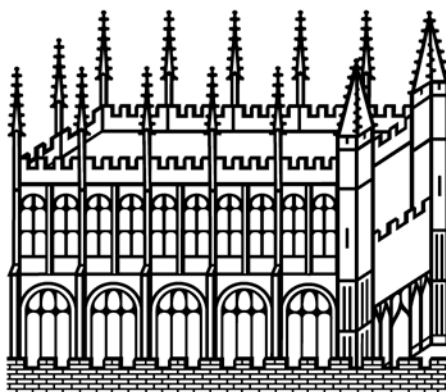




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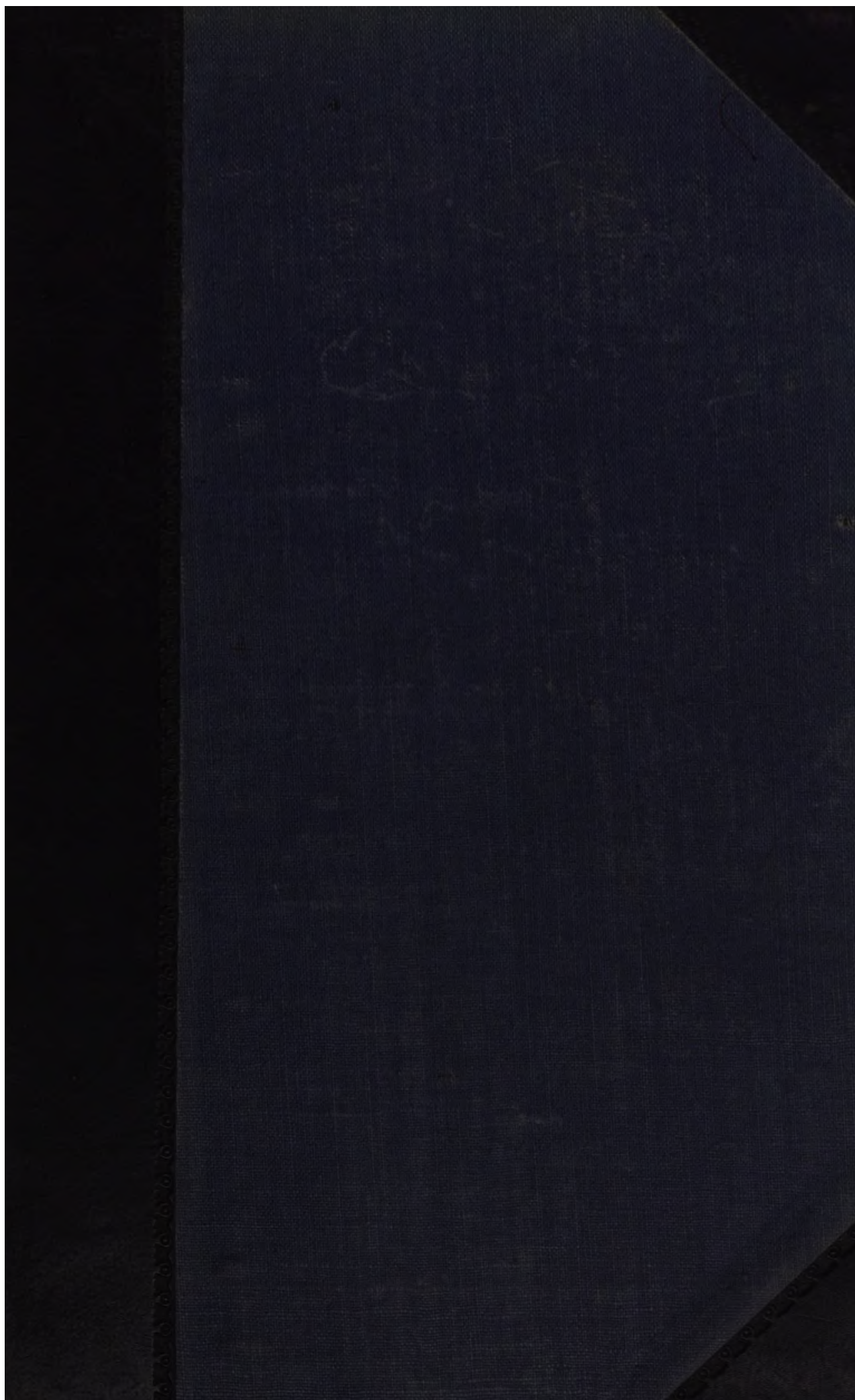
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LECTURES
ON
THE ESTABLISHMENT AND EXTENSION
OF
NATIONAL CHURCHES;

DELIVERED IN LONDON, FROM APRIL TWENTY-FIFTH TO MAY TWELFTH, 1838;

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LECTURES

ON

RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS.

LECTURE I.

STATEMENT OF THE QUESTION RESPECTING A NATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY; AND EXPOSURE OF THE MISCONCEPTIONS REGARDING IT.

1. THERE is a felt indisposition on the part of certain religionists to the question of an Establishment; and that just because it appears to them a mere question of machinery. They view it as at best an earthly expedient for the diffusion and settlement of Christianity in the world. It seems with them to imply a distrust in the efficacy of divine grace; nor can they find room in their contemplation for the respective parts, which belong to the agency of God and the instrumentality of man in the great work of providing for the religious education of the people. Such is the homage which these men, of strong but unintelligent piety, would render to the supremacy of that Being who rules and actuates and determines all things. In the entireness of their dependence upon Him, they would themselves do nothing—as if in things sacred, and more especially in the affairs of the church upon earth, human skill and human activity were alike uncalled for.

2. To meet their antipathy in this very general form, it might be perhaps enough to say, that, if acted upon or carried into effect, it were in utter violation of all the analogies both of nature and of providence. In the business, for example, of agriculture, as well as of seamanship and the arts, do we behold processes of human contrivance, adapted to powers, that often, in their principle and mode of operation, are altogether beyond the reach of human comprehension. And certain it is, that the dependence we ought to feel on the Sovereign of our world, for the shower and the sunshine, and the various influences of the firmament above, does not supersede the diligence wherewith we ply the labours, and both devise and prosecute the schemes, of our well-arranged husbandry below. Here, then, we have a supernal influence in the hands of God, conjoined with a terrestrial economy in the hands of man. If nature withhold her part, there might be no valuable produce from fields cultivated with whatever skill or whatever strenuousness. If we withhold our part, there might be a hundredfold less of valuable produce from the same fields lying waste and neglected, however genial the seasons, or with whatever benign an aspect the year may have rolled over us. But, instead of this, in the operations of common husbandry, man concurs with nature, and nature concurs with man—he by his unremitting industry, the processes of which are all palpable and known; she by her ceaseless and mysterious agency, the footsteps of which are recondite and unknown. Man cannot fathom or foretell

the courses of nature—for, whether in the arcana of our heaving atmosphere, or in the depths of the vegetable physiology, there is in each a laboratory, the recesses of which we have never entered, and the inner movements of which are alike beyond our cognisance and our control. Yet this does not restrain the confidence wherewith we address ourselves to the culture and management of the soil; and it is by the patent working of man, superadded to the inscrutable working of nature, or rather of Him who is the author of nature, that we obtain the sustenance of millions from a territory which, if abandoned to nature alone, would yield but a precarious subsistence for the beasts of the field, and a few straggling savages.

3. Now this holds true, in all its parts, of what may be termed the work of spiritual husbandry. It may be, nay it is by the descent of an influence from above, that every human spirit is reclaimed from the barrenness, from the deadly blight of nature, and made to abound in the fruits of righteousness. But our entire dependence on God, who giveth the increase, does not supersede the entire diligence wherewith the ministers of the gospel should give themselves to the labour of planting and watering, each his own allotted part of the vineyard. So far from superseding, it should stimulate, that labour; and affords the best warrant or vindication which can be given of it. There is a region in South Africa, where the soil is of the best capabilities; but where, from the utter want of rain all the year, vegetation is nearly unknown, or, at least, no human industry can obtain a recompense, by any additions which it can possibly make to the produce of it. Here, then, it is not the presence, but the negation, of a celestial aliment, which suspends all terrestrial labour as hopeless and unavailing; and if, in virtue of some physical change, this aliment were restored, or rain were to fall as in other countries of the globe, then, and then only, could there be a meaning or a justification for the appliances of human activity and skill; and then a busy agriculture, now unlocked, would find room and encouragement for its various processes. And it is even so in the work of spiritual cultivation. For the prosperity of this work, we are taught that there must be a descent of living water from the upper sanctuary. Yet this descent does not supersede—it rather calls for—a work of preparation on the earth which receives it. The part which God takes in the operation, does not abrogate the part which man ought to take in it. They are the overflowings of the Nile which have given rise to the irrigations of an artificial husbandry in Egypt, for the distribution of its waters. And there is positively nothing in the doctrine of a sanctifying or fertilising grace from heaven above, which should discharge us—but the contrary—from what may be termed the irrigations of a spiritual husbandry in the world beneath. It is not enough that there be a descent; there must be a distribution also, or ducts of conveyance, which, by places of worship and through parishes, might carry the blessings of this divine nourishment to all the houses and families of a land. There is nothing, therefore, in the doctrine of the Spirit's agency that should foreclose the question, which still remains to us in all its importance, of the best polity, or the best platform, for a church upon earth. While we acknowledge the celestial descent, we must not neglect the terrestrial distribution. That there is a coöperation between these, is evident from the single expression of men being fellow-workers with God. But the principle rests not on any single or incidental testimony. It pervades the whole system of the Divine administration; and the neglect of it is a radical and pervading error in Christianity. A machinery is not the less essential upon earth, that the impellent force which guides and animates its movements is from Heaven. There is nothing in this to dispar-

age or do away with the paramount necessity of a spiritual influence—whatever the apprehensions may be of a mistaken, I should even say a drivelling, though sincere, piety, which greatly underrates the importance of a visible and material economy in things ecclesiastical, and would set it aside as a mere system of earthly means and earthly expedients. Such an economy may, notwithstanding, in the order of cause and effect, be an essential stepping-stone to the salvation of millions; and that without the slightest relaxation of essential dependence upon God. The husbandman, after having dressed his field, looketh for the former and the latter rain, without which the cultured territory would be a dreary waste. The Christian governor, after having laid down his parishes and planted his churches thereon, looketh for the descent of that blessing from above, without which the country will abide as hopeless a moral wilderness as before. Its channels of distribution, however skilfully drawn, will, if dry and deserted of Heaven, convey nothing for human souls; and the goodly apparatus of a throng and thick-set Establishment in the land will neither prevent nor alleviate the curse of its spiritual barrenness.

4. To establish our conclusion the more, let it further be remembered, that when the Spirit does enlighten or impress a human soul, it is generally through the medium of the Word; or, to express it otherwise, the Bible forms the material pathway for His communications. There is nothing in this doctrine therefore to ~~extenuate~~, but rather every thing to enhance, the importance of multiplying the Scriptures, and giving universal circulation to them over the world. But the application to our argument becomes still more obvious when we also recollect, that, both at the commencement and throughout the successive ages of Christianity, although the Spirit has ever been the great agent in the work of conversion, He makes choice of His own vehicles, and has always annexed an especial virtue to, or puts an especial honour on, the instrumentality of man. By means of one heavenly visitant, the whole substance and truth of Christianity might have been conveyed with power to the mind of Cornelius. But for this purpose two were employed—one preternatural message having been sent to Peter, for the purpose of bidding him go to Cornelius; and another to Cornelius himself, for the purpose, not of delivering the gospel to him, but of preparing him to expect the visit of a fellow-mortal, from whose lips he should receive it. And so it was in the act of Peter speaking to Cornelius and to the other members of his household, that the Holy Ghost fell upon them. The same mysterious agent who gives efficacy to the read also gives efficacy to the preached word—but preached, not by beings of a higher to those of a lower order, but by men to men. It is the Divine Spirit alone who sends the message with efficacy to the heart; but still it is a message borne to the ear by human messengers. In other words, they are bibles and ministers that form the two great parts of His main and chosen instrumentality. And, in our capacity as fellow-workers with God, it is for us to set this instrumentality agoing—to see that a bible should be in every house, and that a minister should have access to every family. These form our plain and palpable doings for the furtherance and distribution of that Christianity upon earth, which, nevertheless, but for the descent of a heavenly influence from above, could have no being in the world. It is ours to strike out the channels of conveyance,—it is for God to fill them. The work which belongs to us in this spiritual husbandry is as patent as that of planting and watering is in common husbandry. The work which belongs to God of giving the increase, is, in both, beyond the sight and search of all our faculties—wholly inscrutable in the mysteries of grace; and far

from being fully comprehended, whether in the mysteries of the fitful weather above our heads, or in the still profounder mysteries of vegetation.

5. There is nothing, then, in the doctrine of the Spirit to reduce, but everything to enhance, the importance of the gospel being preached—and so, therefore, the importance of the question, What is best to be done, that we might secure its being preached to every creature? If there be one economy, under which there is every likelihood that, with all our strenuousness and care, we shall fall short of more than half the population; and another economy, by which it may be made sure that the calls and lessons of Christianity shall be brought to every door—this, all other circumstances being equal, forms in itself a strong ground for our preference of the latter over the former. It is our purpose to demonstrate, that this invaluable property of a full or universal diffusion belongs only to a National Establishment; and to make it palpable, by all the lights of history and human nature, that it never is, and never can be, realised either by the Voluntary System, or by what has been termed the System of Free Trade in Christianity. But we must first premise what is meant by a National Establishment of Religion in a country—or tell what that precisely is which creates or constitutes such an establishment.

6. We shall assume, then, as the basis of our definition for a Religious Establishment, or as the essential property by which to specify and characterise it,—a sure legal provision for the expense of its ministrations. It is a question merely of nomenclature or of definition, and not of doctrine, wherewith we are at present engaged. Our single attempt at this moment is, not the statement of our belief, but the settlement of our language—that there might be a clear and common understanding of the terms used by us, in the course of our argument. We are not saying, at present, whether the legal establishment of religion be a good or a bad thing—we are only telling what we understand such an establishment specifically to be; and saying, that wherever we have a certain legal provision for the ministrations of Christianity, there we have an Establishment of Christianity in the land. It is this which forms the essence of an Establishment, and, as such, must be singled out from among all the other accessaries wherewith it may happen to be variegated. This idea of an Establishment may or may not imply what is commonly meant by a connection between the church and the state. If it be the state which maintains the church, we admit that there is such a connection—whether this maintenance be their ancient and original gift, or a grant renewed every year, and which may or may not be recalled by the civil government. But the truth is, that the maintenance may have originated in other sources—in the bequest of individuals, or numerous private acts of liberality, prompted by the affection of the pious for the Christian good, whether of the community at large, or of special districts in various parts of the land. In our eyes it is not less an Establishment on this account, than if supported by a direct allowance from the national treasury. To realise our idea of an Establishment, it is enough that there be legal security for the application of certain funds to the maintenance of Christian worship or Christian instruction in a country; and this in whatever way these funds may have originated. If the church be indebted for its revenues to the benefactions of the rich and the religious in other days, then it may have no more connection with the state than the state has with any other charitable endowments in the kingdom—where so much property is destined to certain ends; and all which the state has to do in the matter is to make good the destinations, or to see that effect and fulfilment be given to the intentions of the original testators. It is in this

sense chiefly that we understand the universities of Oxford and Cambridge to be national or established institutes for the purposes of education. Their *status* or character, as such, does not depend on the antiquarian origin of the property which belongs to them—which, it so happens, they owe, in greater part, not to the liberality of the civil rulers, but to the piety and patriotism of individuals. It depends not on the origin of their property, but on the sureness of its application; the justice of the nation, or the authority of the state and of the laws, being engaged in the defence of it, whether against encroachment, or against its application to other objects than those on which it is now expended.

7. But even although the church should be wholly supported by the state in things temporal, and a connection between them be established thus far, it follows not that this connection should proceed any farther. There might be an entire dependence on the state in things temporal, without even the shadow of a dependence upon it in things ecclesiastical. Although the church should receive its maintenance, and all its maintenance, from the civil power, it follows not that it therefore receives its theology from the same quarter; or that this theology should acquire thereby the slightest taint or infusion of secularity. The state is the dispenser of things carnal; and the church, in exchange for this, is the dispenser of things spiritual: but these things spiritual may retain their purely spiritual character, notwithstanding; and be ministered by the priests to the people, without adulteration or one ingredient of earthliness. The church receives from the state the maintenance of its clergy; and the clergy, in return, give to the subjects of the state a Christian education,—but they might, and do, reserve to themselves the whole power and privilege of determining what that education shall be. For their food and their raiment, and their sacred or even private edifices, they may be indebted to the state; but their creed, and their discipline, and their ritual, and their articles of faith, and their formularies, whether of doctrine or of devotion, may be altogether their own. Such may be the line of demarcation between the civil and the ecclesiastical—that, while the state maintains the teachers of religion, it meddles not with the things that are taught. It may ordain a scholastic establishment, yet leave unfettered the whole determination of the learning to an educational board. Or it may ordain an ecclesiastical establishment, and leave entirely with the church the determination of its own lessons—alike unfettered by any dictation or control on the part of the civil authority. By a system of endowed schools, education might be introduced into hundreds of districts which, but for this provision, might have remained in unlettered ignorance; and that, too, a right and pure education. By a system of endowed churches, public worship and religious instruction might be introduced into hundreds of districts which, but for this provision, might have remained in grossest heathenism; and still nothing else be observed or taught but a pure and scriptural Christianity. An endowment may not deteriorate the quality either of common or Christian education, while it adds inconceivably to the diffusion and the amount of both.

8. And it is the more necessary to insist on this consideration, that the attempt is so often made to excite the idea of an essential contamination, in every approach which the church might make to the state, and even when with no other object than that of simply holding forth a maintenance to her clergymen. And the church might submit herself so far to the state as to receive this maintenance, and yet abide as spiritual, as holy and independent a church as before—only enabled to distribute the waters of life more copiously among the population, while as purely as ever. When a

West India planter sends for a Moravian missionary, and maintains him in the work of instructing the labourers on his estate, we have here the little model of an Establishment. The planter maintains the missionary; and the missionary, in return, teaches on the estate of the planter—yet teaches nothing there but his own Christianity. The Bible is as much his fountain-head as before—truth and holiness as much the objects of his resolute adherence as before. The whole effect of the relation upon which he has entered, is to bring the gospel into contact with hundreds of immortal creatures, who, but for this miniature establishment, might have lived in guilt and died in darkness. It may or it may not have been a spiritual impulse on the mind of the planter which originated the proposal; either a regard to the immortal well-being of his fellow-men, or an enlightened regard to his own safety and advantage, on the principle, that, if his labourers were religiously trained, they would be thereby transformed into a submissive, orderly, and industrious population. With him it may have been a mere calculation of profit and loss; but, whatever the force was which opened the door, still it was a door of highest Christian usefulness to the missionary—and they may have been motives of the purest and highest order, which led him to acquiesce in the proposal. And what is true of the little model of an establishment on this single plantation, may hold true when expanded into the actual machine of a great national establishment of Christianity over a whole empire. It is uncertain whether it was policy or piety which actuated the mind of Constantine. But whatever secularity it may have been which prompted the overture on the one side, it may have been accepted on the other in purest love to the souls of men, and without the surrender or compromise of one iota of Heaven's high sacredness. When the great autocrat of the Roman Empire, from a persecutor became a nursing father, the church might then have raised her orisons of gratitude to Him who turns the hearts of kings whithersoever He wills; and, now that a way was opened to the plenteous harvest of so mighty a population, might have entered on her now larger field with as holy a zeal for her Master's word, and as lofty an independence throughout all her pulpits, as in the days of martyrdom.*

9. We know that, contemporaneously with this establishment of the Christian religion in the days of Constantine, there was, not the birth but the progress of a great and general corruption, which had its commencement in other causes two centuries before. There is nothing in the mere distribution of ecclesiastical labourers over the territory of the Roman Empire, each working in his proper vocation, and in return for a right and regulated income;—there is nothing in such an economy that can at all account for that fearful degeneracy of the church which began even in the first century; and which the establishment that took place early in the fourth did not originate, and, as it appears from the actual history, could not arrest. The essence of that corruption lay, not in the ascendancy wherewith an establishment had vested the civil power, giving it an undue influence over things ecclesiastical; but, diametrically opposite to this, it lay in the ascendancy wherewith the superstition and ignorance both of princes and people had vested the ecclesiastical power, of which it most unworthily availed itself, to its own enormous aggrandisement in things temporal—at once supplanting the rightful authority of God in His Scrip-

* "Now this very opening was presented to the ministers of Christ when the Roman Emperor, whether by a movement of faith or a movement of philanthropy and patriotism, made territorial distribution of them over his kingdoms and provinces; and, assigning a territorial revenue for the labourers of this extensive vineyard, enabled each

tures; and substituting both a doctrine and discipline of its own, by which to blind the souls of men and subjugate them to its sway. Had emperors and kings understood their own place, and resisted every encroachment by the hierarchy on their own proper and legitimate functions—there was nought whatever in the system of endowed churches, for the universal spread of a Christian education, that could have given rise to a despotism of priests; any more than a system of endowed seminaries, for the spread of a common or literary education, could have given rise to a despotism of schoolmasters. The truth is that influences were at work, which, either with or without an establishment, would have landed Christendom in the terrific Popery of the middle ages—the product, not of that economy for which we are contending, and by which, in return for their legal maintenance, the ministers of the church would, each in his own district, have given forth the lessons and performed the services of the gospel for their respective populations; but the product of an enslaving superstition, that enabled an ambitious priesthood to riot at pleasure over the consciences and fears of their deluded votaries. Their enormous wealth was the fruit of voluntary offerings made by the people; and their enormous power, in its first beginnings at least, the fruit of voluntary concessions made by princes, who partook in the debasing fanaticism of the times. The effect of a regulated establishment might have been to regulate and restrain the characteristic excesses of that period; and to those who, unable to discriminate, are ever sure to confound the adjuncts or the accidents with the causes of certain great and complex phenomena, we would propose for

to set himself down in his own little vicinity—the families of which he could assemble to the exercises of Christian piety on the Sabbath, and among whom he could expatiate through the week in all the offices and attentions of Christian kindness. Such an offer, whether christianly or but politically made upon the one side, could most christianly be accepted and rejoiced in by the other. It extended inconceivably the powers and the opportunities of usefulness. It brought the gospel of Jesus Christ into contact with myriads more of imperishable spirits—and with as holy a fervour as ever gladdened the breast of the devoted missionary, when the means of an ample service to the Redeemer's cause were put into his hands, might the church in those days have raised to Heaven its orisons of purest gratitude, that kings at length had become its nursing fathers, and opened up to it the plenteous harvest of all their population. There is just as little of the essentially corrupt in this connection between the church and the state, as there is in the connection between a missionary board and its pecuniary supporters. Each is a case of the earth helping the woman; but whatever of earthliness may be upon the one side, there might be none, and there needs be none, upon the other. The one may assist in things temporal; while the other may continue to assert its untouched and entire jurisdiction, as heretofore, in things spiritual. There might thus be an alliance between the altar and the throne, yet without the feculence of any earthly intermixture being at all engendered by it. The state avails itself of the church's services, and the church gives back again no other than the purest services of the sanctuary. Its single aim, as heretofore, is the preparation of citizens for heaven; but in virtue of the blessings which Christianity scatters in its way, do the princes of this world find that these are the best citizens of earth—and that the cheap defence of nations, the best safeguard of their prosperity and their power, is a universal Christian education. There needs be nought, we repeat, of contamination in this. The state pays the church; yet the church, in the entire possession of all those privileges and powers which are strictly ecclesiastical, maintains the integrity of her faith and worship notwithstanding. She might be the same hallowed church as when the fires of martyrdom were blazing around her—the same spirituality among her ministers—the same lofty independence in all her pulpits. The effect of an establishment is not necessarily to corrupt Christianity, but to extend it—not necessarily to vitiate the ministrations of the gospel, but certainly to disseminate these ministrations more intimately amongst, as well as to bear them more diffusively abroad over, the families of the land.”—*Sermon XIII, Vol. XI, of the new and uniform edition of Dr. Chalmers' Works.*

contemplation the ecclesiastical state of Presbyterian Scotland on the one hand, and Catholic Ireland on the other—the first with an establishment, the second under the entire ascendancy of the voluntary principle; and then ask, in which of the two countries it is, that a corrupt and a domineering priesthood are doing the most to vitiate the pure doctrine of the apostles, or to injure the peace and virtue of the commonwealth?

