

*class* are by no means so safe on the average. Their stake, as a body, is considerably less ; they are a greatly more fluctuating portion of the population, and more unsteady and unbalanced in their views and opinions. There is really no comparison between the man who, in some of the close alleys of a city like Edinburgh, opens a spirit-cellar on speculation, for which he pays a yearly rent of ten pounds, and the man who, after steadily adding pound to pound during the course of half a lifetime, at length invests his little capital in a house that brings him in ten pounds per annum, or, if he be his own tenant, that saves him that sum. The ten-pound tenants and the ten-pound proprietors compose, in the aggregate, bodies of men of an essentially different status and standing ; and we hold that along the scale of proprietorship the franchise might safely descend a very considerable way indeed ere it corresponded with the existing level, if we may so express ourselves, on the tenant scale. We hold that the proprietor who *possessed* a house valued at *five* yearly pounds, would be on a higher, not a lower level, than the tenant who merely *occupied* a house valued at *ten* yearly pounds. His stake in the stability of the national institutions would be greater ; and it might be rationally premised regarding him, if the house had been purchased out of his savings, or if, being derived to him by inheritance, he continued to preserve it unsquandered, that he was a steadier and safer man than the mere ten-pound tenant, of whom it could only be premised that present circumstances had enabled him, or hopes of future advantage had induced him, to inhabit a dwelling of a certain value. Nay, we are by no means sure whether there be not a principle in human nature through which a descent along the scale of proprietorship very considerably beneath the five yearly pounds might be rendered safe. We have ever found men valuing the property which they possessed, especially if of their own earning, not by an absolute,