

farmers, mechanics, and laborers that they constituted the people, were the bone and sinew of the country, the real possessors of the national wealth, although in their hands it is subdivided into small shares ; and he told them it was their business to make a constant effort to maintain their rights against the rich capitalists and moneyed corporations, who, by facilities of combining together, could usually make their own class interests prevail against a more numerous body, and one possessed in the aggregate of greater wealth.

It seems that they were not slow in taking this advice, for many merchants complained to me that the small farmers had too great an ascendancy. No feature, indeed, appeared to me more contrasted in the political aspect of America and Great Britain than this, that in the United States the democracy derives its chief support from the landed interest, while the towns take the more conservative side, and are often accused by the landed proprietors of being too aristocratic. Every where the ambition of accumulating riches without limit is so manifest, as to incline me to adopt the opinion expressed to me by several rich Boston friends, that wealth has in this country quite as many charms, and confers as much distinction and influence, as it ought to do. If a rich Englishman came to settle here, he would be disappointed on finding that money gave him no facilities in taking a lead in politics ; but the affluent natives do not pine for influence which they never possessed or expected to derive from their riches.

The great evil of universal suffrage is the irresistible temptation it affords to a needy set of adventurers to make politics a trade, and to devote all their time to agitation, electioneering, and flattering the passions of the multitude. The natural aristocracy of a republic consists of the most eminent men in the liberal professions—lawyers, divines, and physicians of note, merchants in extensive business, literary and scientific men of celebrity ; and men of all these classes are apt to set too high a value on their time, to be willing to engage in the strife of elections perpetually going on, and in which they expose themselves to much calumny and accusations, which, however unfounded, are professionally injurious to them. The richer citizens, who might be more in-