10. It is fortunate that the reformers knew, how, in this matter, to make distinction between the machinery and the men; and that, instead of destroying the machinery of the Establishment in their respective countries, they only placed it in other and better hands; and so had it worked by men of another doctrine and another principle than before. An establishment, in fact, with its universities and its parishes, might be the best and most active instrument of conveyance in a land, either for good or for evil, either for a corrupt or a scriptural theology. And so they went intelligently to work. They did not, with blind and headlong zeal, demolish the old apparatus of distribution. They substituted the true gospel for a false one; and sent forth its now amended and purified lessons along the old pathways of conveyance. The Establishment, in the days of Popery, made sure of a pulpit and a minister in every little district of the country. The Reformation did not destroy this arrangement. It kept up the same fountain-head as before in the colleges, and the same rills of distribution in the parishes and throughout the churches of the land; and maintaining, as was done most strenuously by Knox and all enlightened reformers every where, the necessity of a settled provision for the teachers of Christianity—it but changed and new-modelled the system in respect of the things that were taught. Whatever the scholarship may be, whether common or general, wherewith you want to charge and inoculate the population of a country, if you desire that it shall be universally spread, you cannot but desire an effective mechanism for the full and ready diffusion of it. The lessons may be good or they may be bad; say that they are bad, and then the question is, Whether shall we change the lessons, or take down and so demolish the machinery? The obvious thing, we should imagine, would be to do as the reformers did—to change the lessons; and if, after this, they be the lessons now of a pure and wholesome theology, we ask, in the name of common sense, where lies the wisdom of destroying the machinery—kept up, it would appear, so long as it subserved the propagation of corruption and error; and now that this evil is transmuted into good, proposed to be taken down when it might enhance the propagation of righteousness and truth? Is this the treatment, we would put the question, which the government of a country—or if it be a popular government, at the bidding of the collective mind or will of the community at large—is this the treatment which the society of that country ought to bestow on the respective elements of good and evil? After having for ages furnished the evil with all facilities, for its rapid march and full circulation through the families of the land—then, when the evil has been made good, is that the time when these facilities should be taken away? So long as the religion taught was a moral poison, by which to vitiate the hearts and habits of the people, it had the prerogative of an establishment, by which access was made for it through every district and into every door. Strange, if when the religion from a deadly virus has become the water of life, that we should then dispense with those aqueducts of conveyance, by which it might be spread abroad for the healing of the nation. It is well that the venerable fathers of our Protestant church, making distinction between the things which differ, felt and judged otherwise from the headlong innovators of the present day.

They medicated the quality of the thing that was circulated ; but they let alone the apparatus of circulation. In their achievement we behold the wisdom and the principle of genuine reform. The other achievement is by men of a different spirit—done, it may be, in the name of reform ; but marking the very crisis, and having in it all the characters of a revolution—whether it be the act of a legislature, which lends itself, either to the cupidity of the nobles, or to the outcries of the multitude ; or an act of pillage by the multitude themselves, broken loose from the ancient holds of authority, and borne waywardly and uncontrollably along on the surges and amid the uproar of wild insurrectionary violence.

11. And here may we pause on the instructive contrast between the ecclesiastical reformers of the past and present day. It is on the high walk of theology and sentiment that we meet the former—it having been their aim, not to destroy the established church, but to animate it with another spirit ; or to give it other doctrines and other principles than before. In these times, again, the hands of our reformers are differently employed—taken up chiefly, not with the internal but the external—with what may be termed the economics of the church, its rights, its revenues, the number and pay of its office-bearers ; and were their sole aim a better distribution of its wealth, instead of the abridgment or the alienation of it, this, though a humble, might yet prove an innocent, nay, even a salutary undertaking. The real object of the first reform by Luther and his contemporaries was to mend the church's faith. The professed object of the second reform is to mend the church's framework—though often the obvious effect of the attempted changes, as in Ireland, were to mutilate and weaken, and ultimately to destroy. In former times, it was a high war of intellect and principle, and many of the best heads and noblest hearts of England were engaged in it—when the lore of her profoundest students, and the testimony of her sainted martyrs, and the outraged moral sense of a now awakened community, were all enlisted on the side of Scripture, and of a pure scriptural ministration throughout the parishes of the kingdom. Altogether it was a nobler controversy, and maintained on a nobler field, than that which now calls forth the championship both of priests and of parliament-men. The struggle then related to the quality of that nourishment which should be given to the souls of the people ; and the noble result was, that it should be the pure bread and water of life, taken at once from the repositories and fountainheads of inspiration ; and not adulterated, as before, by the mixtures of a corrupt and superstitious Popery. The struggle now relates, not to the kind or quality of this spiritual nourishment, but rather to the kind of apparatus that should be maintained for the distribution of it. It is a question, not of theology or of morals, but of machinery ; and many are the economical and the arithmetical reformers of our age, who feel themselves abundantly qualified for the entertainment of it. We cannot but remark the total difference, both in character and aim, between the two reformations. If the one were a doctrinal or moral, the other perhaps may be termed a mechanical—or, as the sure effect were not to mend but to demolish altogether the framework of the Establishment, it may best of all be styled a machine-breaking reformation ; and of course its advocates, or rather its instigators and its agents, are the machine-breaking reformers of the present day—far more mischievous in their higher walk, but hardly more intelligent, we do think, be they in or out of Parliament, than the machine-breakers of Kent, the frame-breakers of Leicestershire, or the incendiaries of a few years back in the southern and midland counties of England. It was by strength of principle, or

strength of argument, that the venerable fathers of nearly three centuries back achieved their reformation—it will be by strength of hand, or a sort of sledge-hammer energy, that the coarse utilitarians of the present generation, in a period of frenzied delusion on the part of the multitude, or by a wayward exercise of power, unintelligent and unknowing on the part of the legislature, will ever be able to accomplish theirs. If it be the consecrated title of reformation which is to avail them in this day of conflict, if by its means, as with the magical influence of a watchword, they are to enlist in their favour the passions and prejudices of men—then never was there more exemplified the omnipotence of words or sounds over the human understanding—never did conjurers in any walk, whether of politics or of fortune-telling, operate with such success on the credulity of the world, or practise a grosser delusion in the use and by the prostitution of a venerable name.

12. In this age of distempered speculation, we gladly look back, and that with affectionate remembrance, to the more excellent way of our forefathers. Knox new-modelled the faith ; but he did not, in spite of all the violence that has been ascribed to him—he did not demolish the pulpits of the Catholic establishment. He did infinitely better—he took possession of them. He did not destroy a good machine, because of the bad working of it. He did what was a great deal wiser—he dismissed the workmen, and committed the machine into other hands. Fury is often blind ; and, if ever there was a provocative to its wildest excesses, it was at that time, when the accumulated wrongs of many ages had at length aroused an indignant community, against the profligate and the persecuting ecclesiastics who so long had lorded over them. Between the cupidity of the nobles and the indiscriminate rage of the multitude, the Establishment itself might have been swept off as a moral nuisance from the face of the country. But our great reformer interposed in its defence ; and, making his resolute stand for the churches and stipends of the clergy, he transmitted the material framework, not without hurtful molestation, but still as entire and uninjured as he could, for the use of future generations. The truth is, that, without such an apparatus, he could not have propagated, with the speed and facility which he did, the doctrines of his own reformation—which went like lightning over the land, not on the wrecks of the establishment, but through the numerous pathways, which the Establishment, as far as preserved and upholden, had still left open to him. But for this, he might have found a lodgment, on the naked strand where he alighted, yet found the country at large an impenetrable forest ; and which he only entered and pervaded by the old channels, through which now, and by numerous rills of intersection, he sent forth the pure water of life, the lessons of his sound and scriptural theology, among all the parishes. And accordingly all that remains of Popery in Scotland is in those Highland fastnesses—where there might be said to have been no parishes, or these so large and impracticable, as to have been left without the benefits of an Establishment. And so, amid the stormy agitations of that period, when there was a general effervescence in all spirits, his views were calm and enlarged and philosophical. He may have looked indulgently on, when the edifices were pulled down, which harboured the most corrupt and powerful of the old hierarchy ; but he protested against all the violence that was offered, and certainly with too much effect, on whatever of the Establishment was really serviceable, or could be turned into use—either for the instruction of the clergy, or the instruction of the people. He denounced the shameful appropriations that were then made, of the wealth

which should have gone to the better and more frequent endowment both of churches and colleges. His was the inspiration of lofty principle; but there was a regulating as well as impellant power in his mind—there was the guidance of profoundest wisdom along with it.

13. That corruption and error have been spread abroad by the organ of an establishment is no more an argument for the destruction of the establishment, than that infidelity and licentiousness have been printed is an argument for the destruction of printing-presses. The way is to preserve and to extend both—making the one the instrument for a full diffusion of Bibles, and the other for a full diffusion of Bible-preaching and Bible-sentiment through the land. To do otherwise, were as if a physician, to get quit of some disease in the blood of his patient, should, instead of operating on the quality of the liquid, so mangle the apparatus by which it finds its course through the corporeal framework as to stop the circulation of it. Were the water of London to take on a deleterious tinge from the accession of some impurity—the way surely is to purge it of this, or, if possible, to bar the ingress of it, rather than make insensate attacks on the subterranean machinery, by which distribution is made of it through the streets of the city and into the houses of the citizens. Yet this last is in the style of our modern reformers. They would suppress parishes; or, by at least a partial destruction, keep back the water of life from certain parts of the territory. Or they would abolish church-rates; and no longer enforce those contributions from the wealthy, by which access and accommodation are provided for the supply of gospel instruction to the families of the poor. Their war is not against any system of theology—for about this they are mainly indifferent, as if all systems were alike in their eyes; but their war is against the machinery set up in other days, and preserved to our own times, for the circulation of its lessons—a machinery effectual then for the spread of a deadly superstition, and so for the subjugation of all spirits to its sway; but which might be as effectual now for the spread of a pure and undefiled Christianity, and so for the healing of the nation. The days were, “when a man was famous, according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees, or according as he gave of materials or money for the building and the endowment of churches. But now they would break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers. They have said in their hearts, Let us destroy them together: they would burn up all the synagogues of God in the land.”

14. The desirable church reform, then, whether for England or Scotland, is not certainly to destroy the machine—not even to mutilate or abridge, but rather, as we shall afterwards state, to repair and strengthen, and greatly to extend it. There may, besides, be other external or even economical changes that should be honoured with the name of improvements; but mainly, the great reform is that which, leaving the framework of the Establishment untouched, would infuse into it another spirit, or make it the vehicle of a more powerful and scriptural ministration than heretofore. In short, the thing wanted is an internal reform; and, for carrying this into effect, we do not require a change in the theology of either of the churches—none at all in their creeds—a very little, perhaps, in their service-books—though at all times, for the efficiency of any church, even of the best and purest theology on earth, we are dependent, and that most essentially and vitally, on the conscientious and disinterested and well-principled exercise of its patronage. It is not enough that we have a good machinery—we must have good men for the working of it. Even when they had the worst of men, the reformers of other days, with a wisdom

and discrimination which do them infinite honour, kept up the machinery; and only, after they had substituted the Protestant for the Popish doctrine, committed the working of it into other hands. What an emphatic condemnation is held out by their example, on the headlong reformers of the present day—who, without the provocative of a more corrupt or incompetent priesthood than heretofore; but in the face of a most palpable amelioration, and that in all the three kingdoms, on the general worth and devotedness and personal Christianity of the clergy, would seize on this as the time for destroying, and so wresting from their hands, the most effective of all instruments for the religious education of our people. To speak of our own Scotland, there cannot be imagined a wider contrast and dissimilarity than that which obtains between the long past and the now proposed reformation. The former made good by the resolves and the prayers, and at length sealed by the blood of their dying martyrs—who fought, not for the demolition of their kirks, but for the free use of Scripture, and the setting up of a pure ministry within their walls. The latter reformation, even that of the times in which we live, borne along, as if permitted to take effect it most assuredly would be, on a wild career of sweeping and destructive violence, and amid the hosannas of a multitude, as unlike, as east is distant from the west, to those holy worshippers—who, to hide them from their persecutors, assembled round their pastors in mountain-solitudes, and sat down to their sacraments, under the naked canopy of heaven. Such were the reformers of these golden days; and they bear not one feature of resemblance to the reformers of the age in which we live—those impetuous and bustling agitators, in whose breasts politics have engrossed the place of piety; resolved at all hazards upon change; and prepared to welcome, with shouts of exultation, the overthrow of those altars which, in holier and better times, upheld the faith and devotion of our forefathers.

Though at the hazard of detaining you a great deal too long, I cannot resist the inclination I feel to crave from you the indulgence of ten minutes, while I read a few extracts from the writings of one, alike characterized by great power and great prejudices; who saw clearly how to distinguish, when treating of the Church of England, between the machine and the working of it—having at once the highest possible value for the one, and the worst possible opinion of the other. I speak of William Cobbett, whose shrewd discernment at least will be admitted by all; and who, speaking of the church as a machine or apparatus, expresses himself in the words that we subjoin.*

* “An Established Church, a church established upon Christian principles, is this—that it provides an edifice sufficiently spacious for the assembling of the people in every parish; that it provides a spot for the interment of the dead; that it provides a priest, or teacher of religion, to officiate in the edifice, to go to the houses of the inhabitants, to administer comfort to the distressed, to counsel the wayward, to teach the children their duty towards God, their parents, and their country; to perform the duties of marrying, baptizing, and burying, and, *particularly*, to initiate children in the first principles of religion and morality; and to cause them to communicate, that is to say, by an outward act of theirs, to become members of the spiritual church of Christ: all which things are to be provided for by those who are the proprietors of the houses and the lands of the parish; and, when so provided, are to be deemed the property or the uses belonging to the poorest man in the parish as well as to the richest.”

Then follows his opinion of the actual working of this church in the hands of its actual clergymen, in which opinion I do not sympathise; and shall endeavour to qualify his conclusion, by a few closing sentences of my own.

“This is an Established Christian Church; and this you, the parsons, will tell the people that they actually have; and you will tell the people who have no house and land,

Our distinct object is to demonstrate the power and the properties which belong to a National Establishment of religion, viewed as a machine ; and, in regard to the working of it, we may at least state, as our triumphant confidence, that, notwithstanding the exaggeration of its enemies, the evidence

that, in calling for the abolition of tithes, they are in fact calling upon the rich to take from them, the poor, the only property that they have in the country. Alas! you will tell them this in vain. They know that the church is not this thing now to them ; they know that you do not visit their houses and comfort them when they are sick, except in instances so very rare that they hardly ever hear of them ; they know that you do not teach their children, and that, though the churchwardens annually certify the bishop that the children *communicate*, hardly a workman in the kingdom ever saw or heard of such a thing being done ; they know that you are frequently on the bench, perched up as justices of the peace ; they know that you frequently sentence them to punishment without trial by jury, and sentence to transportation, for what is called poaching. This is the capacity in which they now know you ; and to induce them to stir hand, foot, or tongue, in defence of this establishment, is no more possible than it is to induce a Jew to give up a farthing of his interest.”—“I was a sincere Churchman”—“because it was reasonable and just, that those who had neither house nor land, and who were the millions of the country, and who performed all its useful labours, should have a church, a churchyard, a minister of religion, and all religious services performed for them, at the expense of those who did possess the houses and the land. In a word, in the church and its possessions, I saw the patrimony of the working people, who had neither house nor land of their own private property. For these reasons I was a friend, and a very sincere friend, and able to be a very powerful friend of the Church Establishment.

“But,” &c.—*Cobbett's Political Register*, December 21st, 1833.

“Ought we to have any Establishment at all? In answering which for ourselves, it is our own opinion, that this nation has been much more religious and happy under the influence of the Protestant Established Church, than it is ever likely to be in case that church were abolished. To make the question still more close, let it be this, *whether it be reasonable that any one should be called upon to contribute towards the maintenance of a church, the tenets of which he dissents from?* This is making the question as home as it can well be. And we do not hesitate to say, that there is to us nothing so outrageously unreasonable in the idea. One thing is certain, that if *all* are not to remain liable to pay for the church, it is no established or at least no *national* church. Reasons are not wanting, to show the benefits of a national religion, or a mode of worship, or some religious establishment, the peculiarities of which are under the especial patronage and peculiar favour of the government. In judging of such a matter, we can only be guided by experience ; and experience is not less wisdom here than in all other things.”—“It does not follow that because an institution has been abused it should be done away with, if the institution itself be necessary or beneficial. Even kings may require now and then to be driven from their thrones ; but that does not prove the necessity of doing away with the throne.”—“If it be allowed (and we think it ought to be), that an establishment is desirable for such a purpose, the dissenters cannot well object to paying the clergy of a different persuasion. An establishment cannot consist of *all creeds*, or the Quakers themselves would have a right to form a part of it. As we have before said, the church is not *national* unless *all* be taxed towards its support ; and, for the sake alone of preserving decency for religion, it appears to us to be no more unjust than it is impolitic towards the community in general, to require the aid of *all* in maintaining that in which *all* are equally interested.”—*Cobbett's Political Register*, April 20th, 1833.

“But then come the just and charitable principles of the Christian religion ; and they say this to the owners of the land and the houses, ‘The land and the houses are yours, but not in such absolute right as to exclude your working and poorer brethren from all share. There shall be a church in each parish, and a priest for the teaching of religion ; there shall be a churchyard for the burial of the dead ; there shall be sermons and prayers and marriages and baptisms—and these shall form the possessions of the inhabitants, the property of those who labour.’”—*Cobbett's Political Register*, September 14th, 1833.

“Go upon a hill, *if you can find one*, in Suffolk or Norfolk ; and you can find plenty in Hampshire and Devonshire and Wiltshire ; look to the church steeples, one in about every four square miles at the most on an average—imagine a man, of small learning at the least, to be living in a genteel and commodious house, by the side of every one of these steeples, almost always with a wife and family ; always with servants, natives of the parish, gardener, groom at the least, and all other servants. A large farm-yard, barns, stables, threshers, a carter or two, more or less of glebe and of farming.

is every day growing, of its vast practical importance to the moral well-being of our nation. If it be an undoubted truth, that there is a distinct and a decided improvement in the *personnel* of the Church of Scotland; if in England, the mighty instrument is passing into the hands of a more efficient clergy than before; if in Ireland, persecution, with its wonted influence, is begetting a resolute and high-toned spirituality in the devoted ministers of that deeply injured hierarchy—is this, we ask, the time to wrest from the hold of its now more faithful and energetic agency, that engine which would enable them to operate with tenfold effect on the families of the land? The work of reformation was prosecuted more wisely in other days; when, notwithstanding the provocative of a grossly immoral and tyrannic priesthood, they but changed the agency and preserved the engine. And with our present agency, I trust we shall, by the blessing of Heaven, be enabled, not only to preserve but to perfect the engine; and that, with enough of energy and conscientiousness and devoted zeal on the part of their ministers, all the menace and agitation by which they are surrounded will only rivet the three churches more firmly on their bases, and rally more closely around their common cause, the wise and the good of our nation.

Imagine this gentleman having an interest, an immediate and pressing interest in the productiveness of every field in his parish—being probably the largest corn-seller in the parish, and the largest rate-payer—more deeply interested than any other man can possibly be in the happiness, harmony, morals, industry, and sobriety of the people in his parish. Imagine his innumerable occasions for doing acts of kindness; his immense power in preventing the strong from oppressing the weak; his salutary influence coming between the hard farmer, if there be one in his parish, and the feeble or simple-minded labourer. Imagine all this to exist close alongside of every one of these steeples, and you will at once say to yourself, hurricanes and earthquakes must destroy the island before that church can be overthrown. And when you add to all this, that this gentleman, besides the example of good manners, of mildness, and of justice, that his life and conversation are constantly keeping before the eye of his parishioners—when you add to all this, that one day in every week he has them assembled together to sit in silence; to receive his advice, his admonitions, his interpretation of the will of God as applicable to their conduct and their affairs; and that, too, in an edifice rendered sacred in their eyes, from their knowing that their forefathers assembled there in ages passed, and from its being surrounded by the graves of their kindred—when this is added, and when it is recollected that the children pass through his hands at their baptism, that it is he alone who celebrates the marriages, and performs the last sad service over the graves of the dead—when you think of all this, it is too much to believe that such a church can fall. Yet fall it will," &c.

"This settles the matter as to the church as it now stands; and then the next question is, *Can it be restored to what it ought to be?* If it could be, that is the thing that ought to be done—because, though people in great towns do not perceive it, it is a serious change to the country—a serious change to the 465 parishes of Devonshire, for instance, to the 629 parishes of Lincoln, the 731 parishes of Norfolk, the 411 parishes of Kent—a serious change to take away one little gentleman out of every one of these parishes."—*Cobbett's Political Register*, February 22nd, 1834.

LECTURE II.

VINDICATION OF A RELIGIOUS NATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT, IN OPPOSITION TO THE REASONINGS AND VIEWS OF THE ECONOMISTS.

