

and their own personal experience. In the loose sense of the sophist, it was contrary to my experience that Britain should become the seat of any such fatal and widely-devastating disease as used to ravage it of old. And yet, now that I saw as terrible and unwonted an infliction as either the plague or the sweating sickness decimating our towns and villages, and the terrible scenes described by De Foe and Patrick Walker fully rivalled, the feeling with which I came to regard it was not one of strangeness, but of familiarity.

When thus unsuccessfully employed in keeping watch and ward against our insidious enemy, the Reform Bill for Scotland passed the House of Lords, and became the law of the land. I had watched with interest the growth of the popular element in the country,—had seen it gradually strengthening from the despotic times of Liverpool and Castlereagh, through the middle period of Canning and Goderich, down till even Wellington and Peel, men of iron as they were, had to yield to the pressure from without, and to repeal first the Test and Corporation Acts, and next to carry, against their own convictions, their great Roman Catholic Emancipation measure. The people, during a season of undisturbed peace, favorable to the growth of opinion, were becoming more decidedly a power in the country than they had ever been before; and, of course, as one of the people, and in the belief, too, that the influence of the many would be less selfishly exerted than that of the few, I was pleased that it should be so, and looked forward to better days. For myself personally, I expected nothing. I had early come to see that toil, physical or intellectual, was to be my portion throughout life, and that through no possible improvement in the government of the country could I be exempted from laboring for my bread. From State patronage I never expected anything, and I have received from it about as much as I expected.

I was employed in laboring pretty hard for my bread one fine evening in the summer of 1830,—engaged in hewing, with bare breast and arms, in the neighborhood of the harbor of Cromarty, a large tombstone, which, on the following day, was