

of Physicians and Surgeons, the Royal Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, the Royal Society, and such-like. The giving of a special suffrage to these bodies would secure the triple advantage of directly representing intelligent minorities, of favouring education indirectly, and of opening a door of entrance to the House of Commons, to gentlemen of culture and intelligence who might not be disposed, in Alexander Hamilton's phrase, to submit 'with unqualified complaisance to every sudden breeze of popular passion.' By such a scheme as this, and in many other ways, a just and reasonable Reform Bill might be passed, which would maintain the balance of the constitution, and not expose us to the shame of following, as a herd of slavish imitators, in the wake of vulgar French and American precedents. I do not make these suggestions with any crotchet preference. I should be content with any Bill that in some shape or other would acknowledge the principle of social aristocracy, and make a manly protest against the degrading doctrines of American democracy. The public is well acquainted with the sentiments of not a few intelligent persons, who have published their thoughts on this subject, with the view of doing something to prevent us steering right into the Maelstrom of democratic unreason. But whether it be the blind power of precedent, or whether it be laziness, or whether it be that those who should be our leaders are under some fatal necessity of being led, I do not see that public men in this country have ever bestowed on any of these proposals the attention which they deserve. To turn a reasonable proposal into a laugh is one of the most common artifices of the public oratory which pleases the multitude. The principle, for instance, advocated by Professor Lorimer of this city, and Mr. Macfie of Liverpool, of giving to certain persons a plurality of votes, is in the highest degree just and reasonable;¹ it is only when curiously carried out in certain details that it becomes exposed to the light missiles of those who delight in any superficial semblance of incongruity. A similar remark

¹ See *Constitutionalism of the Future*, by James Lorimer, Esq., 1867, 2d edition; and *Speech delivered at a Meeting of the Liverpool Reform League* on Dec. 19, 1866, including extracts from Archbishop Whately and John Stuart Mill, on Plurality of Votes as a needful element in any Final scheme of Parliamentary Reform. London: Longman, 1867.