

10,000 letters he would probably find he was making part of a constituency of 100, all whose votes would be thrown away, the constituency being too small to be reckoned. Such a liberal must write to the great Liberal Association in Parliament street; he must communicate with its able managers and they would soon use his vote for him. They would say, "Sir, you are late; Mr. Gladstone, Sir, is full. He got his 1000 last year. Most of the gentlemen you read of in the papers are full. As soon as a gentleman makes a nice little speech we get a heap of letters to say, "Make us into that gentleman's constituency." But we cannot do that. Here is our list. If you do not want to throw your vote away you must be guided by us: here are three very satisfactory gentlemen (and one is an Honorable): you may vote for either of these, and we will write your name down; but if you go voting wildly you will be thrown out altogether."

'The evident result of this organization would be the return of party men mainly. The member-makers would look, not for independence, but for subservience—and they could hardly be blamed for so doing. They are agents for the Liberal party; and, as such, they should be guided by what they take to be the interests of their principal. The mass of the Liberal party wishes measure A, measure B, measure C. The managers of the Registration—the skilled manipulators—are busy men. They would say, "Sir, here is our card; if you want to get into Parliament on our side, you must go for that card; it was drawn up by Mr. Lloyd; he used to be engaged on railways, but since they passed this new voting plan, we get him to attend to us; it is a sound card; stick to that and you will be right." Upon this (in theory) voluntary plan you would get together a set of members bound hard and fast with party bands and fetters, infinitely tighter than any member now.

'Whoever hopes anything from desultory popular action if matched against systematized popular action, should consider the way in which the American President is chosen. The plan was that the citizens at large should vote for the statesman they liked best. But no one does anything of the sort. They vote for the ticket made by 'the caucus,' and the caucus is a sort of representative meeting which sits voting

and voting till they have cut out all the known men against whom much is to be said, and agreed on some unknown man against whom there is nothing known and therefore nothing to be alleged. Caucuses, or their equivalent, would be far worse here in constituency-making than there in President-making, because on great occasions the American nation can fix on some one great man whom it knows, but the English nation could not fix on 658 great men and choose them. It does not know so many, and if it did, would go wrong in the difficulties of manipulation.

'But though a common voter could only be ranged in an effectual constituency, and a common candidate only reach a constituency, by obeying the orders of the political election contrivers on his side, certain voters and certain members would be quite independent of both. There are organizations in the country which would soon make a set of constituencies for themselves. Every chapel would be an office for vote-transferring before the plan had been known three months. The church would be much slower in learning it, and much less handy in using it; but would learn. At present the Dissenters are a most energetic and valuable component of the Liberal party; but under the voluntary plan they would not be a component,—they would be a separate, independent element. We now propose to group boroughs; but then they would combine chapels. There would be a member for the Baptist congregation of Tavistock, *cum* Totnes, *cum* &c., &c.

'The full force of this cannot be appreciated except by referring to the former proof that the mass of a Parliament ought to be men of moderate sentiments, or they will elect an immoderate Ministry and enact immoderate laws. But upon the plan suggested, the House would be made up of party politicians selected by a party committee, chained to that committee and pledged to party violence, and of characteristic and therefore of immoderate representatives, for every 'ism' in England. Instead of a deliberative assembly of moderate and judicious men, we should have a various compound of all sorts of violence.

'I may seem to be drawing a caricature, but I have not reached the worst. Bad as these members would be if left to themselves—if, in a free Parliament they were