BEFORE entering on the positive and direct argument in favour of a National Establishment of religion, I endeavoured in my last lecture to do away this initial objection, or rather this initial prejudice against it—as if the connection between church and state which is implied by it, implied also a secularization of Christianity, to which it is not equally exposed under all other methods either for extending or maintaining the gospel in the world. In these days of fierce partizanship, we cannot expect much of cool and clear discrimination—when men are borne along as if by a sort of gregarious impulse, and under the influence of a popular and prevailing cry. In Edinburgh, a few years ago, at one of those public meetings, where the connection between church and state is no sooner spoken of than it lights up an instant and sensitive antipathy in the hearts of assembled thousands, there was a speech delivered by an American clergyman of the Presbyterian denomination, who happened to be an acquaintance of my own. The multitude whom he addressed were every one of them enraptured, at hearing from his lips, that the idea of any such connection was held in perfect abomination all over America. I afterwards ventured to make the whole controversy a subject of conversation with him; and my first question was, whether if a Christian philanthropist, seized with a strong affection for a district in Maryland, were to bequeath ten thousand pounds for the erection of a church and ministerial dwelling-place, and for the maintenance of a clergyman, providing at the same time that this clergyman should be of the Presbyterian denomination, and that, in things ecclesiastical he should be wholly under the control of his own Presbyterian judicatories in America—whether such an endowment would be rejected by their General Assembly or Supreme Court of Management, as an unscriptural and unchristian thing, or be accepted by the body as an accession to the means of religious usefulness. There could be but one answer to this question, which was, that an endowment thus destined, and thus placed under the guardianship of what he deemed to be a pure scriptural church, would be welcomed and encouraged to the uttermost. I then asked whether, if these endowments were so multiplied as that the whole state of Maryland should be covered with them—still adhering to the supposition that the theology of all these Maryland clergymen was in no subordination whatever to the will of the testators, but only to the will of their ecclesiastical superiors, the Presbyteries and Synods and General Assembly of America,—whether such an arrangement, admitted by him to be desirable and good in reference to one small territory, whether the character and effect would be at all changed, if the benefit of it were multiplied several hundred times, and spread over the whole of Maryland. It of course was most readily admitted, that just as one apple, multiplied by 750, does not land you in 750 oranges, but in 750 apples—so one moral and religious benefit, multiplied by the same number, does not land in 750 evils, but in 750 most unquestionable and most desirable benefits. After this the transition was not a difficult one, from the single state of Maryland to the whole United States of America; and then the only adjustment betwixt us which

remained to be made was, whether such a great and general endowment that would have so delighted all their hearts, if coming from the hands of so many thousand generous individuals, whether, if it had come down to them as the fruit of an endowment that had been instituted many hundred years ago, and was therefore so firmly based on a separate and proprietary right of its own, that no one individual could honestly affirm of himself, that he was injured by its existence in any thing that belonged to him—whether, as he and his brethren would rejoice in the coming on of such an endowment, whether they would willingly consent to the taking of it off at the clamorous outcry of men who represented it, not only as a bane and a burden on the commonwealth, but as an unchristian abomination in the midst of their land. The rejoinder upon this was a very memorable one. If all you mean by an Establishment is an organized provision for a clergy, we should rejoice in it. If this be the whole amount of the connection between church and state—if maintenance and nothing else come from one quarter, and an unfettered theology from the other, without contamination from the authority of man, but subject only to an ecclesiastical judgment, grounded on a principle of deference to the Word of God—a simple arrangement of this sort is truly a different thing from what we understand by a Religious Establishment. The thing we deprecate is the authority of the civil magistrate in matters of religion; but we should be thankful to him or to any one else, for giving us what he termed an organized provision for clergymen. Now this organized provision is truly all that we contend for. It is just, in other words, a legal provision for the support of a Christian ministry—an arrangement which might truly be gone into, and which actually is gone into, without the slightest infringement on the spiritual prerogatives of the church, or on the ecclesiastical independence of her clergymen. It is obvious from all this, that the indignation of our transatlantic friend was directed against a wrong object; and that he failed in making the requisite distinction between the act of a government in giving food and raiment to ministers, and the act of a government in assuming a lordship over the creed and consciences of ministers. But it is not amid the din and uproar of public acclamations that men can be expected to distinguish very clearly between the things which differ. When an orator denounces the connection between church and state, the effect is instantaneous on all those who, without logic and without discrimination, are carried along by the deafening outcries, and no less deafening plaudits, of an assembly, amid the noise and excitement of which, the still small voice of truth is overborne.*

* In respect of this ecclesiastical independence, I am not aware of any serious practical obstacle to the exercise of it in England; and, at all events, "we know of nothing more perfect in this respect than the constitution of the Church of Scotland. There is, to each of its members, an independent voice from within; and from without, there is no power or authority whatever in matters ecclesiastical. They who feel dislike to an establishment do so, in general, because of their recoil from all contact and communication with the state. We have no other communication with the state than that of being maintained by it, after which we are left to regulate the proceedings of our great home mission with all the purity and the piety and the independence of any missionary board. We are exposed to nothing from without which can violate the sanctity of the apostolical character, if ourselves do not violate it. And neither are we exposed to aught which can trench on the authority of the apostolical office, if ourselves we make no surrender of it. In things ecclesiastical we decide all. Some of these things may be done wrong, but still they are our majorities which do it. They are not, they cannot, be forced upon us from without. We own no head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever is done ecclesiastically, is done by our ministers acting in His name, and in perfect submission to His authority. Implicated as the church and the state are imagined to be,

But we must now pass on to the proper subject of this lecture, which is the vindication of a Religious National Establishment in opposition to the reasonings and views of the economists.

1. By the system of a free trade in commerce, its various exchanges are left to the pure operation of demand and supply; and the two, it is thought, should be permitted, without interference, to regulate and to qualify each other. When the demand for any particular commodity increases, it will be the interest of the dealers to provide it in larger quantity than before; or, when the demand is lessened, it will be their care to reduce the supply accordingly—so as that the market shall not be overstocked with any article, beyond the extent to which it is sought after. It admits, we hold, of the clearest demonstration, that it is unwise to interfere with this law of action and reaction—or, as it may be termed, with this natural law of political economy. The supply rises and falls just as the demand rises and falls. Government should make no attempt to restrain the supply beneath this point by means of a prohibition, or to encourage it above this point by means of a bounty. Such an interference is an offence to all wise and enlightened economists; and resented by them as a disturbing force, that would violate the harmonies of a beautiful and well-going mechanism.

2. This prepares us to understand what is meant by the system of a free trade in Christianity. Under its hands the article of religious instruction is left to the same treatment, and to the operation of the same laws, with an article of ordinary merchandise—according to which Christian instruction should be provided for a community, to a greater or less degree, just as there is a demand for it; or, in other words, is left to be regulated by the laws, and of course to be limited by the extent of the market. At this rate the supply, whether as respects its amount upon the whole or the proportion of it in various places, will be made to suit the taste of the cus-

they are not so implicated as that, without the concurrence of the ecclesiastical courts, a full and final effect can be given to any proceeding by which the good of Christianity and the religion of our people may be effected. There is not a clerical appointment which can take place in any one of our parishes till we have sustained it. Even the law of patronage, right or wrong, is in force, not by the power of the state, but by the permission of the church, and with all its fancied omnipotence, has no other basis than that of our majorities to rest upon. It should never be forgotten that, in things ecclesiastical, the highest power of our church is amenable to no higher power on earth for its decisions. It can exclude, it can deprive, it can depose, at pleasure. External force might make an obnoxious individual the holder of a benefice; but there is no external force in these realms that could make him a minister of the Church of Scotland. There is not one thing which the state can do to our independent and indestructible church but strip her of her temporalities. *Nec tamen consumebatur*, she would remain a church notwithstanding—as strong as ever in the props of her own moral and inherent greatness; and, though shrivelled in all her dimensions by the moral injury inflicted on many thousands of families, she would be at least as strong as ever in the reverence of her country's population. She was as much a church in her days of suffering as in her days of outward security and triumph; when a wandering outcast, with nought but the mountain breezes to play around her, and nought but the caves of the earth to shelter her, as now, when admitted to the bowers of an establishment. The magistrate might withdraw his protection, and she cease to be an establishment any longer—but in all the high matters of sacred and spiritual jurisdiction, she would be the same as before. With or without an establishment, she, in these, is the unfettered mistress of her doings. The king by himself, or by his representative, might be the spectator of our proceedings; but what Lord Chatham said of the poor man's house, is true in all its parts of the church to which I have the honour to belong—"In England every man's house is his castle—not that it is surrounded with walls and battlements. It may be a straw-built shed. Every wind of heaven may whistle round it; every element of heaven may enter it, but the king cannot—the king dare not."—*Sermon XIII, Vol. XI, of Dr. Chalmers' Works; New and Uniform Edition.*

tomers. It will betake itself to those places where there is, what economists term, an effective demand for it—that is, where there is wealth enough and will enough, to ensure a remunerating price for the expense of its preparation. A free trade in commerce, only seeks to those places where it can make out a gainful trade; but it is sure to avoid or to abandon those places, where, whether from the languor of the demand or the poverty of the inhabitants, it would be exposed to a losing trade. By a free trade in Christianity, let the lessons of the gospel follow the same law of movement; and these lessons will cease to be taught in every place, where there is either not enough of liking for the thing, or not enough of money for the purchase of it: Or that religion, the great and primary characteristic of which was that it should be preached unto the poor, must be withheld from those people, who are unable by poverty to provide a maintenance for its teachers. And the teachers of this religion, whose office it is, after the example of its great Founder, to seek and to save those who are lost, must make no attempt to awaken from their slumbers, those who have no value, and will therefore give no price for their ministrations—because lost in the apathy of a deep and settled unconcern, and sunk in the indifference of spiritual death.

3. This brief and bare statement, one might think, of the effects of a free trade in Christianity, should be enough to condemn a system which seems to carry its own signal refutation along with it. But we ought to understand what the precise distinction is between Commerce and Christianity, which calls for such a difference of treatment between the two as that for which we are contending—so that while the one prospers to the uttermost under the system of free trade, and reaches by its means the greatest possible diffusion of its blessings and benefits through the world; the other, under the same system, would shrink into narrower dimensions, and be limited to a small fraction of the human species. If there be a diversity in the two cases, there must be a reason for it, which admits of being distinctly stated, and which may be distinctly apprehended. When Turgot and Smith and others proposed to assimilate the one to the other, so as to leave them both to the pure operation of demand and supply; and without the artificial encouragement, whether of bounties or endowments—if there be error in the proposition of these economists, they must have been misled by the light of some false analogy, which surely is capable of being exposed. In other words, there must be some intelligible principle, capable of being propounded and put into language; and on which the system of free trade, so applicable to the one case, is not alike applicable to the other also.

4. The following then is our explanation. Generally speaking, there is, by the very constitution of our nature, a sufficient intensity of desire, and consequently of demand, for the articles which commerce deals in, and so as to call forth an adequate supply of these articles, or a supply commensurate to all the exigencies of human society. There is no such intensity of desire or of demand for the article of Christian instruction. When it is affirmed, in regard to the goods of ordinary merchandise, that they might, with all safety, be left to the operation of demand and supply, it is always presupposed of the one element, that it is sufficiently strong to stimulate and call forth the other. And so it usually is. The longer a man is in want of food, the keener will become his appetency of hunger—till at length he would give any price, or make any sacrifice, in order to obtain it. And so it is of other sensations, which impel him to seek after other necessities of existence—as the cold which makes it indispensable to his comfort, that he should be clothed and lodged, as well as fed. Even when the neces-

saries of life are refined into exquisite and high-wrought luxuries, there is a sufficiently spontaneous and wide-spread desire after these, to ensure a sufficient demand for them, in the physical sense of taste and the vanity of man or his natural love of distinction—the one disposing him to the gratifications of the table—the other, though at the expense of all he can give away, to the decorations of his person and equipage and household establishment. Man's natural liking for these things, affords a powerful enough guarantee, either for that part of his labour which he is willing to put forth, or for that part of his wealth which he is willing to give up, in order to acquire them. Between the love of gain on the one hand, and the love of enjoyment on the other, there is no danger but the wheels of commerce will move with velocity enough—and in the very direction, too, that is most suited both for the needs of customers and the prosperity of dealers. It seeks no other aid at the hands of the legislature, than the enforcement of justice between man and man. The bounties wherewith a misjudging government would seek to encourage it, but serve to displace or to embarrass its movements—which, by the voice of all experience and all philosophy, might be left with the utmost safety and the best possible advantage, to a self-going mechanism of its own.

5. Now the very reverse of all this holds of Christianity, or rather of Christian instruction, viewed as an article which is beneficial to man; and which should therefore be distributed, to all the extent that is good or desirable to mankind, throughout the mass of society. It is not with man's intellectual, or his moral, as it is with his animal nature. Although it be true, that the longer he has been without food, the more hungry he is, or the greater and more urgent is his desire of food—yet the more ignorant a man is, not the greater, but generally speaking, the less is his desire of knowledge. And this converse proposition is still more manifestly true of his moral than of his intellectual wants. The more immersed a man is in vice or in voluptuousness, not most certainly the greater, but beyond all doubt the less, is his desire of virtue or his desire of holiness. There is no natural hungering or thirsting after righteousness; and before man will seek that the want should be supplied, the appetite must first be created. The less a man has, whether of religion or righteousness, the less does he care for them, and the less will he seek after them. It is thus that nature does not go forth in quest of Christianity; but Christianity must go forth in quest of nature. It is, on the one hand, the strength of the physical appetency; and, on the other hand, the languor of the spiritual, the moral, or the intellectual appetency, which makes all the difference. The law of our moral and intellectual is not the same, but reverse or contrary to the law of our physical wants. With the physical, the intensity of the desire is directly proportional to the want; with the intellectual and moral, it is inversely proportional, or the less he has of these the less he cares for them. The strength of man's natural craving, guarantees an effectual demand for food or raiment, or all that might contribute to the shelter and convenience of the house that is over his head—which, rather than want, he will go if he can to the most distant market, and with the full price in his hand for them. But though we may trust to his natural longing, for the goods which are to be had in a market, there is no such natural or universal longing for the good to be had in a church, or in a college, or even in a school. And never, therefore, was there a more unfortunate generalisation than that by which our economists have placed on the same footing, the articles of ordinary merchandise with the articles whether of common or Christian education; or by which, because they

are demonstrated of bounties for the one that they were unnecessary or even mischievous---they therefore contended against endowments for the other, as being, in their operation, alike mischievous or alike unnecessary.*

6. These principles are in full accordance with the facts, both of past history and of present experience. With many, there is a confused imagination, that, previous to the establishment of Christianity, the whole ministry of the gospel was conducted on the system of free trade. On a closer view, however, and a proper discrimination of the things which differ, it will be found, that what actually took place was the very reverse of this. It is true, that in all ages, the lessons of the gospel behoved to be paid for by some one, because the teachers of the gospel behoved to be maintained. But the whole system hinges upon this—who paid for these lessons? We know by whom it is, that, in the exchanges of ordinary business and on the principles of free trade, the payments are usually made. They are the customers or users of the commodity that is purchased, who, generally speaking, pay its price and its whole price. It were in

* As far back as 1817, I had occasion to publish a sermon which I preached on the death of the Princess Charlotte, wherein I adverted to the want of churches in Glasgow; and subjoined an appendix, in which there occurs my first exposition of this argument. The following is a brief extract.

“Dr. Adam Smith, in his *Treatise on the Wealth of Nations*, argues against religious establishments, on the ground that the article of religious instruction should be left to the pure operation of demand and supply, like any article of ordinary merchandise. He seems to have overlooked one most material circumstance of distinction. The native and untaught propensities of the human constitution, will always of themselves secure a demand for the commodities of trade, sufficiently effective to bring forward a supply equal to the real needs of the population, and to their power of purchasing. But the appetite for religious instruction is neither so strong nor so universal as to secure such an effective demand for it. Had the people been left in this matter to themselves, there would, in point of fact, have been large tracts of country without a place of worship, and without a minister. The legislature have met the population half-way, by providing them with a church and a religious teacher, in every little district of the land; and by this arrangement have increased, to a very great degree, the quantity of attendance and the quantity of actual ministration. In point of fact, a much greater number of people do come to church, and do come within the application of Christian influence, when the church and the preacher is provided for them, than if they had been left to build a meeting-house, and to maintain a preacher themselves. There is a far surer and more abundant supply of this wholesome influence dealt out among the population under the former arrangement, than under the latter one; and it is this *excess* of moral and religious good, which forms the only argument for a national establishment that I shall now insist upon.

“The argument of Dr. Smith goes to demonstrate the folly of a national establishment, either of meal-sellers or of butchers, or of any national establishment for supplying the people with the necessities and the comforts of life. But the peculiarity already adverted to, renders it totally inapplicable to the question of a national establishment for supplying the people with the lessons of Christianity.”

This argument I have been incessantly repeating since, on numberless occasions, and in a variety of forms; but it strikingly marks the slow progress wherewith a principle before unheard of makes way in society—that for at least fifteen years any testimony I could lift upon the subject was like the voice of one crying in the wilderness. It is now more familiar to Scotland since the extension of our church, no longer a matter of mere speech or speculation, has become a living and practical concern. I believe that in this part of the world, it is chiefly indebted for any currency it might have, to the important circumstance of its having been adopted by Lord Brougham some years ago, who, in a speech in the House of Peers, made use of the very consideration, and propounded it, almost in the very words which I have now uttered in your hearing—after which it expanded into full notoriety, when this particular reason for an established church, instead of lying hid in so many paragraphs of obscure authorship, went forth over the whole length and breadth of England under its far more influential title of the Lord Chancellor's argument.

violation of the system of free trade, if government paid any part of that price in the shape of a bounty. And it were an equal violation of the same system, from whatever quarter that bounty should come—whether from the state, or from any body of associated philanthropists, or from private individuals. It is the doctrine, and we hold it a sound one, of the economists, that an article should no longer be brought to market, if the price which purchasers are willing to pay for it, do not remunerate the cost of its preparation; or if, to help out that price, advances must be made by any party distinct from the purchasers themselves. For in this case it were a losing trade; and so much of the capital of the country, it is argued, would be thrown away on a profitless or hurtful investment. And one of the foremost articles in our modern, and, as we think, enlightened creed, is, that the supply of all those goods should cease, for which there is not an effective demand, that would cover the whole expense of bringing them to market—that the whole matter of demand and supply, in fact, should be left to find its own adjustment, in the free choice of the two parties concerned in it; or should be made to hinge exclusively on the price which the one party are willing to give, and the profit which the other party are willing to receive. Let these two elements act and react at will on each other, and so as to make out between them a self-going mechanism, that would only be put out of order, as if by the violence of a disturbing force—should the intervention of any third party be admitted, for the purpose either of help or of hinderance. In other words, the economists contend, and with our entire acquiescence, for the establishment of a perfect freedom in the world of trade, as being the condition of things, in which the best and most beneficial result, the greatest good or maximum of commercial prosperity, is realised—when dealers on the one hand are most profited, and customers on the other are most pleased.

7. Now let us consider whether this is the footing on which the world ever is or ever can be supplied with its Christianity, or rather with its Christian instruction, in the way that is best for the moral interests of our species. It was not so at the first introduction of Christianity, in virtue, not of a movement from earth to heaven, but of a movement from heaven to earth; and the expenses of which, throughout the infancy and boyhood of the Saviour, were certainly not defrayed by those for whose welfare the mission was undertaken. It was not so during the time of His public ministry, when three or four women ministered to Him of their substance, as He travelled from place to place over the land of Judea; and so He was maintained at the cost of the few for the benefit of the many. It was not so in the journeyings of His disciples, two by two, among their countrymen—who, when they entered a city, fixed their residence in some particular house, and were supported by the hospitality of one individual for the good of the general population. It was not so when the apostles went forth after the resurrection; and received their maintenance from such as Simon the tanner, or Lydia the seller of purple, or Stephanus and Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and others of those Scripture worthies who harboured and entertained the men of God, while they held out the bread of life, without money and without price, to the multitude at large. It was not so when the last, but not the least of the apostles, provided with his own hand for his own necessities; and the wages of Paul the tentmaker, enabled Paul the apostle, to labour in his sacred vocation without wages. It was not so when he received from other and distinct churches, that, in the church of Corinth, the gospel might not be chargeable to any; and he would suffer no man to strip him of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

And, to come down from the age of the New Testament, it generally could not have been so, that the extension of Christianity was carried forward during the first three centuries. The men who were not yet Christians did not, in those days, send to the apostolic college for men who might give them the lessons of the gospel; but, by a reverse process, teachers went forth among the yet benighted countries of the earth; and their expenses, at least in the first instance, behoved to be borne, not in the shape of a price by those who received the benefit, but in the shape of a bounty by those who dispensed it. In all these instances, contrary to every law or character of pure trade, the expense was borne either totally or partially by one party, and that for the good of another party. It was not as in the ordinary exchanges of commerce. The receivers were not the purchasers; and what they did receive was not a thing by them bought, but a thing to them given. It is an utter misconception that when Constantine set up in his dominions a national establishment of Christianity, he made the first infringement on that system of free trade by which the prosperity of this religion had been heretofore upholden; for, from its very outset, Christianity stood indebted, for almost every footstep of its progress, to a system and a policy directly the opposite of this. When he came forth with his great imperial bounty or benefaction, he only did on the large scale, what thousands of benefactors had previously, and for hundreds of years, done on a small scale before him. When he became the friend and nursing father of the church, he did for the whole territory of which he was the sovereign, what, times and ways without number, the friends of the church had already done, each for the little district in which he himself resided, or for the introduction and the maintenance of Christian worship in some chosen locality of his own. With his great national endowment, he but followed in the track of those private and particular endowments which, sometimes temporary and sometimes perpetual, had multiplied beyond all reckoning, during the preceding ages of Christianity; and in virtue of which it was, that churches innumerable were raised, and congregations were formed; but chiefly in the large and flourishing cities of the Roman empire. The peasants, or they who lived in the country and villages, inhabitants of the pagi, and hence called Pagans, were, in the great bulk of them, still unconverted—insomuch that Paganism in those days became synonymous with heathenism; or, in other words, the great majority of the rustics or countrymen of that period, notwithstanding the strenuous and apostolic exertion of many thousands of Christian missionaries for about three centuries together, were still adherents to the old superstition and idolatry of their forefathers. The universal endowment, by which a ministry was provided for every little section of the territory, or the whole was broken into parishes, opened a way to the moral fastnesses that were still held and occupied by the countless millions whom all the efforts of by-gone generations had not reached; and so brought a whole host of gospel labourers into contact with the wide and plenteous harvest of the general population.

