

the evil originates. Now, in the present state of Scotland we recognise an urgent necessity, on both these principles, for State interference in behalf of the poor. They are perishing for lack of bread ; they are spreading deadly contagion through our lanes and alleys ; the system of compulsory support is a coarse, inadequate system ; it will have by and by to be connected with some repulsive check, in order that the capital and industry of the country may not be swallowed up by its lean and blighted poverty. But, however coarse, however inadequate, however productive it may prove of fierce discontent or miserable degradation, it is the only system in the field at present. A poor-law, we repeat, has become inevitable in Scotland. The controversy between contending systems exists among us no longer. Dr Alison still occupies his ground : Dr Chalmers has withdrawn.

Truly, it is enough to make one's heart swell, to think how the gigantic exertions of this great and good man in behalf of his country have been met in this cause. Were we to say that the poor of Scotland are on the eve of perishing in utter degradation, from a lack of faith in the efficacy of the gospel of Christ on the part of our influential classes, the remark would no doubt be deemed over extreme and severe ; and it would be a remark open, doubtless, to objection,—not, however, from its severity, but from its tame and inexpressive inadequacy. It is the condemnation of the class most influential in directing the destinies of our country, not that, in the indifferency of unbelief, they have stood aloof and done nothing, but that they have risen in maniac hostility, and overpowered those who were straining all their energies in their behalf. Not since the days of Knox did any venerable father of the Church of Scotland so exert himself in bringing Christianity to the people by the erection of congregations and the planting of churches, as Dr Chalmers has done. Never has merchant so travailed to fill his coffers,