

—They strangely mistake us who fancy that because we demur to Junto Government, we are hostile to local institutions. On the contrary, we set a value on them beyond, perhaps, that which is set upon them by our opponents, and anticipate for them an importance in the future which, so far as we are aware, nobody but ourselves does. The great experiment in Elective Government, which has now been going on for a century on the two continents, begins to yield definite results. One of these results is the futility of Second Chambers, which, according to the mode of their appointment, have either proved cyphers or brought on collisions and deadlocks. Another is, the vanity of relying on Party as the permanent basis of government. A third is, the difficulty, amounting almost to an impossibility, of the direct exercise by the people of the power of electing their representatives in Parliament. A common man knows his neighbours, and is able to choose among them with tolerable accuracy the one best qualified to manage the business of the neighbourhood: beyond this his personal power of choice hardly extends, still less does his power of inviting the man of his choice to come forward. Elect rightly he probably might, if he were let alone; but the difficulty lies in the nomination, though curiously enough the framers of constitutions have all overlooked this vital point, confining their attention to the election. The constituent cannot nominate; nor can the candidate well nominate himself; the worthiest, at all events, are pretty sure not to do it. The upshot is that the nomination, and virtually the election, falls everywhere into the hands of some ring, caucus or convention: the people lose their power of choice altogether, and their exercise of the suffrage becomes illusory: at all events, they are confined to an option between two parties. We are inclined to believe that the only possible mode of restoring any real power of choice to the people, and excluding the fell necessity of the caucus, is the introduction of graded elections. We do not mean the election of electors, as in the case of the American Presidency, which, of course at once leads to a mandate. We mean the election of