8. But, instead of looking to the distant past, of which the history is far from perfect, the same lesson might be drawn from the observation of present or modern times. Certain it is, that the introduction of Christianity into any new land, proceeds by a very different method from the introduction therinto of any of the goods of ordinary merchandise. The commercial adventurers look for the remuneration of their expenses, to the price or equivalent given by the natives themselves. The missionary adventurers are upheld in their expenses, not by a price, but generally in whole, and almost always in part, by a bounty—the bounty of those who employ

and send them forth in full equipment for their high enterprise of charity. In this process, that law of equal and reciprocal barter, between them who bestow and them who receive the benefit, which the advocates of a free trade contend for, is altogether unknown. Rather than want the teas of China, the families of Britain do, in effect, send for them along half the circumference of the globe, and defray the whole cost of the expensive and distant voyage by which they are brought to our shores. But who paid for the outfit and all the other charges of that first missionary vessel, which first wafted the gospel to the remote island of Otaheite? Not the natives themselves, who should have wanted the blessings of Christianity for ever, had we waited for their effective demand; or not moved but in the expectation of a safe and profitable return from their hands, for the cost of this great undertaking. The undertaking originated with us; and was defrayed to the last farthing, out of a missionary fund raised from the benevolent of our own land. It is generally thus that all missionary work is upholden—paid and provided for, not by the receivers of Christianity, but by its dispensers, or rather by those who maintain the dispensers. So that, at least in the extension of Christianity, we do not sell the gospel, but offer it: we do not calculate on a price, as in the operations of commerce, but have recourse to a bounty, that dread and deprecation of all the economists—without which, whatever the effect might be on the continuance of Christianity in old countries, the propagation of it, at least in new countries, were altogether hopeless. Some may contend, that, on the principles of free trade, Christianity could be perpetuated wherever it is already planted; but few will have the hardihood to affirm, that, on these principles, its first settlement could have been effected in any land.

9. But though Christianity were indebted to the operation of a bounty, for every footstep of its progress from one region to another, this is far from being decisive of the controversy. For properly the question relates, not to the methods by which Christianity is introduced, but to the methods by which it might be maintained in any land. It might be very true that the taste, and consequently the demand, for this religion, must first be created among those people to whom it is at present unknown; and that therefore anterior to this, instead of waiting till it be sought after, it must be offered to their acceptance, or be carried to their doors, and taught to their families, not at their own expense, but at the expense of others beside themselves. It is even thus that commerce sometimes obtains a footing for itself in particular countries. Before the natives can have a liking for certain of its articles, they must first have a sight and a trial of them; and so instances can be given, where dealers have adventured their goods into places, where, instead of finding a market, they had first to form one—at their own hazard, therefore, or even expense in the first instance, and not at the expense of customers. But though it was thus at the commencement of the trade, it could not possibly be thus that we can explain the continuance of the trade. The same people who would not send for the commodity at the first, might, when once made to know and to relish it, rather than want, be abundantly willing to pay for it afterwards. And might not Christianity be sped in like manner? Though introduced at the expense of others, might it not, when the appetite for its lessons is excited, be maintained by themselves afterwards; and that not by certain of the nation for the benefit of the rest, but entirely and exclusively by those who receive the benefit? It might be very true that missionaries, at the charge and bidding of those who are Christians, must be employed for the conversion of those who are not Christians; but may it not also be true, that,

after their conversion has been effected, then a native demand will be set agoing; and ministers be employed at their own charge and their own bidding, for keeping up this religion from generation to generation?

10. There is a great semblance of probability for this, in much that might be seen, both throughout our own land and in various countries of Christendom. In Britain, there are many hundreds of large and flourishing congregations, where all the expenses of the service are defrayed by the hearers themselves. These are pure instances of free trade, and of an interchange as complete and equal as any which ever takes place between the buyers and the sellers of a market—where Christian instruction is rendered by the one party, and where its price, its whole price, is rendered by the other party—where there is not one farthing of endowment to help out the maintenance of the clergyman; and a remuneration for his labour, often adequate and respectable, is fully made good to him by those who enjoy the fruits of it. This operation of demand and supply is often exemplified both within and without the church of England, in many a successful chapel and many a prosperous meeting-house—where, in virtue of a large or a wealthy attendance, the produce of the seat-rents is sufficient, both for the payment of the minister and for all the other expenses of the concern. And, most assuredly, we have no quarrel with institutes like these—provided only that a pure gospel is delivered, and that Christian good is done by them. In whatever way Christ is faithfully and efficiently preached, it is the part of every honest disciple therein to rejoice; and no one can question the undoubted contributions made to the cause of religion, in the proprietary chapels of such churchmen as Newton and Cecil and Howell and Daniel Wilson, or of such dissenters as Watts and Doddridge and Andrew Fuller and Robert Hall. But it follows not, that, because there is a fitness in such as these to supplement the Establishment, there is also a sufficiency in them to supersede the Establishment; or, that the economy which is found to succeed within the limits of many a select and separate assemblage of worshippers, is the proper type of that larger economy, the object of which is to extend the blessings of Christian knowledge over the whole length and breadth of a land.

11. And, on viewing more specifically and attentively the state of these unendowed chapels, it will be found, that, on the strict principles of a reciprocal trade, a very large proportion of them could not possibly be sustained. In very many instances, the seat-rents of the occupiers, aided even by their voluntary offerings, are inadequate to the yearly expenses of the undertaking; and so subscriptions have to be instituted, which are carried beyond the hearers themselves; or collections are advertised for the benefit of the chapel-funds, to which the public at large are invited; or creditors, whether by constraint or generosity, have to transmute their loan into a gift, by the abandonment of their claims altogether; or journeys have to be undertaken, that money might be raised in various ways to help on the building of chapels in progress, or to extricate those already built from their sore embarrassments: And the innumerable other shifts and difficulties of these heavily indebted concerns, familiar to those who are vested with the management, all serve to demonstrate, that, unlike to the other articles which are brought into a market, and of which the supply is continued only because of an adequately remunerating price—unlike to these, the returns for the article of Christian instruction are very often beneath the prime cost incurred in the preparation of it. In thousands of instances, we might venture to say, the inadequacy of the whole sum obtained from the seat-rents must be made up by a liberality or a bounty

obtained from other quarters; or, which is the same thing, they who receive the whole benefit of the ministration do not pay the whole price of it—and the deficiency is covered by certain others who have no share in the benefit. In this transaction between the minister and his people, what is given on the one hand, and what is received on the other, do not stand to each other as the equivalents of a mercantile exchange. The payment for his services consists of two ingredients—one in the character of a price, but the other in the character of a present, which coming from the hands of individuals might be termed a benevolence, and would be termed an endowment did it come from the hands of the state.

12. But the strongest argument remains behind, for the necessity, either of such a benevolence being raised from the Christian public, or of such an endowment being obtained from the state. We may find, though a very few, of those wealthy congregations, which, in virtue of a revenue made up of golden seat-rents, can support their clergymen in affluence—and of course the highest in the scale, as may be seen at a glance on the face of the assemblage within, or as may be collected at the proper hour by the passing traveller without, from the throng and splendour of the many vehicles which beset the chapel doors. And, descending from such, there may perhaps be some hundreds more of independent or self-subsisting congregations in our land, which at the end of the year can exhibit their favourable balance, and be appealed to as so many examples of the prosperous working of the system of free trade in Christianity—where wealthy merchants, even substantial tradesmen, and at times, though rarely, a certain but small proportion of the best-conditioned among the working classes in the cheapest or outskirt pews, make up a body of worshippers, of whom it may justly be said that they pay to the full, and without help from any foreign quarter, for the spiritual provision both of themselves and of their families. Over and above these, we have as many thousands of those places of worship, which, but for the aid, either of private or public benevolence, would have turned out to be so many failures—indebted for their perpetuity to helps which are perfectly honourable to both parties, but which, as being departures from the system of free trade, serve at least to demonstrate its insufficiency for the supply of any land with the lessons of the gospel. And, accordingly, we find, that, in such congregations, it falls short of maintaining them; and that because congregations of altogether a more plebeian cast and composition than those which we have just specified—planted, it may be, in some poorer districts of the country; or admitting, if in town, a larger proportion of artizans and labourers. The system of free trade does something for these congregations, but does not and cannot do all. It should be accredited with the sum of all the prices fetched, in the shape of seat-rents, from those who are hearers. But these, in violation of that free trade system which repudiates all bounties, have to be supplemented by presents fetched from those who are not hearers. These, therefore, are not specimens of the sufficiency of this system. The difficulties under which they labour, their struggles to keep themselves afloat, the many shifts and difficulties which they must resort to, in the shape of drafts on the charity both of individuals and of the public, may all be appealed to as evidences, that, however commerce may thrive—on the native power of her own articles to summon the attendance of customers, and call forth a full equivalent at their hands; it is not thus that Christianity can be so sped and carried forward, or can ever become commensurate to the whole length and breadth of a country's population.

13. But, as we have already said, the strongest argument of all remains behind. We have accompanied the progress of these unendowed chapels

so far down in the scale of society; and have found, in the greatest majority of those which we come to last, that, on the mere footing of a commercial speculation, they could not be upholden. They in all probability would never have been built, but for the prospect of an addition from some other source than the market-price of sittings; and certain it is, that without such addition they would never have been maintained. When thus pushed to their extreme limit, and then examined as to the rank and quality of those who repair to them, it will be found that they serve chiefly for the accommodation of those who may be designated the lower of the middle class; and these mingled, to a certain extent, with household servants, and the better-conditioned of the working classes in society. But the decisive fact is, that beyond this limit, across which our chapel undertakers have never ventured—and that because, from the ulterior on the other side of it, there is the certainty of a dead loss to scare them away—on this untrodden vastness, there do exist thousands and thousands more, comprising often the great mass and majority of the common people, whom a deficient Establishment on the one hand has necessarily left out; and whom all the energies of Dissent upon the other, with all which the system of free trade can do, and all which Christian benevolence does into the bargain, have not overtaken. They cannot, it would appear, be allured as customers into those houses which dissenters have provided; and there are no houses provided by the Establishment to take them in as commoners—and that, because the Establishment has fallen short of its proper design, which is to hold forth Christianity without charge to the poor, or as a common good and benefit for all the families of all the population. And so it will be found that, in this surplus territory, whether it be met with in town or country, the great bulk and body of our ordinary workmen are neither church-goers nor chapel-goers. It is a question of statistics, and admits of being determined arithmetically and experimentally. Our assertion is borne out by every ecclesiastical survey that has been made in those places where the Church is greatly short of the population, and where the free trade system has put forth all its energies to supplement the deficiency. And, accordingly, there are eighty thousand human beings in Glasgow, who should be the regular attendants on divine worship, and who yet go regularly and habitually nowhere; and fifty thousand in Edinburgh; and at the very least half a million in London; and untold myriads in the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire and Lancashire. The thing admits of being brought decisively to the test of observation. It is at the choice of any single inquirer to verify it on his own account. Let him go forth on any district, whether of town or country, if the same or similarly conditioned with the places which we have now specified, and it be chiefly inhabited by men of handicraft and hard labour—let him fix at random on some contiguous thousand of a population made up of such materials, and he will often find, that, where at least one half should be every Sabbath in the house of God,—not one hundred or a tenth of the whole, much oftener not a hundred and twenty-five or one eighth of the whole, very seldom indeed one hundred and fifty or between a sixth and seventh of the whole—that have sittings in any place of worship, whether in the parish church or in meeting-houses of all denominations. On the field of his investigation, the population may have doubled or tripled, or perhaps even be assembled on a territory where, within its limits a century before, there was not a single human habitation. It is most interesting to know what free trade does, and what it leaves undone, in such new and increasing settlements as these. And it will invariably be found, that while shops and

markets, and the number of victuallers or clothiers, keep full pace with the increasing population and their increasing demand for food and raiment—the churches and the chapels, even the schools, and of course the number of teachers whether for religion or learning, have notoriously fallen short and not kept pace with them. The dealers in those things which are necessary to life ever maintain an equal proportion with the growing number of the families. The dealers in those things which are necessary to godliness fall behind this proportion, very often to one fifth, not unfrequently to one tenth, sometimes so low or even lower than one twentieth—leaving a vast moral wilderness in all those places where the people have been left to multiply, and at the same time left to themselves. Dealers, of course, accommodate their wares to the taste and inclination of their customers; and it were a transgression on the principle and philosophy of free trade to interfere with this process. And true it is, that to its single operation may be confided with all safety, the supply of the physical wants of our nature. Let a bazaar be instituted for the sale of provisions; and at the powerful and ever-recurring call of hunger, the multitude with one accord will flock daily to its portals, and with such a price in their hands too as will remunerate all the expenses of the establishment. Let the institute be a church, for distribution amongst them of the bread of life, or for the supply of their moral and religious wants; and its presence in the midst of them, with the weekly invitations of its Sabbath-bell, will fail to attract beyond the veriest handful of the surrounding population to this house of prayer—and more especially, if the market-price for the accommodation and the service be expected at their hands. It may or it may not be filled to an overflow by hearers from all distances, who have both the wealth and the will to pay for their attendance. But hundreds often are the families in the precincts of this temple of piety, so near that the voice of its psalms may enter their dwellings, yet not awaken them from the insensibility of their spiritual death. In the midst of besetting opportunities do they abide in their fastnesses; and just because left, as the system of free trade leaves every one, to their own inclinations—are there thousands, nay millions, in our land, who, abandoned to themselves, and voluntary aliens from the light of the gospel, are left to live in guilt and die in grossest darkness.

14. Such is the melancholy upshot of those rash and unfortunate generalisations, which the philosopher often indulges in his closet; and which have sometimes, to the great curse of the nation on whom they are inflicted, found their way into the cabinet, and been carried into effect, by those vain and misguided statesmen, who, themselves the erring worshippers of science and ambitious of its honours, have drunk, but not deeply, at the Pierian spring. It may be well in commerce, that markets should be left to find their own spontaneous level; and that the two elements of demand and supply should be suffered, without interference, to come to their own mutual adjustment of themselves. But it is not well that matters should thus be left in Christianity—else no attempt will be made, either to instruct the poor or to reclaim the profligate; and men, left to their own native indifference in spiritual things, will lapse into a habit of irreligion, will rather never be raised or liberated therefrom. The benefits which commerce confers upon the world are all provided at the expense, not of the dispensers, but of the recipients. Let this be the footing on which the benefits of Christianity are provided also; and in what possible way shall we reach either the depraved or the destitute?—those who have no will for its moral and spiritual blessings, or those who have no wealth to purchase them?

In truth, there is no enlightened philanthropist bent on the highest interests of humanity, and no enlightened patriot or statesman bent on the chief good of his own land, who would not prize it as a most gainful as well as glorious achievement, if the great bulk of the people in these realms would but consent to take the lessons of Christianity for nothing ; and be taught in the doctrine and morality of the gospel at the expense of others, and without one farthing of the purchase-money being advanced by themselves. This sacred theme—the education of the people, more especially when the education of principle has been utterly vulgarised by these computations of a cold and secular utilitarianism. Never was there a wider departure from all principle and truth, than when proposed to liken this highest good of the community to the goods of ordinary merchandise—whether viewed as an error of speculation by the *savant*, or as the crude imagination of the prosperous citizen, who appeals to the snug prosperity of his own thriving chapel, which, because filled to the door by wealthy seat-payers like himself, he would, therefore, hold forth as the representative and type of that system, by which the religion of a whole country should be provided for. The best and greatest interests of human society must not be so trifled with. And, after all, there is not only false sentiment but even false arithmetic in the view of these gross and mercantile calculators. The universal scholarship for which we are contending, would, if carried into effect, be indeed the cheapest defence of our nation—whether its expenses shall be defrayed in the form of a liberality by the hands of private individuals, or from the public treasury in the form of an endowment.*

15. We have not yet, however, made good the conclusion, that a National Establishment is the best and fittest expedient for providing our general population with the lessons of Christianity, although we trust it may soon appear, that it is not on the free trade principle, which is the principle of let alone, that we can most effectually secure this high interest. We may have scored off this from the list of expedients ; yet other expedients for the religious education of the people may remain to be disposed of, besides that of an Establishment—and having now delivered our views on the scheme of the econonists, we shall proceed in our next Lecture to expound and to give our estimate of another scheme, which, though generally held to be identical with the former, is, in some material respects, distinct from it ;—we mean the scheme of the voluntaries.

* On the subject of cheapness, let us confess once for all “that we have no sympathy with what has been called the spirit of the age. The very worst effects are to be dreaded from it. Every thing now is made a question of finance ; and science, with all that can grace or dignify a nation, is vulgarised and brought down to a common standard—the standard of the market and of the counting-house. It does look menacing, to take an example out of the thousand which may be specified, that it hinged on one solitary vote, whether the trigonometrical survey of our island should be permitted to go on—a work which like the Domesday-Book of England might, after the lapse of a millennium, still survive, as a great national index for the guidance of our most distant posterity. It makes one tremble for some fearful resurrection of the old Gothic spirit amongst us—when one thinks that we were within a hair-breadth of this noble enterprise being quashed. And this is the spirit of the age!—an age of unsparing retrenchment ; a regime of hard and hunger-bitten economy, before whose remorseless pruning-hook lie withering and dissevered from their stem, the noblest interests of the commonwealth ; a vehement outrageous parsimony, which, under the guise of patriotism, so reigns and ravens over the whole length and breadth of the land, and cares not though both religion and philosophy should expire, if but some wretched item of shred and of candle-end should be gained by the sacrifice ; this, though now the ascendent policy of our nation, elevated into power by the decisions of the legislature, and blown into popularity by the hosannas of the multitude, will be looked back upon by posterity as an inglorious feature of the worst and most inglorious period in the annals of Britain ; the befitting policy for an age of little measures and little men.”—*Chalmers' Political Economy*, p. 260.

LECTURE III.

VINDICATION OF A NATIONAL RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENT, IN OPPOSITION TO THE VIEWS OF THOSE WHO ALLEGE THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLE.

THE Voluntary Principle is partly in unison with the doctrine of a free trade in Christianity, but far from being altogether so; though thus generally imagined by our indiscriminating adversaries, who, in the management of this controversy, have so confounded the things which differ, as to assail the system of endowments sometimes under the former argument and sometimes under the latter—unconscious all the while of such an occasional conflict and contrariety between the two reasons which themselves employ, that the one reason often completely neutralises the other. We should in fact have taken up the anti-establishment expression of the Voluntary Principle sooner—had it not been that the other, or the principle of a free trade in Christianity, though not so current in the vocabulary of the general public on this question, is now the favourite expression of our senators and economists; and more embodies that conception in their minds, on which many of them do hold a National Establishment of Christianity to be uncalled for. Under this title it carries more the air of science or of profound and enlightened statesmanship; is recommended by such names as those of Smith and Turgot and others of the high *savans* both in France and in England; and altogether has such a character or pretension of philosophy about it, as to prove greatly more seducing to minds enamoured of those generalisations, in which a lofty and comprehensive intellect delights to indulge. It is by a slow and laborious process, and after many a severe encounter with the prejudices of the age, that the original speculations of the closet, however sound, come to have their practical effect and development in the hall of legislation. It has been said that it took half a century, ere the enlightened political economy of Dr. Smith found its way into the statute-book. But a great and unfortunate error has been implicated with a theory otherwise unexceptionable; and will it take another half century, ere the proper discrimination be made, and that error be discharged from the minds of those legislators, who have imbibed the whole system and philosophy of this great master in economical science? And meanwhile, because the doctrine of a free trade in commerce has now become an article of the popular and prevailing creed, must we be doomed to hear for the whole of that period of the doctrine of a free trade in Christianity also? Never truly did two distinct questions stand more widely apart from each other, or had less of a common principle to rest upon; and should, in consequence of the two being resolved alike, our religious Establishments be abrogated—then will the best and greatest of our national institutes have been offered up in sacrifice to the wizard power of a phantom—to the mere deceit and sorcery of a name.

We now come to the proper subject of this day's lecture.

1. When men tell us in argument of the *Voluntary Principle*, they are not aware of a certain ambiguity in the phrase, which, though not generally noticed by controversialists, would, if fully exposed and done away, go far to simplify, if not to settle, the whole controversy. When we ask

our antagonists, what substitute they would propose for a national establishment of religion, we shall at one time hear of a free trade in Christianity; and at another of the Voluntary Principle—and that from the mouth of one and the same reasoner. Yet in one sense of the Voluntary Principle, there is an utter discrepancy between it and the system of free trade; and it is only in the other sense of it that the two are analogous, or rather indetical, the one with the other. If this matter were perfectly cleared up, we think it would chase away a certain mistiness which overhangs this whole question—inasmuch that the agitation of it has, in many instances, been a combat in the dark. It has often been found to terminate an intellectual warfare, when the champions on each side of it have been made to understand, both each other and themselves.

2. There now seems on all hands a strong practical sense, if not an explicit and avowed one, of the insufficiency of the free trade system, for the supply of the world with the lessons of Christianity. This has long been acknowledged, or at least acted upon in the business of foreign missions, or in the business of supplying foreign parts with the knowledge of the gospel. Instead of waiting till the demand for Christianity comes of its own accord, from men ready with an indemnifying or remunerating price, to cover all the expenses of bringing it to their shore—the dispensers of Christianity go forth on their missionary voyage, in quest of men, to whom they might offer this pearl of greatest value, and on whom to urge the acceptance of it without money and without price. Instead of discerning in this process any of the methods of ordinary trade, there is here a reversal of all its principles; and what comes near to the point at issue, there is a like reversal of them in the home as in the foreign missionary enterprise. And accordingly we have the one institute as well as the other. We have the Home Missionary Society, that would never have been thought of, but for the experimental feeling of a destitution and depravity at our own doors, which required the very same treatment with the heathenism of distant lands—and this society composed of the very men, too, who, while they give evidence by their own doings of the insufficiency of the free trade system, can yet talk of this as the grand specific, on the strength of which they might dispense with a national establishment of religion altogether. There is in truth no analogy between their operations, and those of commerce on the system of free trade, or of commerce alike unfostered and unfettered by any artificial regulations. The agents of this society, the men who labour under them, in the streets of our city or the villages of our country population, are not maintained on the principles of a market—do not receive their necessary hire in the shape of equivalents from those who are benefited by them; but in the shape of a bounty from those who employ them. We say that all they who have become parties in such an institution, stand committed, if not in favour of a national Establishment, at least against one of the favourite substitutes, by which it is proposed to replace the want of one—against the system of a free trade in Christianity. They tell us emphatically by their own conduct, that something else, something additional must be tried, beside the mere operation of demand and supply as in ordinary merchandise; which, however sufficient for the upper and middle classes—who, if they have got the will, have also the wealth to purchase the lessons of the gospel for themselves—has long proved itself to be glaringly insufficient for the great mass of the common people, for that mighty host of immortal and accountable beings, who compose the great bulk and body of every commonwealth.

