attention to the evils of the present system, and proving the possibility of remedying them, and probably the grandeur of the conception of uniting the whole country into a single constituency has contributed not a little to Mr. Hare's success in making converts.

Nevertheless, I am convinced that practically this grand conception of a single constituency would contribute little or nothing to securing the results aimed at; while several circumstances contribute to render it much less difficult to establish one of the single vote methods, with constituencies each returning a limited number of representatives, than to procure the adoption of Mr. Hare's scheme in its entirety. (1) It is much easier to realise how one of the single vote methods would work in a limited constituency, than to grasp and understand all the complicated details of Mr. Hare's scheme. (2) Single voting in limited constituencies might be introduced gradually and tentatively. It would not be impossible to retain the present distinction between the county and borough franchises, and the principle of representing communities, and not merely geographical districts. Moreover, (3) there would be the same local connection between the representative and his constituents as at present. But this question, whether single voting should be introduced with limited local constituencies, or with the whole country voting as one constituency, is quite subordinate to the principal subject of this paper—the comparison of the single vote methods with majority voting.

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