

man of the established church. A third change which has militated against the clergy is connected with that general revolution in manners, dress, and modes of thinking which, during the last forty years, has transferred the great bulk of our middle classes from the highest place among the people to the lowest among the aristocracy; the clergymen of our church, with their families, among the rest. And a fourth change, not less disastrous than even the worst of the others, may be traced to that recent extension of the political franchise which has had the effect of involving so many otherwise respectable ministers in the essentially irreligious turmoil of party. There is still, however, much of its original vigor in the Church of Scotland; a self-reforming energy which no radically corrupt church ever did or can possess; and her late efforts in shaking herself loose from some of the evils which have long oppressed her give earnest that her career of usefulness is not hastening to its close.

There is certainly much to employ the honest and enlightened among her members in the present age. At no time did that gulf which separates the higher from the lower classes present so perilous a breadth, at no time did it threaten the commonwealth more; and if it be not in the power of the equalizing influence of Christianity to bridge it over, there is no other power that can. It seems quite as certain that the spread of political power shall accompany the spread of intelligence, as that the heat of the sun shall accompany its light. It is quite as idle to affirm that the case should be otherwise, and that this power should not be extended to the people, as to challenge the law of gravitation, or any of the other great laws which regulate the government of the universe. The progress of mind cannot be arrested; the power which necessarily