3. Still we may have cancelled or disposed of the free trade system, and

made effectual demonstration of the necessity for its being supplemented, if not set aside, by the adoption of some other expedient for the Christian instruction of the people; and yet not made it out, that this expedient should be a legal and sure provision for the maintenance of an established clergy. The doctrine of an establishment may have other rivals, or other antagonists to contend with, beside the system of free trade; and accordingly such an antagonist has been conjured up within these few years, under the name of the Voluntary Principle—which, though identified in the imagination of our opponents with a free trade in Christianity, is yet not throughout all its extent identical therewith. Had it been perfectly the same, we should have viewed it as having been already fought against, and placed *hors de combat*. But the two are in certain respects distinct, and each requires a distinct argumentation—although confounded together by the undistinguishing advocates of the Voluntary Principle, who thus prove themselves alike insensible to the strength and the weakness of their own cause.

4. There are two sorts then of the Voluntary Principle, which are almost never adverted to; but which it is of the utmost argumentative importance to discriminate the one from the other. A man, then, may either make a voluntary return, in the shape of a price or equivalent, for those Christian ministrations which are rendered to himself or his family; or he may make a voluntary offering in the shape of a donation, to set agoing or to support a Christian ministration for others beside himself, or for other families than his own. The one may be altogether as voluntary a payment as the other. He may not have been more willing to make remuneration for his own share of the article of Christian instruction to himself—than he is willing to make a contribution that others may share it along with him. Both of these exercises, however different in their effect and object, have been referred to the Voluntary Principle; and the result has been, that, to a great extent, it has darkened or bewildered the whole controversy. Two things so different in their nature, ought to be signalised and set apart from each other by different names. When a congregation, therefore, do from their own contributions, whether formed by seat-rents or otherwise, support their own minister—we shall put it down to the account of internal voluntaryism; and that because the members of the congregation raise within themselves a sufficiency for all their expenses. In so far as they have been helped to accomplish this by the contributions of others, not members of the congregation, we shall put it down to the account of external voluntaryism—as coming from the people without the limits of the congregation. In other words, the one is voluntaryism *ab intra*; the other voluntaryism *ab extra*. We regret the scholastic character of these designations; but we can find no others more expressive than these.

5. It will now be seen how far the Voluntary Principle is coincident, and how far it is in conflict, with the system of free trade in Christianity. It must be obvious of internal voluntaryism, that it is just another name for this system; and must therefore share in all the defects and all the impotency, under which we have proved it to labour. On the principle of a free trade, or of a trade unforced and unfostered by any bounty, each congregation is left, out of its own resources, to pay the expenses of its own ministry,—a principle of which we have already demonstrated, that it leaves millions and millions more of our British population—all in fact who have neither the wealth nor the will to purchase a Christian education for themselves—in a state of heathenism. But any short-coming in the price which these are willing to give for their religious instruction, may be supplemented by the contributions which others from abroad are willing to

advance, so as to make out such a remuneration as may be essential to keep the chapel and its services agoing. Now whatever comes from this source, comes from the willingness of the people to give, who have no benefit from these services; or, in other words, is the produce of external voluntaryism. But this lands us in what, to all intents and purposes, is a bounty; or the moment you draw upon external voluntaryism, you make a practical acknowledgment of the insufficiency of the free trade system, for the supply of a population with the lessons of the gospel. We hear of the sufficiency of the Voluntary Principle for the supply of all the moral and religious wants of a population; but if ever, to make this out, the internal voluntaryism draw upon the external, in order to supplement its own deficiencies, let us at least hear no more of the sufficiency of the free trade system: neither let us hear any more of the same objection to bounties in Christianity, which the disciples of our modern and enlightened school in political economy prefer against bounties in commerce. If ever the internal need to be helped by the external voluntaryism, what becomes of the sufficiency of the free trade principle? And, on the other hand, if the offerings of the external be thankfully received by the voluntaries themselves, when involved in the struggles and harassed by the shortcomings of their internal voluntaryism—what becomes of the economical argument against a national establishment of Christianity? When the Voluntary Principle in all its extent, or as comprehensive of the internal and external, becomes your specific for the Christianisation of a country—then the free trade system ceases to be that specific, for it is set aside, whenever the internal requires the aid of the external; or, to express it differently, whenever a bounty has to be given for the purpose of repairing the deficiencies of the market price. At all events, let us no longer hear of the Voluntary Principle, and the principle of a free trade in Christianity, put into the same category; or so confounded, as if the one were tantamount to the other—when, in truth, the Voluntary Principle, in that branch of it which we have denominated voluntaryism *ab extra*, offers as great a violence to the system of the economists in this matter, as does the doctrine of a national establishment, or of a certain legal provision for the support of a Christian ministry in a land. The free trade in Christianity, and External Voluntaryism, are as distinct from each other in the ecclesiastical question—as a market price and a bounty are in the economical question.

6. Let us now, after these various explanations, understand the real state of the controversy. Our antagonists, who think that a national establishment of Christianity ought to be superseded, tell us of the sufficiency of the Voluntary Principle. But this cannot be the sufficiency of internal voluntaryism, which is but the system of free trade under another denomination; and the shortcomings of which have been made abundantly manifest. To make up for these shortcomings, to provide a gospel ministration for the millions and the millions more whom the system of free trade or of internal voluntaryism does not overtake, were an achievement worthy of the highest efforts of philanthropy and patriotism. But viewed as a deed of patriotism, it is the proper work of statesmen, or of the government whose affairs these statesmen administer—thus landing us at once in a legal, or national, religious establishment. But this is resisted, and still, as heretofore, on the alleged sufficiency of the Voluntary Principle—not surely of the voluntary principle *ab intra*, this being already disposed of; but of the voluntary principle *ab extra*, or on the sufficiency of the external voluntaryism to compensate all the defects of the internal. Perhaps viewed

as a deed of philanthropy, they regard it, not only as the proper but as the exclusive work of philanthropists, and in which the government ought to have no share. At all events, the question is now brought within a narrower compass than before. We presume it to be agreed on both sides, that the outcast millions ought to be reclaimed from the ignorance and irreligion of heathenism. The only difference relates to the party at whose expense this great achievement ought to be perfected—whether by private Christians, under the impulse of a religious benevolence; or by an enlightened government under the impulse of a paternal regard for the highest weal of its subject population. We, the advocates of a National Establishment, hold it the duty and wisdom of every state, thus to undertake for the education of the great family under its charge, and to provide the requisite funds for the fulfilment of the enterprise—and this without prejudice, but the contrary, to the liberality of those individuals, who might choose of their own means to build more churches, and maintain more ministers—thus adding to the amount of Christian instruction in the land. Our antagonists on the other hand hold this to be only the fitting work of individuals, whether acting separately or in associated bodies—to be their concern, and theirs exclusively; and that the government of a country should have nothing to do with it.

7. We do not object to these supplemental efforts of private Christians, and by which the shortcomings of an establishment might in a greater or less degree be repaired. But ere we confide the religion of our people to the growth and multiplication of these churches, we should like to know in how far they have filled up those blank spaces, which, in the course of an increasing population, our national churches have left behind them. In the deficiency of our existing apparatus, the Voluntary Principle has had an ample field for the trial of its energies; and we desire to understand, whether, in virtue of those spontaneous and expansive properties which have been ascribed to it, the mighty surplus of our unprovided millions has indeed been overtaken. In this land of perfect toleration, there has been no want of liberty for the great experiment; and now, at the end of at least a century, since chapels may without let or hinderance have been planted in each vacant portion of the territory, let us be told, whether all the national and all the voluntary churches together be commensurate to the exigencies of our augmented population. When reckoning the outcast multitude in our land who congregate nowhere, and that because there were no cheap and accessible places of worship which could take them in, we at that time appealed to them as evidence of the insufficiency of a free trade in religion. But in truth they afford evidence of more than this. This system of free trade is tantamount only to the system of internal voluntarism. But the existing number of our voluntary chapels represents all that has been done, not by the internal only, but by the internal and external voluntarism together. Over and above those places of worship which are wholly sustained by the seat-rents of the congregations assembled in them, it comprehends, not only those which are wholly sustained, but that still greater number who are partially helped by the liberalities of Christian benevolence. The unprovided millions of the British population furnish a measure, not for the deficiency of the free trade system of the voluntary principle *ab intra*, but for the deficiency of that system after all the additions which have been made to it by the voluntary principle *ab extra*. They let us know, that, after both have done their uttermost, there is a task of first-rate social and national importance, even the Christian education of thousands and thousands more of our British families, which

remains undone. These tell us a great deal more than the impotency of the great economical specific, even that of free trade in Christianity. They further tell of the impotency of the great sectarian specific, or of the voluntary principle. If such be the filling and the fertilising power of voluntaryism, whence those mighty wastes of barrenness and moral desolation which meet the eye, in all the over-crowded towns and all the recent and still churchless villages of our empire? How comes it that, while shops and markets for the supply of their physical necessities keep full pace with the tide of advancing population, chapels and churches for the supply of their spiritual necessities should fall so immeasurably short of it—bespeaking not only the languor of the spontaneous demand, among those people who should be willing to pay for Christian instruction to themselves; but bespeaking the languor of Christian charity, among those people who should be willing to give it on behalf of others without money and without price? We confess a greater value for experience than for experiments; and when, in spite of all the talent and energy of our dissenting brethren, we witness on the outfield of our National Establishment, open now to their enterprise for several generations, such a spectacle of defects and difficulties and grievous destitution, with the myriads of unreclaimed wanderers whom they have never reached, and far less overtaken—we do apprehend, that, on the overthrow of this venerable institute, the same evils, now so largely exhibited on all the unprovided remnants of the country, would be realised and multiplied over the whole length and breadth of the land. We must first behold the moral triumphs of voluntaryism, in the many hundreds of surplus localities which are before our eyes, ere we can consent to give up the whole territory into their hands; and do think that men who have evinced so little their power to rebuild, should be somewhat less fiery and precipitate in their zeal to destroy.

8. If, on taking the moral statistics of a land, we found, that, after all the voluntary efforts both of individuals and societies for the spread of education, a large proportion of the peasantry were destitute of all good scholarship, we should not feel it to be incongruous, but in perfect keeping with our idea of a government in the exercise of its best and highest functions, should we look to the advance of funds from the National Treasury, for the erection of schools and the requisite endowment of teachers, in every little section of the territory; or, in other words, for a commensurate scholastic establishment at the expense of the state. And what is true of common, we hold to be alike true of Christian education. If, in spite of all the strenuousness and zeal of our religious philanthropists, we behold millions and millions more destitute of virtue as well as knowledge; with as little sense of immortality as the beasts that perish; and, reckless alike of their obligations to God and man, living in that guilty abandonment of all principle, which is at once ruinous to their own everlasting prospects and hazardous to the peace and order of the commonwealth—then, if competent for the rulers of a state to provide against the nuisance of a population untaught in letters, it is still more competent, we should say still more imperatively binding, to provide against the still more hurtful and intolerable nuisance of a population untaught in morality and religion. If it be lawful and encumbent on the civil magistrate to achieve the one object by means of National Schools and schoolmasters—where lies the objection to his achievement of the other by means of National Churches and clergymen? In other words, we can discern no greater reason in a Scholastic than in an Ecclesiastical Establishment, or rather a more emphatic call for the latter than the former. What is true of the smaller family of a household, holds

true of the greater family in an empire. If both the parent in the one case, and the governor in the other, be chargeable with a guilty indifference who should suffer their respective families to remain unschooled—there is guilt of a deeper dye, if, by the indifference or neglect of either, they are suffered to remain unchristianised.

9. We are sensible both of a feeling and a theory in our day, which are strongly and strangely adverse to this conclusion. It is extremely difficult to describe the antipathy, either in the nature or in the grounds of it; but the fact is undoubted, of a certain sensitive notion that is now generally afloat, as if a government overstepped the limit of its own proper and legitimate functions, by charging itself in any way with the religion of the people. On the contrary, it is reckoned to be in the magistrate the very perfection of enlightened patriotism on this subject, when like Gallio he cares for none of these things. And thus it is held, by the disciples of a certain cold and metaphysical utilitarianism, as one of the chief proprieties of a government, that it should be quite unconcerned, nay unconscious of the religion of its subjects—as if, bereft of all vitality and sentiment, it were reduced to a sort of mechanical automaton which had other functions to perform; and to go beyond which, more especially for the education of the people in the faith and principles of any theological system, were an utter confusion of the characteristics and the species of things. Such is one of the theories of our day—in conforming to which a government should, as a government, be lifeless of all regard to things sacred; and, maintaining a calm and philosophic indifference to all the modes and varieties of religious belief, should refuse to entertain the question, in which of these varieties the people ought to be trained—or, rather, make it wholly the affair of the people themselves, with which they have no business to intermeddle in any form, whether or not they are to have any religion at all.

10. Now we protest altogether against this view of a government—against what may be termed this artificial inversion of its idea. We plead for its moral prerogatives; nor can we forget the human principles and human feelings of the individuals who compose it—whether it be the humanity which glows in the breast of the king upon the throne, or the humanity that tells on the sensibilities, and also does and ought to tell on the votes of a parliament. A righteous and religious monarch, or righteous and religious senators, must impress their character on their acts; nor can we understand the distinction, or rather the disjunction, which is spoken of in these days, between Christian governors and a Christian government. We have no such notion of the moral that we have of the physical chemistry, in the compounds of which, the properties of the ingredients may be changed or disappear. The corporation of a state cannot be thus denaturalised, or reduced to a sort of *caput mortuum*, discharged of all soul and all sentiment—as if by a process of constitution-making in the crucibles of a laboratory. The cold metaphysical abstraction that is thereby engendered, may exist in the region of the ideal; but it does not exist in the region of the actual, nor even in the region of the possible; for men, though convened within the hall of a legislative assembly, will not, therefore, forget that they are men; or think that they must renounce all care for the highest well-being of families, when called to deliberate on the well-being of a nation.

11. And accordingly we find that, unchecked by any freezing limitation of this sort, a Parliament or National Assembly does collectively give way to the very principles, or tastes, or feelings, by which the men who compose it are separately and individually actuated. For example, they have the desire, that at least plain and popular learning should be diffused

throughout the mass of the community ; and so, without let or hinderance, will they vote away the nation's money, and that for the support and establishment of schools, and for the sake of a general scholarship throughout the nation. Or, with a still loftier cast of intellect, they are bent on the encouragement of science ; and so, with like freedom, will they grant of the funds of the nation for literary societies and universities and museums and botanic gardens—and all for the sake of a loftier learning, or for the philosophy of the nation. Or, in their love and value for the arts, will they, from the same source still, that is from the nation's revenue, the product of hard taxation, purchase and throw open a magnificent park, for the health and recreation of the public ; or a gallery of choice pictures, and that for the improvement of a nation's taste. Or, with the very impulse which enters into the heart of the humblest individual, will they listen to some tale of suffering, and not from their own funds but from the funds of the state, undertake the charge of relieving it—as when they provided for the destitution of the Highlands ; or resolved, at the expense of the nation, on a voyage of benevolence for the discovery and rescue of the missing ships detained through the winter in Greenland, and this in obedience to the call of the nation's humanity. Now we have yet to learn, in the midst and with a multitude of such proceedings as these, why an assembly of legislators, having in themselves a sense and principle of religion, or bent on the moral and Christian education of society at large, or lastly in obedience to the call of the nation's piety, why they might not, and for the accomplishment of this high end, ordain, and from the means of the nation, an establishment of national churches—even as, for the accomplishment of other ends, they ordain national schools and national universities, and public or national institutes of various sorts and descriptions. We cannot but imagine our antagonists reduced to a difficulty, who would leave a government free to provide for the health, or the scholarship, or the taste, or even the amusement of the people ; and yet would tie up their hands against any provision for the moral wants of the community, or for training the families of our land in that best and highest of all education—the education of principle and piety.

12. And so far from any speciality of argument against such a destination, all the sound reasoning, we apprehend, is a reasoning *à fortiori* in favour of it. To establish our conclusion, it does not even require, however desirable it might be on other grounds, that we should have a parliament of spiritual men ; for let them be utilitarians only, and that too in the coarsest or merely material sense of the term, and it were a mighty advancement of all their objects, that the people should be trained in the principles and habits of religion. Neither the taste of the nation, nor the scholarship of the nation, can so facilitate the business, or so prodigiously lessen the expenditure of a government, as would the Christianity of the nation. It is this latter education of which Burke's celebrated aphorism holds most emphatically true, that it were the cheap defence of the commonwealth. A universal Christianity would annihilate crime ; and though even then the poor should still be with us, or there should still be poverty in the land, it would at least annihilate pauperism. And what a universal Christianity could accomplish in full, would be accomplished in great part by a universal Christian education, which might not annihilate, but would at least indefinitely reduce, both of these great and expensive evils. It were an incalculable saving of the wealth, and still more a saving to the happiness of the nation, that there should be the prevention of crime rather than its punishment. And it were a like saving, that there should be the pre-

vention of pauperism rather than a positive administration to relieve its necessities, or to meet its exactions, which at one time in England amounted to three times the revenue of the National Church. It could be made an affair of numerical computation; and an argument might be raised from it to suit the understanding even of the most arithmetical of our statesmen. The outlays on our civil and criminal jurisprudence—the still more enormous outlay of our parochial expenditure; and what we have not yet noticed, the outlays on the maintenance both of the military and constabulary forces, to overcome an untrained, and therefore a turbulent community, exceed, and more than in a tenfold ratio, all the outlays which would be required for a system of religious discipline, by which to form a manageable population of peaceful and industrious and well-ordered families, and which last outlays, after all, should not be viewed in the light of an expenditure which the Voluntaries want to save, but as the present destination of a long-established property which the Voluntaries want to seize upon. But without remarking further on this injustice—had we only yet been at the commencement of the work—had we still to institute a new, or to extend a deficient establishment—and could the object be provided for only by a grant from the Treasury—such an application of the public money might be vindicated, we contend, not alone on the high ground of religious principle, but even on the infinitely lower ground that is taken by those who merely view it as a question of polity and economics. The main object of the Christian who desires an establishment is the godliness of the people, and that they may secure the promise of the life which is to come; but to provide such an establishment is also the wisdom of the statesman, even though his main or only object should be the interest of the life that now is. When a Christian labours for an establishment of churches, it is, first and foremost, for the kingdom of God and His righteousness; but the patriot and the statesman should also labour for an establishment of churches, though only for the sake of the “all other things which are added” to them.

15. It will now be seen that there is a harmony not previously seen, perhaps not even suspected before, between the doctrine of a national establishment, and at least one great branch of the Voluntary Principle. It is no doubt at utter antipodes with the maxim that each man should pay his own minister, which, if raised into a universal and unexcepted category on this subject, would not only exclude a payment by the state, but even the contributions of private benevolence, either for the erection of churches or the maintenance of clergymen. But this total abandonment of the great mass of the people to themselves—this assertion of the sufficiency of internal voluntaryism for the supply of the country with religious instruction, is pretty well now given up, at least in practice, and by sectarians of all denominations as well as churchmen. Innumerable are the appeals made by the Voluntaries themselves to the generosity of the public in behalf of their labouring congregations; and the call is responded to by thousands, who feel that to give for the religious education of the people is the best and most productive of all benevolence—and their contributions, whether from an impulse of piety or of patriotism, are not more willingly made by the one party than they are welcomed by the other. It is not very discriminating we think, thus to hail the liberalities of private individuals, and to refuse or regard them as incompetent and wrong, when they are congregated in the form of one great liberality from the state. For in truth, the very spirit which prompts the individual gifts needs only to be strong enough and general enough, to call forth a gift from the treasury. This

were but one of the many examples, in which the voice of a country is found to have an influential control over the acts of a government. Let the sentiment prevail, that it is good to pay for the Christian instruction of those who either cannot or will not pay for it themselves; and a government, when adding its own great national subscription to those of the many individuals who have preceded and pointed the way to it, is not thwarting the sentiment by which they were actuated, but only giving further expression, or larger and more lasting effect to it. There is no fear lest a popular government like ours will award a grant for the erection or the endowment of churches, till they anticipate a virtual ratification of the deed by a preponderance of feeling in its favour from without—or till encouraged to the measure, if not by the universal majority of tax-payers, at least by that class of them whose larger payments constitute the vast majority of by far the larger part of the revenue of our nation. In as far then as they are concerned, we behold in an ecclesiastical provision by the state, an example of external voluntaryism, or a willing public contributing of their wealth to the Christian instruction of the common people, through the medium of a willing government. It only differs from a separate or a personal contribution, by the channel of conveyance through which it passes—or as a mite given by the hand to some individual object of charity, differs from a mite cast into a treasury that has been opened for the relief of this and of all similar objects. When instead of local establishments, for the good of so many special districts, raised by the munificence of individuals, we behold a great national establishment for the good of the whole country and raised by an endowment from the state—we only see the final development of an anterior tendency, which operated in the minds of many thousands of private Christians; or their collective mind finding its outlet, and its ultimate expression or effect, in the act of a government. A parliamentary vote then in aid of religious education, is, both in principle and effect, but an example of the Voluntary Principle *ab extra*. And you will now perhaps see, that, on this subject, there was room for a distinction between the things which differ, but which are apt to be confounded—even though you may have disliked the scholastic and somewhat repulsive terms which we have employed for the expression of it. It is but internal voluntaryism, or rather the assertion of its sufficiency, which comes into conflict with the principle of a national establishment. On the moment that the internal draws upon or seeks for help from external voluntaryism—which it does in fact all over the kingdom—our cause is practically and substantially gained; for this external voluntaryism, so far from being in conflict with the principle of a national establishment, is in perfect and precise coincidence therewith.

14. We have had a recent illustration of all this in the doings of Scotland. It is but a moderate estimate of the ecclesiastical destitution which obtains there, when we affirm, that at least half a million of inhabitants who ought to be church-goers, have no right of occupancy in any place of worship—whether in the established church or the dissenting meeting-houses. The population had greatly outgrown the provision originally instituted, for supplying them with the lessons of the gospel—having increased since the days of John Knox from one million to two millions and a half. Till within these four years, it was left chiefly to the energies and the efforts of internal voluntaryism, to meet and make provision for this enormous deficiency; and the result is that certainly not more than one third of the outfield population has been thereby overtaken. At all events, there remains as great a number to be provided for as corresponds to the

gross population of a million, and these, it is to be remarked, consisting mainly of the common people—the most helpless, because the least able, and when once the habit of irreligion is formed also the least willing, to help themselves. For it cannot be too much insisted on, that they are not the poorest in the community who attend the meeting-houses, but of a higher grade than these—though in greater part, perhaps, and of course with many exceptions, of the lower of the middle class, as shopkeepers and master tradesmen, and in certain places a considerable number of husbandmen, with doubtless a small proportion of the better-conditioned among our artisans and even labourers. It is upon these last that the evils of our ecclesiastical destitution have principally fallen. They are the working classes, and families of the working classes, who have been laid in consequence under the burden of a great moral calamity. It is for their relief, for their enlargement, that the scheme of church extension has been formed; and whereas we have been represented as seeking a boon for the church, the true spirit and design of our enterprise is to obtain, at the hands of the public and the hands of the government together, a boon for the common people.

