

cessions of strength which Popery might receive from a five-pound extension of the franchise would be balanced at least ten times over by the assistance which Protestantism would draw from the accession to political power of this thoroughly respectable antagonist class.

There are two other parties,—the “Edinburgh Review” Whigs and the “Blackwood Magazine” Tories,—whom the extension of the franchise would leave exactly as they are, unless, indeed, in the exercise of an ingenuity in which they excel all other political bodies, they should fall upon some new mode of manufacturing fictitious votes. Of these two parties, the Parliament House forms the central nucleus, and each in turn, as their friends chance to be in power for the time, possess the legal patronage of Scotland. Judgeships, sheriffships, clerkships, procurator-fiscalships, all the many offices which Government can bestow, and to which gentlemen of the law are alone eligible, with not a few, besides, for which they are as eligible as any other class, are the good and weighty things which, like a great primary planet in the centre of a system, give cohesion and force to the movements of these parties. We make the remark in, we trust, no invidious spirit. Human nature being what it is, these things must and will have their weight and influence. There have been many instances of wholly disinterested *individuals* among both Whigs and Tories; but there never yet was a wholly disinterested *party*, especially when in power; and that patronage which made Lord Dundas in the last age the great centre round which Scotch politics revolved, renders the Parliament House a great political centre now, especially in Edinburgh. We remember seeing, many years ago, an ingenious caricature of the times of Fox and Pitt, which represented the great political system of the country as formed on the plan of the solar system. The Treasury, with its massive bags of guineas, formed the solar centre, and the various