15. In the prosecution of this enterprise, we, in the first instance, have been drawing largely upon external voluntaryism. In virtue of our repeated appeals and applications to the Christian benevolence of the land, we have undertaken the erection of 180 churches—greatly more than half of which are now in progress of building; and nearly one half of which are completed, and indeed opened, for the regular services of the sanctuary. It was highly instructive to us, when our friends the Voluntaries, at the outset of this great operation, thought they saw in it the triumph of their own cause—saying that we had at length given in to their principle, and become Voluntaries ourselves. Now it is very true, that in defect of their internal voluntaryism, in utter defect of their free trade system, which, after a century of perfect freedom for the enterprise and the utmost strenuousness in the prosecution of it, left without the blessings of a gospel ministration half a million who ought to have been church-goers, and a whole million of general population—it is very true, that, in these circumstances, we are attempting, by the liberty of others, to do for our unprovided thousands and tens of thousands, that which their own poverty, and their own listlessness together, have prevented their doing for themselves. We are glad to understand that the Voluntaries approve of this; or that in any thing there is a community of sentiment betwixt us. We can bear to be told, that we too, in our endeavours to repair the deficiencies of our church, have had recourse to the voluntary principle—for, as far as our share of it is concerned, we hold it to be a very sound one. Nay, we should have rejoiced most heartily, had their internal voluntaryism sufficed for the moral and religious wants of our countrymen; and would bid it God speed to the whole extent of its capabilities and efforts. It is only because these have fallen short of the object that we have taken an onward step to external voluntaryism; and should furthermore rejoice if, in the tried sufficiency of this expedient, we found that no additional exertion was called for. But this is not our experience; and therefore we do take another step onward; and having drawn all we can from a pious or philanthropic public, are now endeavouring to draw as much as we can from a patriotic or paternal government. We are not sensible of any incongruity between these two applications. They are not conflicting, but conspiring movements; or the consequential following up of one step by another, along a line of continuity. After having obtained from the good will of

our countrymen the sum of two hundred thousand pounds for the erection of places of worship, and that in behalf of a people unable to build churches of themselves,—we now knock at the door of our rulers, in the hope of propitiating their good will to a grant, and that too in behalf of the same people, quite as unable of themselves to maintain their clergymen. We stand before the ministers of the crown, not so much in the attitude of supplicants,—for we ask nothing for our own personal advantage,—but rather in the attitude of donors, telling them what is our contribution, and asking what is theirs, to the religious education of the community,—a cause dear to us as Christians, and which should be as dear to them as statesmen. We have traversed no one view for which we ever contended upon this subject; and whereas our friends and most vigilant guardians, the Voluntaries of Scotland, allege of us, because of this our appeal to the liberality of the Christian public, that we have come over to their principle,—they, from the first moment of preferring the same appeal themselves; and when they sought, which they have ever done, from the generosity of contributors, what they could not make good from the seat-rents of their own congregations,—from that moment, in truth, did they abandon their own, and come over to our principle. And we cannot blame them for this—believing, as we do, that, but for a benevolence from without, the Christian instruction of the people never has, and perhaps never will be provided for. Meanwhile we maintain that there is no conflict, no contrariety, but the utmost harmony of principle, between the legal and voluntary parts of our conjunct operation. We have been gifted with one sum by a willing Christian community in Scotland; and we expect, sooner or later, to be gifted with another, by a willing House of Commons in London; and after having obtained the willing support of both these parties, our pugnacious opponents will be quite welcome to call us Voluntaries, if they please. Only we hope that it will serve to rectify their conceptions, after they have made the discovery, that even the Voluntary Principle, which they have hitherto imagined to be all against our cause, if viewed comprehensively enough, and in all its bearings, is actually on the side of a national establishment for the Christian education of the people.

16. So little have we any doubt of the perfect harmony between a contribution from external voluntaryism and a grant from the state—that the one, we have every confidence, will at length prove a stepping-stone to the other; and in the very proportion that we enlarge the first, do we strengthen and multiply our claims, and add a greater momentum to all our appliances for the second. So thoroughly indeed is this our conviction, that the discouragement we have lately received at the hands of our rulers, will only redouble our exertions in the country; believing, as we do, that if the voice of 180 congregations fall short of the requisite force to carry an endowment, the voice of 250 or 300 will at least come nearer to it; and furthermore resolved, as we are, not to desist till we have done our uttermost for the families of the working classes, and so enlisted in favour of the great design the friendly and approving suffrages of the great mass of the commonalty in Scotland. Yet this, we are told, is but the cry of the unfranchised population, of men who have no suffrages, and are therefore of no weight in the senate-house. We believe, on the contrary, that the cause of the unprotected and the poor, when it comes to be thoroughly understood, is of mighty influence there. And besides, we not only begun our enterprise under the countenance and support of the highest orders in the country; but even in that class which supplies the greatest numbers

to the constituency of Scotland, the ten-pounders and a little upwards, whose prejudices were strongest against us at the first, we are every year making sensible progress; and have no doubt that, if we only persevere, and are adequately upborne by the contributions of the liberal, we shall be enabled to lift a still louder appeal than heretofore; so that with the authentic demonstration of a continued, or rather a greatly augmenting interest in our cause, on the part of the British public, the British Legislature will at length give way.

17. We trust that this will both explain and justify the efforts which the friends of our church, most of them clergyman from Scotland, are now making in London,—not merely to recruit our exhausted treasury, but, if possible, by that most authentic of all demonstrations, the names and the sums of those who shall have enlisted their testimony in favour of our object, to make palpable exhibition in the eyes of Government,—soon to hear a fresh representation on the subject, of the growing strength and popularity of our cause. The best recommendation I can give of their errand, is to state the class or description of persons for whom they are labouring,—and who are now shut from the benefits of moral and religious instruction, in virtue of the numbers in our land having increased, and the Establishment not having increased along with them. On whom is it that the burden of this calamity principally lights; and of what description in society are those sufferers, who are left without a church to humanise and elevate their spirits,—without a clergyman, who might be at once the friend and adviser of their families? They are the men who, finding no provision for them within the Church, are either not able or not willing to provide a ministration for themselves. The two requisite elements for this, are the wealth and the will; and they who want either of these, or most generally both of them together, form the great class of our unhappy exiles from the habits and observances of a Christian land. In other words, they are the depraved and the destitute, whom we seek to reclaim; and it is in their cause, or for the relief of their moral necessities, that we labour to interest the Government of these lands, in the enlargement and further endowment of the Church of Scotland. There is not one of our actual clergymen who will be benefited by the measure. We seek by it no increase to any of our livings; and as we have no pluralities, each of our new churches must be occupied by a distinct and additional ecclesiastic. Let the Government themselves determine what his revenue ought to be; and then, for every shilling which they contribute thereto, by a grant from the treasury, let that shilling go, not in augmentation to him, but in deduction from the seat-rents, which we are at present forced to demand from the general population. We repeat, then, that the *terminus ad quem* of our proposition is, not any personal object of our own, but the public object of a cheap Christian education to the community at large. We knock at the door of Government, not in the crouching attitude of supplicants for ourselves,—but in the firm and high attitude of donors,—with two hundred thousand pounds, or a hundred and eighty new churches, as an offering to a cause of highest patriotism; and saying, “This is our contribution; what is yours?” It is not true, as represented, that we stand before them as so many fawning and pampered ecclesiastics, bent on the further aggrandisement of ourselves or of our order. We appear for the families of our peasants and our artisans, and our men of handicraft and hard labour. We are the tribunes of the people, the representatives of that class to whom the law has given no other representatives of their own,—of the unfranchised multitude, who are without a vote, and without

a voice in the House of Commons. Our sacred object is, the moral well-being of that mighty host who swarm and overspread the ground-floor of the fabric of our commonwealth; and, after the mists of prejudice and misconception have cleared away, our ultimate hope of success, under Heaven, is the inherent and essential popularity of our cause. You will not therefore be surprised if we look for the countenance of those who esteem the moral well-being of the poor as the highest boon which can possibly be conferred upon them; and also of those who look upon our present contest as being, in fact, a contest between a higher and a lower element in society—and who, along with all the better and finer spirits of our nation, are anxiously bent that the higher of the two elements should carry it. For you cannot but remark, that there is a certain coarse utilitarianism making way even in our high places, and which threatens to vilify and vulgarise the whole system of our affairs; a growing distrust in the efficacy of moral expedients, and the substitution of palpable, or material, or merely economical expedients, in their room; a dealing with but the grosser principles of our nature, as if mind and conscience, and the higher faculties were too shadowy and ethereal things for a legislature to work upon; and so a harsh and stinted parsimony in providing even for the common, but still more for the Christian education of the working classes,—a universal cry for cheapness, and thus, perhaps an immediate saving of money, but with the sacrifice, let it be remembered, of the money's worth,—and ultimately with a tenfold greater cost, that might have been prevented by a timely expenditure. The memorable aphorism of Burke, that "Education was the cheap defence of nations," has now become obsolete and old-fashioned, in this headlong and scrambling demand for all other sorts of cheapness. It seems to have been forgotten how much cheaper it is, that we should have to do with an intelligent and well-trained peasantry, than with a population adrift from the restraints of principle; each generation, from the growing numbers of the community, more unprovided with the means of instruction than the preceding; and so rising up in still more reckless defiance to all the duties of life, and to all its decencies. This misleading and miscalculating economy will be disappointed of its own object, and be at length filled with the fruit of its own ways. Unless the emollients of Christian kindness and Christian instruction be brought to bear on the turbulence of the popular mind, a smouldering fire, which now lies at the bottom of the social and political edifice, will at length burst forth, and explode it into fragments. And a day of fearful recompense for the moral wrongs of a long-neglected population will be the sure result or reaction of that process, by which our rulers shall have conducted us onwards, step by step, in the path of deterioration, till we have landed in the veriest dregs and degeneracy of an iron age.

LECTURE IV.

ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH DETERMINE A GOVERNMENT TO
SELECT ONE DENOMINATION OF CHRISTIANITY FOR THE NATIONAL
RELIGION.

1. IT seems a very clear and indisputable axiom, that there can be nothing better for a nation, than when a common sentiment on the side of what is good is shared between the rulers and the people; or, when one and the same principle, and that a right one, is found to harmonize and actuate them both. A certain amount of agreement between these two parties is at all times indispensable to the internal tranquillity of a state; and there do occur periods in history, when this unanimity becomes so strong and cordial and sympathetic, that it has given rise to a general and wide-spread enthusiasm—a kind of moral jubilee in the land, when high and low rejoiced together; and the heart of the king upon the throne beat in unison with the acclamations of the multitude. On such occasions the distinction between the legal and the voluntary is forgotten; and both are often blended together in one common offering at the altar, whether of charity, or of patriotism, or lastly of religion—as when the hostile Armada made its approaches to the shores of England, and the appeal of the sovereign to the people was responded to, not by the willing services alone, but the willing contributions of all the orders in the land: Or as when, in recompense to the family of a public benefactor, not only is a grant from the Treasury welcomed by the public approval, but followed up by the public subscriptions, in testimony of departed worth or departed patriotism: Or, as happened more than once within the remembrance of us all, when famine, or pestilence, or some signal calamity, has involved thousands of families, the same pathetic representation which opened the hearts and purses of the wealthy, also unlocked the coffers of the state. And there have occurred many other passages in the annals of our nation, where the governors and the governed, had money been called for towards the attainment of their common object, would have trampled under foot that line of demarcation, which, but for the wretched controversy of the present day, might never have been heard of. This union of now warring elements might have been exemplified, even in the days of that cruel and capricious despot who first broke off from the spiritual tyranny of Rome—still more under the brief and gentle sway of his religious successor—and still more when the imprisoned bishops, those venerable Fathers of the English Church, who could have laid down their lives in defence of the pure faith and the sacred rights of conscience, were met, on their egress from confinement, by the loud and rapturous acclaims of a then liberated nation. It is from such evolutions—brief, while brilliant, though they are—that we catch, as it were, the transient glimpse of a community in its best and happiest mood—when one simultaneous feeling pervades all classes; and, in the pulsations of one mighty heart, the breath of one actuating and reigning spirit, the wealth and efforts of all are consecrated to one common object, and all jealousies are forgotten.

2. And it has happened not infrequently in the history of nations, that religion has been the theme of this generous and wide-spread exultation—as on the restoration, in the days of the Old Testament, of its long-forgotten

ordinances—or, in modern times, on the celebration of some achieved triumph, whether of truth or liberty. These form the brightest and sunniest periods, in the otherwise dark history of the kings of Israel—when the monarch met in convocation with his people, and both rejoiced together in the reëstablishment of the worship of their forefathers. There was no conflict between the legal and the voluntary in those days; when, under the authority of the one, the people duteously and faithfully rendered their tithes; and, under the impulse of the other, added their free-will offerings—when the king made his levies or issued his munificent grants from the royal treasury; and, at the same time, the people cast abundantly, and with unsparing hand, into the treasury of the temple. There is now, it would appear, a war of extermination between these two principles—as if the one were destructive of the other, and there was not room for their contemporaneous operation. Under the best of the Jewish monarchs, and in the best periods of the Jewish history, they acted and reacted to each other's hands; and we need only cast an eye over the reigns of David and Solomon, and Joash and Jehoshaphat, and Hezekiah and Josiah, to be convinced that that was the happiest state of the commonwealth when there was the harmonious working of both.

3. But these were Jewish kings who lived, in common with their subjects, under a palpable and declared theocracy—who had prophets, with the credentials of Heaven's authority, to guide and to correct them; and the book of God's law, which had ordained a priesthood, and prescribed a maintenance for the support of their families. There was, during the subsistence of this older economy, a clear and express sanction for an established religion. But the question now respects Christian kings and Christian communities; and, in the absence of that distinct and definite authority for an established church in the New, which stands forth so unequivocally in almost every book of the Old Testament, we have to enquire what the circumstances were, which, under our present dispensation, brought on, and as we think justified, an enactment for the provision of a national clergy, who might teach the lessons of the gospel, and conduct its services among the people at large.

4. The causes, as far as they are known to us, which led to the first establishment of Christianity as a national religion, might be stated in a few words. For centuries after the original promulgation of the gospel, it was not only an unprotected but a persecuted faith. Under this severe regimen it was nurtured into strength; and from year to year, took deeper and firmer root,—as if cradled by the storms, in the midst of which it grew into maturity; and it was only fed and fostered the more by every new edict that was framed for its extirpation—till converts were so multiplied, and the public mind was so far carried in its favour, as to leave it doubtful whether it was the piety of Constantine, or the policy of Constantine, which led to his espousal of Christianity, and determined him to throw the shield, not only of his imperial protection, but of his imperial patronage over it. If the former explanation be the true one—if the change of his profession originated in the power of truth and principle, then he but did upon his throne what a Christian parent does in his family. The one carried into effect the wishes of a christianised heart over a larger, as the other does over a smaller sphere of operation. Each, by the arrangements of Providence, obtained a certain measure of ascendancy over other minds and other consciences than their own; and gifted as the one was with influence over an empire, and the other with influence over a household, we behold in each the example of a gift consecrated to the honour of Him who is the

Universal Giver ; and whom they now believed to be the author of that Christianity sent down from heaven on purpose to rule and to regenerate the world. In compliance with this great duty, and as fellow-workers with God, the one did for his subjects what the other does for his children—provides them with a Christian education, as the best boon which a religious monarch can confer upon his people.—On the supposition of the monarch being himself a Christian. Such is the account, and such also we deem to be the vindication of that procedure by which he awards a maintenance to the teachers of the gospel, and bids them, in return, carry the lessons and services of the gospel throughout his population. But he may have been no Christian ; and policy, not principle, may after all be the key for the explanation of his conduct. He must then be tried by a different standard ; and if he cannot be vindicated as a religious, he may at least be vindicated as a wise governor ; and that, not because he conceded to the religion of the majority, but because he consented to place his subjects under the best moral regimen, for the formation of a virtuous and well-ordered commonwealth. If even the heathen of these days could say of Christians, Behold how they love each other ! if so palpable was the exhibition of their superiority, that, by general acknowledgment, they made the best citizens and the best soldiers in the empire—Constantine may have seen that, by the establishment of a universal Christian education, he best consulted both for the economic well-being of his people, and for the prosperous administration of his own civil and political affairs. If we cannot speak to the sincerity of his principle as a man, we may at least speak to the soundness of his policy as a monarch ; and although this vindication leaves the blemish of ungodliness and of political hypocrisy on the memory of Constantine, it lays no blemish on the compliance of the other party in this great transaction—we mean of the Church, in having complied with the overtures which he made to them. We read of the earth helping the woman. But we nowhere read, that it is the duty of the woman to refuse this help, or to refrain from the facilities which are opened up to her by the hand of Providence, for the multiplication of her converts. He who can make the wrath of man to praise Him, can make the ambition of monarchs subserve the honour and extension of His own spiritual kingdom in the world ; and the Church, in prosecuting this subserviency, and labouring to make the most of it for the salvation of human souls, is but following the bequeathed duty of preaching the gospel to every creature—is but doing good unto all men, as she has the opportunity.

5. The first example then which we have quoted, of a government having made selection of a faith, to be by them signalized and supported as the national religion—is that of Constantine, who evinced all the greater strength of motive and determination in the act of doing so, that, in setting up this new establishment, he superseded or overthrew an old one. It is all the more favourable to the exhibition whether of sentiment or policy ; it manifests with a so much greater force, and therefore distinctness, the inducement which led to this measure, that, in the adoption of it, the prejudices on the side of an ancient and hereditary worship had to be overcome—the very circumstance of a struggle and a strenuous resistance having to be encountered in effecting the movement, bringing out more palpably into view some one, if not all, of the many influences under which it was carried. The second example of any thing similar to this in history took place at the Reformation, when a change was accomplished in the national establishments of several countries in Europe—not a change, as before, from Paganism to Christianity, but a change from Popery to Protestantism, or from

one denomination of Christianity to another. There was the assumption of one kind of faith for the national church, made all the more striking and noticeable by the rejection of another—affording therefore so much a better chance of our being able to detect the principle of so great a revolution. Nor is it difficult to find it, in the history of a period so much nearer to ourselves. There may have been other reasons besides those which can be alleged in vindication of this great movement resolvable neither into conscience nor patriotism, as those which actuated the bosom of our capricious and tyrannical Henry. But we speak not of the reasons which explain—only of those which justify the change; and perhaps the best historical example which can be given of them, will be found in the Elector of Saxony, who established the Protestant religion in his kingdom, under the impulse of the Protestant faith, or of a sincere Protestant feeling in his own heart. The faith of the monarch justified the part which he took in it—or the proposal of such a change; and it was the faith of his subjects which justified the part which they took in it—or their acquiescence in the change. Without both these ingredients, it may have been attempted by the monarch, but not been accomplished by him—as by James, who, for attempting to impose the national establishment of his own faith on an adverse and reluctant kingdom, was hurled from his throne. We shall not stop at present to enquire, whether the conviction was right or wrong, or take up the time, which at present we cannot afford, with the demonstration, though we hold it to be impregnable—that wherever there is access to the light and the opportunities of our present day, and there be notwithstanding a wrong belief in religion, some element of moral evil might be detected in the process which led to it. But, without tracing our way so far backward, grant the sincerity of the potentate—of James, for example, in his Catholicism; of Charles in his Episcopacy: and the Elector of Saxony, in his Lutheran Protestantism—it may be said, both of him who succeeded and of those who failed in the establishment of their own doctrine as the national faith, that all three in the attempts which they made were alike conscientious, and this might serve for the vindication of the men—even as it would serve for the vindication of five hundred men, if the power, instead of being concentrated in one individual, were lodged in such an assembly, and they gave forth their collective voice in favour of an establishment which coincided with the faith of the majority. The only other reason we can sustain in vindication is one of patriotism, as the former was one of piety; or which had respect to the temporal, as the other had respect to the spiritual well-being of the people. We can imagine a monarch without the principle of religion, but of sound enlightened policy—we mean the policy which has for its object, not the maintenance or the increase of his own power, but the prosperity of his kingdom and the present welfare of its families. The one is a justifiable motive on a heavenly, the other is a justifiable motive on an earthly standard. Both influences, the religious and the philanthropic as they may be termed, may have acted at the same time on the mind of the Elector of Saxony. He may have felt, and with a deep sense of sacredness, the truth of Protestantism; and he may have been alive also to its secular blessings—to the virtue, and the intelligence, and the industrious habits, which its education and its principles carried in their train. The act of setting up a Protestant Establishment in his dominions may have been at once the act of a sincere Christian and of a sound patriot.

6. We may now carry our views onward in history—nay down as far as from what has been done by governments in former ages, to what might or should be done by governments in the present day. And at this mo-

ment, there is no legislative body in Europe who are more called upon, to be ripe and ready on the principles of this great question, than the Parliament of England. There is a loud and instant call upon them for a wise and righteous decision. We cannot imagine a heavier misfortune to our beloved land, than that a measure, so pregnant with consequences both to the present and future generations, should cast up at random; or in the eddying whirl of party and political movements, instead of coming forth as an unfettered, but withal well-weighed deliverance, on the part of intelligent and high-principled men—best of all if done on the greatest, and which should be the first consideration of, What is truth? but, if not disposed to entertain this question, next best, when done on the consideration of, What is the most effectual regimen for training the successive generations of a country in the virtues of good citizenship, and so as shall be likeliest to insure for the commonwealth the blessings of a moral and religious population? On either consideration we should not fear for our own Protestantism; for, though the two considerations be distinct from each other, in practice and fulfilment there is a real harmony between them. For the determination of the one question, the lights of conscience and erudition ought to suffice in every well-principled and well-educated assembly: For the determination of the other, it will be enough to consult the lights of history and of economic science.

7. It is well that there should be two principles, altogether right and legitimate, on either of which the question of a religious establishment might be hinged; so that, whatever the incapacity of senators might be to decide on the first of these principles, that is, on the theological truth of any given system of belief—there might remain the other, the moral and economic principle, on which to ground their determination, that is, on the fitness of any system, by the influence and the lessons of its discipleship, to humanise a population, and impart such habits as are best both for the comfort and the virtue of families. And yet we can see no incongruity, no extravagance, but the contrary, in the supposition of its being quite competent for an assembly of legislators, to decide on the former of these principles; or to give their suffrages for the maintenance of a certain national creed, as well on the ground of that divine authority which has prescribed the lessons of our education for heaven, as on the ground of that human judgment or experience, which tells of the best education for the virtues of good citizenship on earth. We are aware of the summary and contemptuous rejection to which this proposition is liable—as if it would transform the senate-house into an arena of theological conflict; and senators into wrangling polemics, who, to be accomplished for their task, would need to grapple with whole libraries, with the tomes of the mighty controversialists in former ages, or at least, it may be thought, to be deep read, both in the Fathers of the Christian church, and in the Fathers of our own Reformation.

8. Now this is exaggeration. It would have been truth had the proposition been to devolve upon civil rulers, or to devolve upon a parliament, the office of settling and of filling up the national creed, even to its minutest articles; or of framing the whole polity of a church, from the highest to the lowest of its office-bearers, from the most solemn ordinances of its ritual to the most inconsiderable observances of its ceremonial and its forms. The settlement of these is the proper work of ecclesiastics. But the great and general question between Protestantism and Popery does not hinge upon these—a question to which the public mind in many countries of Europe, and particularly in our own, was all awake, and, we may add, intelligent also; and to which the representative mind in the body of

legislators was alike sensible, and ought surely to have been, nay actually was, alike intelligent. This was not a question which could only be resolved in an assembly of priests or of scholastics; but a question that might be rightly entertained, and rightly decided also, in any assembly of well-educated Englishmen. We could not imagine a more testing evidence of an incompetent and vulgarised parliament, than that it should not be qualified to decide the question between the merits of Protestantism and Popery—or which of the two systems, not in respect of policy, but in respect of absolute truth and of sacred obligation, is the most worthy of being upholden as the national faith of these realms. This is neither a minute, nor is it a manifold controversy, but one great and simple question, on which too there shine the broadest lights, both of moral and historical evidence: and that is, whether the Scriptures, as being of divine authority, be the only rule of faith and practice in religion—or whether, coördinate therewith, the decisions of any councils or governors in the church, after the days of the apostles, should be admitted to an equal or superior lordship over the consciences of men. This, of all the countries in Europe, is not the land, where it should be difficult to find hundreds, or even thousands, of the upper and middle classes in society, with information enough, and scholarship enough, to pronounce intelligently upon this question—the richest of Christendom in that literature, and accessible too to all readers, the literature of the Christian evidences—the land of the Stillingfleets, and the Clarks, and the Butlers, and the Lardners, and the Paleys,—or if any shall recoil from these ecclesiastical names, the land of deepest reasoners in philosophy, of Bacon, and Newton, and Milton, and Locke, and Boyle, and Sir Gilbert West, and Lord Lyttleton, all of whom have done profoundest homage to Christianity, and many of them have told, and with irresistible weight of argument, that the voice in the Scriptures is a voice which speaketh to us from Heaven. In this nation, of all others, there is none, with the ordinary schooling of a gentleman, who could not thoroughly inform himself, and by the reading of a few weeks, on this great question, so as to decide between the authority of the Bible, and the authority of Rome's apostolic church; between the miracles of the gospel, performed in the face of the then civilised world, and the mummeries of the Papal superstition, transmitted to us in barbarous legends, those products of the cells and the convents which overspread Europe through the dark and dreary millennium of the middle ages. We owe it to its church and its universities together, that this knowledge is so rife in England—familiar as household words in so many of its accomplished circles, so many of its ancestral halls—and that, not because of any professional interest in theology as a science, but in virtue alone of a full and finished education. It is thus that we have abundant materials for a parliament that could decide the question on its high and proper merits. We only need a parliament of England's best principled and best educated men. But should we not be so fortunate; should the disaster ever befall us, of vulgar and upstart politicians to be lords of the ascendant; should an infidel or demi-infidel government wield for a season the destinies of this mighty empire, and be willing, at the shrine of their own wretched partizanship, to make sacrifice of those great and hallowed institutions, which were consecrated by our ancestors to the maintenance of religious truth and religious liberty; should, in particular, the monstrous proposition ever be entertained, not to tolerate (for that is quite as it should be) but to endow Popery—not perhaps to abolish, but at least to abridge the legal funds for the support of Protestantism, and at all events to uphold an antisciptural, and with this aggravation, that it should be at the ex-

pense and with the diminution of a scriptural faith—let us hope that there is still enough, not of fiery zeal, but of calm, resolute, and withal enlightened principle in the land, to resent the outrage—enough of energy and reaction, in the revolted sense of this great country, to meet and overbear it.*

9. But let us imagine for a moment the concession made, though we think it neither a right nor a necessary concession, that it were too theological for a Parliament to decide between the two religions of Popery and Protestantism, on the ground of the argument which respects their truth—there remains another argument, which it is surely competent for the most secular assembly on earth to entertain; and that is the argument grounded on the palpable and glaring experience that tells us, and with an evidence too plain to be resisted, under which of the two regimens it is that we can best provide for the moral and economic well-being of a population. I will not speak of the impolicy of France in their expulsion of the Huguenots, who carried into other countries the arts and the habits by which they might have enriched their own. I will not speak of the contrast which strikes the eye of every traveller, between the Catholic and Protestant cantons of Switzerland. I will not speak of the moral and industrious population of the United Provinces, or tell of their immeasurable superiority in virtue and freedom, and all that makes for the supe-

* "Speaking of the competency of men not ecclesiastical, to decide a question which hinges on the evidence and authority of the Bible, there is, we have long apprehended, a striking contrast between the lay mind of France and that of England in this respect; and one of its most remarkable displays is, when Voltaire, in the examples which he has quoted of the aberrations of the human understanding—along with the case of Roger Bacon, having written upon witchcraft—brings forward also that of Sir Isaac Newton having, in his declining years, written a commentary on the book of Revelation. Now, as to our great philosopher, who transferred his mighty intellect from the study of the works of God, to the study of his word, this may have taken place at the decline of his years, but not, most certainly, at the decline of his understanding. The truth is, that he felt a kindredness between his old and his new contemplations; that, after having seen farther than all who went before him into the godlike harmonies of the world, he was tempted to search, and at length did behold the traces of a wisdom no less marvellous in the godlike harmonies of the word; that, after having looked, and with steadfastness, for years on the mazy face of heaven, and evolved thencefrom the magnificent cycles of astronomy, he then turned him to Scripture, and found, in the midst of its now unravelled obscurities, that its cycles of prophecy were equally magnificent: and, whether he cast his regards on the book of Revelation, or on the book of Daniel—who, placed on the eminence of a sublime antiquity, looked through the vista of many descending ages, and eyed from afar the structure and the society of modern Europe—he whose capacious mind had so long been conversant with the orbits and the periods of the natural economy, could not but acknowledge the footsteps of the same presiding Divinity in the still higher orbits of that spiritual economy which is unfolded in the Bible. And while we cannot but lament the deadly mischief, which the second-rate philosophy of infidels has done to the inferior spirits of our world, we feel it almost a proud thing for Christianity, that all the giants and the men of might in other days, the Newtons, and the Boyles, and the Lockes, and the Bacons of high England, have worshipped so profoundly at its shrine. But, chief of these is our great Sir Isaac, who, throned although he be by universal suffrage, as the very prince of philosophers, is still the most attractive specimen of humanity which the world ever saw—and just because the meekness of his Christian worth so softens while it irradiates the majesty of his genius. Never was there realised in the character of man so rare and so beautiful a harmony, that he who stands forth to a wondering species of loftiest achievement in science, should nevertheless move so gently and so gracefully among his fellow-men—not more revered for the glory he won on the field of discovery, than loved by all for the milder glories of his name—his being the modest, the unpretending graces of a child-like nature—his being the pious simplicity of a cottage patriarch."—*Third Volume of Dr. Chalmers' Lectures on the Romans.*

riority or well-being of a nation, over the people of Spain, that land at once of superstition and despotism—the land of their proud oppressors, against whom they nobly revolted, and as nobly triumphed. The lessons may be learned by us nearer home. Literally, he who runs may read it in Ireland; and that on a cursory glance, and in the course of a few days' rapid travelling. It is patent as the light of day, that the same geography, which marks off the distinction between the two faiths, also marks off the distinction between, on the one hand, a land of industry and peace, with a population of thriving families, and on the other, a land teeming with all moral and all political disorders—a land of mendicity and midnight tumults, where violence is abroad in their streets and their highways; and at home, in their wretched hovels, there are found, and almost invariably, the filth and the squalid destitution of perhaps the worst-conditioned peasantry in Europe. Let us have but the names of the Popish and Protestant counties, and we could learn from the map, which is the region of grievous and general distress, of unequalled turbulence, of fierce and incessant agitation; and which the region of prosperous industry, of peaceful and orderly habits, and of decent respectable sufficiency, even down to the lowest labourers of the soil. The truth is open to us through many channels, and by various statistics—as the amount of crime and number of commitments in the province of Ulster, when compared with the rest of Ireland—the proportion of military required in these two great departments, to protect from outrage, and maintain the authority of Government—the vagrancy that meets us everywhere in the one territory, and is comparatively rare in the other. These all speak for themselves; and if our statesmen are afraid of the theological question, we ask them to take it up as a question of polity, and tell us in the name of all that is dear to patriotism, whether it were better to have a nation of Papists or a nation of Protestants in that unhappy land. We are aware of an utter heartlessness in the negotiations of national policy, when ambassadors meet, and if the balance of power required it, would barter away or bargain for the faith of whole countries, just as they would barter away or bargain for the protection and encouragement of their commerce. And there is, too, a balance of power to be adjusted at home, as well as on the great theatre of the politics of Europe; and what takes place in the war of states, may also take place in the war of parties—when the temptation to make the same unprincipled sacrifice may occur, and when, for the ambition of place, the moral interest of a whole nation is disregarded, and both the comfort and character of its families are given to the wind. If any thing can add to this atrocity, it is when perpetrated, not by the simple adoption of that which is evil, but by the transmutation of the good into evil—when done in the face of possessory rights; and the proposal is, not merely to plant a corrupt establishment, but to change a better establishment for a worse—in other words, to clear out the Protestantism, and so make room for the Popery; or, at least, to abridge the one, and follow it up by such institutions, whether of an ecclesiastical or scholastic nature, as will surely extend and perpetuate the other. We can imagine nothing that would so mark the utter absence and abjuration of all public virtue in public men, than, with their eyes open—not, you will observe, to persist in what is bad, but, greatly worse—to retrograde into what is bad, and lavish the resources of the nation on the maintenance of a faith, which, if the sacred consideration of immortality must be kept out of the question, all history and experience tell, is, of every form and variety of religion, the most fitted to blind and vitiate a population.

10. But, when considering the movement by the state in the days of

Constantine, we made a reference to the clergy; and then observed that, without the forfeiture of principle, but rather in compliance with the dictates both of the most sound principle and of the soundest and most upright policy, they could accept of a national provision, and undertake in return for the Christian education of the people. And in like manner would we speak of the part, which belongs to the clergy of the Protestant Establishment in Ireland. They virtually did undertake the Christian education of the families in their respective parishes; and, I will speak only of the generations that are past, they have not acquitted themselves of that undertaking. It is in the spirit of an even-handed justice that we would make this avowal; for though it never can vindicate, it at least explains, and perhaps in some degree palliates, the indifference, nay, in some instances we believe, the hostility even unto death of many of our statesmen to the church of our sister kingdom. It cannot be disguised that, with many illustrious and honourable exceptions, the clergy as a body, have not, during the whole of the last century, done what they might, or done what they ought, for the cultivation of the vineyard, made over by the state to their care; and which, in return for their maintenance, they should by this time have put into right order, and now been keeping in order. But we must not lose sight of the goodness of a machine in the badness of the working of it. We must see where the failure lies—not in the magnitude of those revenues, which the wayward politicians of our day are now labouring so hard to reduce, if not to annihilate—not in the number of those Protestant labourers, whom, with a strange inversion of all sound policy, they are now doing their uttermost to diminish—not in things pertaining to the framework of the Establishment, wherewith they are now tampering by all sorts of paltry economical reform. The whole evil, in the great bulk and essence of it, has been, that the Church in former times was carelessly and corruptly patronised. The Church itself, viewed as a machine, is well fitted for its work, provided only that it be well supplied with good and able workmen. A few hundreds of these, with the spirit and apostolic zeal of good Bishop Beddel, could, in the multitude of their converts and the great moral change effected in their respective neighbourhoods, have made this as manifest as day. Had this establishment been what it ought to have been, a great home mission, with its ministers acting the part of devoted missionaries, we should by this time of day have been rid of all our embarrassments. There would have been no Catholic question to perplex—and that because there might have been few or no Catholics. But matters there have not been so ordered. We need not speak of their pluralities, and their sinecures, and of all the evils of their clerical absenteeism. These are the more patent corruptions of the Protestant hierarchy in Ireland, and perhaps the only ones that strike the public observation. But over and above this, there was a mistaken policy, maintained and avowed even by their best clergymen, in the form of an honest though still of a grievously mistaken principle—as if they went beyond their legitimate province if they at all meddled with the Catholic population; at which rate the primitive Christians went beyond their legitimate province, when they meddled with the Pagans of the Roman empire. Even the most venerated of their prelates, as Bishop Jebb, proclaims this in his published letters, as if it were one of the categories or proprieties of a Protestant minister in Ireland. We do not say that the maxim has been universally acted on, but it has been greatly too general, that to attempt the conversion of a Papist was to enter another man's field; and that, in kind at least, if not in degree, there was somewhat of the same sort of irregularity or even of delinquency in this, as in

making invasion on another man's property. In virtue of this false principle, or false delicacy, the cause of truth suffered, even in the hands of conscientious ministers; and when to this we add the number of ministers corrupt, or incompetent, or utterly negligent of their charges, we need not wonder at the stationary Protestantism, or the yet almost entire and unbroken Popery of Ireland. We now inherit the consequences of the misgovernment and the profligacy of former generations. They may be traced to the want of principle and public virtue in the men of a bygone age. Those reckless statesmen who made the patronage of the Irish Church a mere instrument of subservience to the low game of politics—those regardless clergymen who held the parishes as sinecures, and lived in lordly indifference to the state and interests of the people—these are the parties who, even after making full allowance for the share which belongs to the demagogues and agitators of the day, are still the most deeply responsible for the miseries and the crimes of that unhappy land.

11. But here the distinction again recurs, which has been so often insisted on, between the goodness of a machine and the goodness of its working. If the latter have been in fault, that is no reason why the former should be condemned or given up to destruction. The remedy is not to abolish the Protestant Establishment of Ireland, but rightly to patronise it; nor can I imagine a wider contrast, than between the wise and the temperate reformers from Popery of 300 years back, who, despite the enormities of that system, let alone the material apparatus of its establishment, and only committed it to other and better hands, and the reformers of the present day, who have abridged and would destroy the Protestant church, and that too in the face of a manifest revival in the zeal, in the character, in the devoted and missionary spirit of its clergymen; who, unlike to those predecessors for whose errors, I should say for whose crimes, they are not responsible, consecrate their whole time, and talent, and unrequited labour to the moral interests of their country—the martyrs of its now misplaced and excited violence, yet we trust the agents of its coming regeneration. The truth is, that, among the established churches of our empire, that of Ireland, in the vital and spiritual sense of the term, is the most prosperous of the three. “While its outward man perisheth, its inward man is renewed day by day.” The hand of power may strip it of its temporalities; but we trust that its indomitable spirit in the cause of a pure and scriptural faith, will not so easily be quelled. Though despoiled of their rights, they will not abandon their duties. Like the Christians before the days of Constantine, they may perhaps have to win the ground over again—when the Church, purified by the discipline of adversity, will again arise in its strength; and, repeating the conquest of truth over the errors of a degrading superstition, will add another victory to the triumphs of former generations.

12. But though such be the economy of things under which we live, that often the greatest good—moral and spiritual good—comes out of evil, that is no reason why we should do the evil that the good may come. Better if the injustice were not perpetrated, of that spoliation that would abridge or would abolish the Protestant establishment of Ireland. Better that the ministrations of a scriptural church should be upheld, than that they should be suspended, even in the hope of a great and consequent revival; and that the present generation should not be made to suffer, or be offered up in sacrifice, for the sake of the ages that are to follow. The hidden purposes of God do not form the measure by which to estimate the plain duties and obligations of man, whose part it is to proceed, not on that which is hidden, but on that which is revealed—to shun all which is palpably and at present

evil, and to do all the good for which he has a present opportunity. There is nothing more instructive in the philosophy of public affairs, than to observe, that in those seasons when the government is weak, and the spirit of the country is wayward and strong, so that the pressure from without carries it over the will or the principle within—in those seasons, when the governors and the governed may be said to change places—there is nothing more instructive, or from which a sounder lesson of political wisdom may be gathered, than to observe the almost constant misdirection of the popular zeal; and so the misuse of that power, wherewith for a time the people may be said to be invested. However good the institutions of a country may be, that the country may have the full good of them, it is indispensable that they should be placed in the hands of able and upright functionaries—for if not, they may have proved to be the instruments of evil, not however because the machinery, but because the men are in fault. In these circumstances, what we ask in the name of common sense is the desirable reform? and what is the right object for reformers to set their hearts upon?—Whether—it may be thought strange to ask—whether on the destruction of the machine, or on the appointment of right men for the working of it? There may be energy, there may be irresistible momentum, there may be the impulse of a good feeling, of a good and honest design; but there is no discrimination in the masses. With what salutary effect, one is apt to think, their influence might be brought to bear upon rulers, so as to compel a virtuous exercise of their patronage; and then every good institution of the country, and its churches among the rest, would be placed in fair circumstances, for the development of their properties and their power. But this is almost never the use to which the popular will is turned—and so when let loose upon the commonwealth, unfit either to purify or guide, it is found powerful only to destroy.

LECTURE V.

ON A TERRITORIAL ESTABLISHMENT, AND THE REASONS OF ITS EFFICACY.

1. But it may well be thought, that it is easier to state the grounds of preference, on which Protestantism should be adopted rather than Popery, even in those cases, where, as in Ireland, it is not yet the national faith, as being the worthier of the two for a national provision; and that not merely for the sake of its maintenance, but also of its propagation in the land—That it is an easier task to select the one and pass over the other, from the very wide and palpable distinction which there is both in principle and effect between them—than it were to select and single out from among the numerous sectarian varieties of Evangelical Protestantism, that one denomination, which is most entitled to the privileges and honours of an establishment. For, substantially speaking, they have all one and the same theology; and we may add, that, experimentally speaking, they have all made their respective contributions to the sound education of the people in the habits and principles of Christianity. Who can question, for example, the wholesome effect of the active and widely-extended ministrations, which have been rendered by the Wesleyan Methodists; and that, too, among the families of that very class which stands most in need of those cheap or gratuitous services which it is one great object of an establishment to afford,—even the families of those poor men and labourers, who can, with the least safety, or with the greatest risk, be left to take their chance, or be abandoned to that most frail and fluctuating of all securities, we mean the operation of the voluntary principle. And we cannot deny the pure and effective ministrations of Baptists, and Congregationalists, and Presbyterians, and many other sectaries—all varying circumstantially from the Church of England, and each other; yet all, in essence and effect, teaching the same Christianity. It were, in our estimation, a grievous outrage not on charity alone, but on truth, to deny that the education given in many of our dissenting chapels, is a good education for heaven; and that in both countries we stand indebted to their coöperation, for much of the religion of our families. But does not this make it all the more puzzling, to assign any ground on which they should be excluded, we do not say from the honours, but from the substantial benefits of an establishment; or why a national provision should be withheld from the ministers of those Protestant denominations, more than from the Protestant Episcopalians of England? It may be easy to say, why we should keep out Popery and let in Protestantism; but it does not appear easy to fix on the proper reason, why, when there is so little to discriminate between them, we should let in one species of Protestantism, and keep out all the rest. The closer their modes of faith approximate to each other, it does—it may well be thought—aggravate the task of selection, and make it all the harder to specify, why it is that the monopoly of the emoluments of a great national institute should have been vested in one alone; or why its favoured disciples should have been admitted into the bowers of the establishment, while all the rest have been left on the outfields of unendowed sectarianism.

2. These, at first sight, may appear to be formidable questions; and all the more so, the more nearly the sectarians approach in doctrine to the Church

—or the more significant the points of difference are between them. Now we happen to think, that, where there is a substantial agreement and only a circumstantial variation—the adjustment of this matter, instead of becoming more difficult, becomes on that very account all the more easy; and though the principle on which we would let in Protestantism and keep out Popery, is not that on which we would let in the Episcopalians and keep out the Presbyterians and all other denominations from the Establishment in England—or, what might look strange, let in one set of Presbyterians and keep out all the other sets and sectaries, nay even the Episcopalians of the Southern Establishment from the Northern Establishment of this our land—still we think, that there is a substantial principle on which to vindicate these seeming anomalies of the ecclesiastical system under which we at present live, or to leave them untouched. But ere we proceed further in this undertaking, we must interpose in the form of a lemma, or as a stepping-stone to the argument which follows, a proposition which has been mainly overlooked by all the parties in this controversy, or at least the importance of which to the decision of it has not been perceived—we mean the immense good of a religious establishment being formed on the territorial principle—the meaning and efficacy of which principle it will require a whole lecture to explain.

3. And first, as to what is meant by a territorial establishment. The circumstance of its being an establishment, involves in it a legal provision for the clergyman. But, over and above this, suppose, that, in return for this provision, this clergyman has a certain geographical district, whether in town or country, assigned to him; and that he is expected to take an ecclesiastical cognizance of all the families within its limits. To perfect this arrangement, they must stand so related to his church, as to have a right of preference over all extra-parochial* families to the occupation of its sittings; and he, on the other hand, should be so related to his parish, as, if not to have a right of entry into all the houses, at least to be bound in point of duty to make a tender, to every householder who is willing to receive him, of such ecclesiastical attentions and services as his time will permit him to bestow, and which might be conducive to the Christian good of himself and of his family. In other words, he is bound to superadd, as far as the people will let him, week-day and household to his Sabbath-day and pulpit ministrations. He is the minister not of a congregation only, as far the greater number of our unendowed ministers are; but he is the minister both of a congregation and of a parish.

4. To illustrate this distinction between parochial and merely congregational ministers the more, we may point to those few instances, which exemplify what we have defined to be the essence or principle of an establishment, without at the same time that establishment being territorial. There is a legal provision to a certain amount, in the shape of a *regium donum*, for the Presbyterian ministers in the north of Ireland—who are helped in consequence, to congregate their hearers at lower seat rents than would otherwise have been possible; but without any definite section of a territory being assigned to them within the limits of which they might exert an ecclesiastical surveillance or guardianship over one and all of the families. The minister is thus enabled, to surmount in so far the barrier in the way of his ministrations, which lies in the want of wealth on the part of the people; but there is no guarantee secured under such an arrangement, for surmounting that other barrier, which lies in their want of skill. He has to do with his hearers; but there is nothing in such an economy,

* That is, all families who reside without the limits of the parish in question.

which at all necessitates him to do with those who are not his hearers. They may choose to attend him if they so like; but if they do not choose, they may accumulate in any numbers without the sphere of his observation, or at least without the sphere of his moral influence and control. If they do not come to him, there is nothing in this congregational, even though endowed system, which insures that he should go to them; and at this rate it is obvious, that whole masses of heathenism might be forced out of contiguous families, lapsing into their own native earthliness, and infecting each other with habits of irreligion. We can see how possible it is, that, in such a state of things, the people should sink into a rapid and fearful degeneracy—while there are no forces in a system so imperfect, by which to recall them. The same economy obtained at one time in the United States of America—only, instead of the legal provision being confined to one sect, it extended to all that were in sufficient force to muster one or more congregations. But neither here does it appear, that any ministers had the charge and superintendence of all the families within a given district. They preached to those who came; but there was no understanding on the part of the state, from whom they received their maintenance, of any obligation on their part to take any cognizance, or go in quest of all within the limits of a certain assigned territory who did not come. The Presbyterian establishment in Ireland is sectarian, but not territorial. In the Northern States of America, so long as it subsisted, it extended to a congeries of sects; and may therefore perhaps on this account be also regarded as sectarian—yet neither was it territorial. In the Presbyterian Establishment of Scotland, the Episcopalian of England, and, we believe, all the religious establishments in Europe, the ministers have to do with parishes as well as congregations; and therefore they are both sectarian and territorial.

5. Now, our object at present is to demonstrate, that it is in the territorial principle where the great strength of an establishment lies; and that, though by means of voluntaryism, or of a merely congregational establishment, we may somewhat retard the progress of irreligion in a country—yet that it is only by a territorial establishment, and in virtue of the peculiar energies and adaptations which belong to its parochial system, that we can lay an arrest on this melancholy process; and far more, it is only thus that we can recover a people from the moral degeneracy into which they have fallen.

6. It is well that both the reality of the disease, and the operation of our proposed remedy, can be ascertained by methods so strictly experimental—insomuch that henceforth we might almost dispense with any general reasoning to prove either the impotency of voluntaryism on the one hand, or the efficacy of a well-worked territorial establishment on the other. We are not sure but that in the study of this important question, we might obtain a clearer and more impressive view of the truth by limiting our attention to but one locality—from the present state and the future treatment of which, the whole principle and philosophy of the subject might be gathered.

7. In any large town, where the population has greatly outgrown the capacity of the established churches to hold them, you can be at no loss to find an apt specimen of ecclesiastical destitution, on which, after having experimentally ascertained the inadequacy of all the existing methods, the operation of our proposed remedy might then be exemplified. For this purpose, let there be assumed a plebeian district of not more than two thousand people; and let a thorough investigation be made of the state and

habit of the families—more especially as respects their church-going; and the number of sittings in chapels of all denominations, which, in defect of the legal provision, they have provided for themselves. The inquiry should first be made from door to door, at the mouths of the householders; and their answers, when thoroughly sifted and subjected, if need be, to the correction of various tests which it is needless to specify, will exhibit a melancholy proof of the impotency, the glaring impotency of that voluntarism, which, in the arrogance of its boasted sufficiency, would supersede every other method but its own, for the spread of a Christian education throughout the community at large. A mighty field has lain open to its enterprises for several generations; and yet what has been the result? We do not need to guess, to speculate on the probabilities; for we can lay our immediate hand on the varieties of the subject. Let the survey, which we now recommend, of one single locality, be at all accordant with the numerous surveys of other and similar localities, which have been actually taken; and we shall be sure to find, that, at the very most, not one in five or six—far more usually not one in eight—often not one in ten, and in some instances not one in twelve, fifteen, or twenty of the gross population, possess accommodation in any place of worship whatever, whether in churches or meeting-houses. Such is the languor of the demand when people are left to themselves. Such is the certain consequence of their being abandoned, either to the voluntary principle, or to the system of free trade in Christianity—a conclusion this, not excogitated by any theoretical speculation of ours on the laws of human nature; but a conclusion, which might be verified by yourselves within less than half a mile of your own doors—resting on the firm basis of induction; or of that evidence, which, in every other department of inquiry, is respected as far the most authoritative and the most accordant with the spirit and the philosophy of modern science.

8. Now the question is, how shall we reclaim this outlandish population to habits of church-going? In what way shall we propose to go about it? They reside, it will be recollected, within the bounds of one locality—an assemblage of contiguous householders, occupying in space not more than a few streets, alleys, or lanes. In their assumed gross number of two thousand souls, the likelihood, often realised in London and elsewhere, is, that not two hundred go to any place of worship whatever—implying therefore a general population of sixteen hundred, or eight hundred human beings, the fit subjects for a public and regular ministration of the gospel, and who wait to be recovered from that habit of irreligion, which may not only have been confirmed by the practice of a whole lifetime, but into which the people of that district may have sunk and settled down for several generations. A voluntary chapel might be adventured in the midst of them, and be even filled to an overflow—not by them, however, let it well be remarked; but by hearers from all distances, who have a predisposition for the services of the sanctuary, and a power as well as a willingness to pay for them. Now the probability is that the people have not the power; and at all events, and which forms a still more material obstacle, the certainty is that they have not the willingness. A predisposition for the regularities of Sabbath attendance, either was never felt or has long been extinct among them; and there is nothing fitted to awaken it in the mere presence or juxta-position of a chapel, whose minister has to do with hearers, and hearers only, and who takes no charge of other families besides. And this impotency, which attaches to the unendowed, attaches also in great part as a defect and blemish to the endowed minister—pro-

vided that no territorial charge has been assigned to him. He may be enabled, in virtue of his endowment, to minister to the people at low seat-rents, and thus be helped over the first barrier in the way of their attendance—the want of ability to pay for church accommodation: but this does not help him over the second, which is greatly the more insuperable of the two—their want of willingness. He may be attended by those who have the predisposition—that is, just like the other, by hearers scattered up and down from all parts of the city; but be nearly as little attended as the unendowed minister before him, by people in his own immediate vicinity, or in the immediate confines of his own place of worship. Now the specific business which we should like to put into the hands of a Christian minister is, not that he should fill his church any how—that he may do by the superior attractiveness of his preaching, at the expense of previous congregations, and without any movement in advance on the practical heathenism of the community: But what we want is, to place his church in the middle of such a territory as we have now specified, and to lay upon him a task, for the accomplishment of which we should allow him the labour and perseverance of a whole lifetime; not to fill his church any how, *but to fill this church out of that district*. We should give him the charge over head, of one and all of its families; and tell him, that, instead of seeking hearers from without, he should so shape and regulate his movements, that, as far as possible, his church-room might all be taken up by hearers from within. It is this peculiar relation between his church, and its contiguous households, all placed within certain geographical limits, that distinguishes him from the others as a territorial minister. And let the whole country be parcelled out into such districts and parishes, with an endowed clergyman so assigned to each, and each small enough to be overtaken by the attentions of one clergyman—we should thus, as far as its machinery is concerned, have the perfect example of a territorial establishment.

9. But good machinery, even the best in the world, can avail nothing of itself without the good working of it; and the all-important question remains, How are we to work the machinery of a territorial establishment? We shall study so to frame our reply to this question, as still to concentrate your regards on our supposed territory of two thousand inhabitants; and which, for the very purpose of making an *experimentum crucis*, we should like to be in the worst possible circumstances for such an achievement, that is, to be the section of a town, and that too, if you will, among the very deepest and most depraved recesses of the vast metropolis—where the present, the actual proportion of church-going is the lowest that is anywhere to be found—So that the object of our enterprise you will observe is, not to retain a people in their attendance on the ordinances of the gospel, but far more difficult, to recover from non-attendance—not to perpetuate a good habit, but to change a bad one; and to restore a people, now sunk among the lowest depths in the abyss of irreligion, from the degeneracy into which they have fallen. The question is, How shall a territorial minister address himself to so stupendous a moral undertaking; and where lies the charm or efficacy of that territorial system, on which we reckon for so stupendous a fulfilment?

10. He of course would begin with a very small attendance. Few, very few, would in the first instance be inclined to go to him on the Sabbath; and that is the precise reason why he should make the most of every opening and every opportunity for going to them through the week. Of these two parties, the minister and the people—on the unendowed, or even the

endowed, if but the general and congregational system, the first movement is left with the people; and so with all those who have lost the taste and habit of waiting on the ordinances of the sanctuary, no such movement ever can be counted on: And the people, once become alienated from the services of the gospel, might, for any force that is brought to bear upon them, remain alienated for ever. There is no self-originating or spontaneous tendency to such an approximation; and the families will abide in the dormancy of nature until they are operated upon by an influence from without. The minister will never, by his mere power of attraction, draw them to his church; and he must therefore take another way of it—or, on the method of aggression, he must go forth upon their houses. In short, circumscribed though he is within a very limited sphere, he must fill it up, else he will never succeed in it, with the labours and the locomotion of a missionary. The movement never will begin with them; and it must therefore begin with him, or there will be no movement at all. The first impulse lies in his general week-day attentions; the final result, to be gradually come at however, in a greater or less number of years, and perhaps not till after the patience and painstaking of a whole incumbency, will be their general Sabbath attendance.

11. But it will be asked, what reason, grounded either on experience or on our knowledge of human nature, have we for counting on so mighty a practical effect as this—even in the course of a whole generation? We are quite sensible of a certain secular or shrewd incredulity, by which all our anticipations on this subject have been met and resisted; of a very prevalent idea, that, to think of operating with any sensible effect on such stubborn and unlikely materials as the families of the working class in a city population, is but a confident and overweening imagination, which can never by any possibility be realised—that all sense and all observation reclaim against it; and therefore, however much to be admired as a picture—the beautiful fancy picture of a sanguine high-coloured and most amiable Utopianism—we must not look for the living fulfilment of it, in this our actual and every-day world. It is thus, that our project of subdividing city parishes has been put into the same category with another benevolent project, the parallelograms of Mr. Owen; or likened to one of those many schemes of fond, but withal visionary and speculative philanthropy, which pass in rapid succession before the eye of the public, have their day and are forgotten. It is, therefore, all the more incumbent on us, to demonstrate the likelihoods of our proposed undertaking—to show wherein it differs from a romance of Arcadia; and prove that it has no common quality with a mere painting or fiction of airy sentimentalism.

12. Our first experience, then, which we quote with the greater confidence that it is so general—we had almost said constant and unexpected, and which it is in the power of any one to verify at pleasure, is the welcome and cordiality on the part of the householders, wherewith these visits of a Christian minister are received. This is the actual finding among all who make the attempt; and surely, after it has become their finding, it should no longer be stigmatised as our fancy. Whether in town or country, it makes no difference. There is an open door of admittance every where; and this forms a very great encouragement to at least the initial footsteps of our enterprise. From the immense overgrowth of our city parishes, the practice of household attentions, on the part of the clergymen, has got into disuetude: but now, when the thing is tried on little experimental slips of their huge territory, it universally happens, that the manifested goodwill on one side, draws forth the response of an honest and heart-felt gratitude on

the other. In this respect human nature maintains a certain identity, which survives every change of situation or exposure—inasmuch that ministers, when transplanted into cities from the most remote and rural parishes in the land, have been astonished to meet with the same respectful and kindly entertainment of their visits from the families of the manufacturing, which they were wont to experience from those of our cottage and agricultural population. And the human nature of England is the same with that of Scotland. In the year 1822, I made a small household survey in the worst part of the parish of St. Giles, in London, in company with Mr. Joseph Butterworth, who then lived in Russell Square, at the distance of little more than a stone-throw from the wretched hovels that were explored by us. Our ostensible errand was not a dispensation of money, but an inquiry into the state of education among their young: or, in other words, ours was not an object by which we laid hold of the sordid appetencies of the people, but of a higher and more generous part of their nature. There was not one exception, I will not say to the civility, but to the cordiality of our reception; which was no surprise to myself, for I had learned a good many years before, with what perfect confidence, nay with what a pleasurable exercise of the affections, one might enter the houses and hold converse with the families, even in the poorest and most outlandish districts of a city; while, on the other hand, Mr. Butterworth uttered the observation, that it was only within a few months, since they had made the discovery that it was consistent with their personal safety thus to go forth among the people. In other words, such had been the ignorance among the rich and the poor of each other—such the barrier of suspicion or fear on the one side; and such most likely, because most naturally the consequent distrust or defiance on the other, that when at last the one party broke their way over the moral distance by which they had been separated, it was to them altogether an unexpected novelty, when they found that the other party welcomed their advances, and could enter with the most warm and intelligent sympathy on those concerns, which appertain to the brotherhood of our common nature. If this was indeed a discovery, it is a discovery which all of you have the opportunity of making for yourselves; and I shall be glad if this first experience should dispose you to wait, and be the willing disciples of any experiences which might follow—else it is possible, that while denouncing the theoretical imagination of others, you may be setting at nought the authority of facts, and so evincing yourselves to be the most unsound and precipitate of all theorists.

13. So far from its being a theory, we are not aware of a more felt and familiar experience, than the power to conciliate and subdue human hearts, which lies, not in the gifts, but in the mere attentions or offices of kindness—however trifling in themselves, if they but give the authentic manifestation of genuine unequivocal good-will on the part of those who discharge them. It is not with a romance, but with a solid history, that we are dealing—when we read of the moral triumphs achieved in prisons by the philanthropy of Howard and Fry; and we are only carrying back their experience from prisons to parishes—we are only concluding from the more to the less marvellous, when we affirm, that the same charity which effected such conquests in the malefactor's cell, and before which the desperadoes of the gaol melted and gave way, will effectuate a still larger and more enduring conquest—when brought to bear, in their own dwelling places, on the men and women of our actual and every-day world. If such be the might and mastery of Christian benevolence—such the omnipotence of its spell, even among the guilty outcasts of society, and that in the last stage

of depravation—what might we not anticipate from the working of the same engine in the earlier stages, when the man of God goes forth in the spirit of zeal and love; and, in the midst of their domestic groups, speaks out the earnestness of an affectionate heart to the fathers and mothers of families? But why make that a matter of inference, which should be, and which is, a matter of direct observation? Let a parish minister go forth on the walk of household visitation; and the kindness of his reception, especially among the families of the working classes, is all but universal. Let their unpractised rudeness, nay even let their depravity be what it may, they almost never shut the door against him; and if he will but venture himself across their threshold, he may lay his account with a courteous, and in far the greater number of instances, with a friendly entertainment at their hands. At the commencement of a new parish, when provided with its new church, specially destined for the accommodation of the people who have been assigned to him, it is his part in the first instance to move toward them—for they never, if left to themselves, will move toward him. And he can be at no loss for topics of introduction to these, his parish families. The very announcement of himself as their minister, will secure, with the majority of the householders, a favourable outset; and there are so many ingratiating errands, by which he might incorporate himself and his doings, with the strongest and the tenderest affections of nature—as when he makes inquiry into the education of children; and can tell them of the schools which are visited by himself as their official guardian, and which are open for their reception; or as when his services are required for marriages, and baptisms, and funerals; or as when he volunteers the frequent entry of himself, at the bedsides of the sick and the dying; or as when, with kind and judicious advice, he can make himself of use to them in their quarrels, or their misfortunes, or their difficulties; or as when a signal calamity befalls the household, and the sympathy of neighbours is awakened, he falls in with the epidemic feeling—and, on every such occasion of a common sentiment and common effort for the good of the unhappy sufferers, between himself and the parochial community over which he presides, he rivets and confirms still more his moral ascendancy over them. To denounce all this as Utopianism, is really to betray the utmost ignorance and inexperience of our common humanity. It is not a fairy-land that we are now employed in picturing and setting forth. We are but describing our own average and every-day nature. We ask any man, possessing an ordinary sense or discernment of the feelings and the fellowships of social life—we ask him, not sanguinely to image, but soundly and soberly to estimate, the likelihoods of such an enterprise as we now set before him—when a Christian minister assumes to himself, in the heart of a crowded metropolis, a manageable vineyard, say of two thousand people, and turns it into a home-walk, where, day after day, he plies the attentions and charities which belong to his sacred office; and superadds to the personal influence which lies in the air and education of a gentleman, the weight of his personal character, and still more resistless, the weight of that tried and manifested friendship which glows within his breast, and pours forth, as from a fountain, the most gracious and endearing cordialities on all who are around him. We do not ask for him the eloquence, or the talent, or the rare and surpassing brilliancy, which distinguish the few; we but ask for him the principle, the worth, the kind and Christian affection, which, by the power of the divine word, and with the operation of the divine Spirit, are diffusible among all. It is on the strength of high moral, and not of high mental qualifications, that we look for the result in question. If but gifted with these, he go

forth on such a territory as we have ventured to chalk out for him ; and, more especially, if he reside within or upon its confines—there is not a month will elapse before that, by his presence and his labours, he will light a moral sunshine throughout nearly all the habitations. We are not so extravagant, not so visionary, as to think, that, as by the lifting up of a magical wand, he will obtain, by dint of his week-day attentions, even in the course of half an incumbency, their universal attendance on his Sabbath services. If he gather in but a hundred hearers from amongst them in the first twelvemonth of his labours, this were enough for us to indicate the germ of a most hopeful experiment, and at length a most triumphant consummation ; when, without magic and without miracle, he shall have congregated the residents within his little domain into a parochial family ; and, as the fruit of his sustained efforts and assiduities and prayers, he bequeaths them a now church-going and church-loving people to the minister of the next generation.

14. We would not overstate our prospects of success in this great enterprise. We know it to be a work of slowness and difficulty. We are quite sensible that, with those who have arrived at manhood, and lived all their days in a state of exile from the ordinances of the gospel—that with many of them, the obstinacy of their habits, habits of neglect and non-attendance, is well-nigh irreclaimable. And therefore it is, that we count on a very gradual accession from the grown-up people of a newly allocated parish, to its infant congregation. And yet all experience tells, that, even of these, a goodly number may be confidently expected—beginning perhaps with a small fraction of the whole, who, a few at the first, draw others after them, till (the gregarious principle coming every year into fuller play,) the regular, the respectful observance of church-going ripens at length into one of the established proprieties of that little vicinage, which has been selected as the field of this momentous experiment—the experiment, we think, of all others, fraught with deepest interest both to the church and to the commonwealth. Yet however confident of the final result, we demand time and patience for its successive footsteps. In the midst of all these bright anticipations, it is our melancholy conviction that many of the old and middle-aged of such a heretofore neglected population may never be reclaimed, even to the external decencies of Sabbath observation ; and that the locality on which this apostolic enterprise is going forward, will be relieved from the profaneness or profligacy, not by their conversion, but by their death. Our best hopes, we confess, are associated with the coming up of another generation ; and under a right treatment of the ductile and susceptible young, congregated in parish schools, and trained from earliest boyhood to a punctual attendance on the ministrations of the parish clergyman. He, if put in possession of a complete parochial economy, is on mighty vantage ground—at all times of course a welcome visitor in those dependent seminaries, which have been reared for the express convenience of his operations, forming part and parcel of the machinery that has been committed to his hands ; and where, without charging himself with the executive details of their week-day education—he, nevertheless, by the encouragement of his presence and the cognizance he takes of their presence and behaviour, might obtain the most wholesome ascendancy over the hearts and habits of his juvenile population. Over and above the juvenile influence, which, through the medium of their youth, he transplants into the bosom of families, these schools become the direct nurseries of the church,—the feeders, as it were, of that grand reservoir, which, in return becomes the centre and the fountainhead of a rich moral dispensation to

the neighbourhood around it ; and so more prolific of blessings every year, as it rises onwards from its first slender beginnings—till filled to an overflow, even before the expiry of the present or commencement of the succeeding age.

15. But let us not lose sight of the influences for good which might thus be carried forward, not in the public schools only, but in the most private and retired dwelling-places of this appropriated vineyard. The most reckless, the most resolute in their moral hardihood, are not beyond the operation of these. Even let them carry it so far, as to barricade their houses, even as their hearts are barricaded, against the approaches of this apostolic clergyman; and he need not yet give them up in despair. He has only to watch his opportunity and Providence will work for him. The hand of death may at length open a door for him—even to the worst habitation of aliens in the parish. Let him be ever ready with his services; and, in the hour of family disaster or family bereavement, the most sullen and else impracticable of these outlaws from all the decencies and humanities whether of Christian or civilized life, may at last give way. And when he makes good his entry, it will not be against their will; but with their will, softened and subdued under the power of that untired, that invincible charity, which they find it impossible any longer to withstand. The man who can achieve a victory like this, fully though it be within the likelihoods of nature and experience, has only to be disencumbered from the labours and cares of a general congregation; and, concentrating his efforts within a given territory, to operate with perseverance on its contiguous households, that he might build, by successive additions, from time to time, a local congregation out of them. And we have only to imagine the same repeated often enough from one manageable locality to another, or in other words, we have only to imagine a sufficiently thick-set establishment, in the hands of diligent and conscientious ministers, each working within his own domain, on the territorial principle—in order to effectuate the moral transformation of a city, of a vast metropolis, of a widely extended province; or finally, to carry it over the length and breadth of a whole empire.

16. It is true that though we can create the right machinery, we cannot create the right men; and that without these the machinery may either be ill worked or not worked at all—and so be the instrument of evil instead of good. This may be admitted, without, at the same time, destroying the importance, the vast importance of the proposition—that there is a certain machinery, a certain system of moral and spiritual tactics, by which the Christian worth of one man might be made tenfold more available for the christianization of two thousand people than we ever find it under a random economy—and by which therefore the well directed labour of five hundred zealous and devoted clergymen, could be made to tell with an efficacy, far surpassing all that has yet been realised on a population of a million human souls. The difficulty, we are quite sensible, lies in our want of men—but why not make them effective as far as we have them, as far as they will go? Why not provide them with the greatest possible facilities for the greatest possible result; and, could we only make good a few specimens of the power and the fruitfulness that lie in this territorial cultivation—would it not, along with the demonstration given by them to the worth of an Establishment, give a mighty impulse and direction towards a pure and well-principled exercise of the ecclesiastical patronage?

LECTURE VI.

CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH JUSTIFY A GOVERNMENT, THAT HAS ASSUMED ONE FROM AMONG THE SEVERAL DENOMINATIONS OF EVANGELICAL PROTESTANTISM FOR THE NATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT, IN ABIDING BY THE SELECTION WHICH IT HAS MADE.

1. WE trust that it will now appear of a territorial establishment, however rapid or imperfect our description of it, that it is the only one by which the mass of a community can be out and out pervaded. It is this pervading faculty, in fact, which constitutes its great and characteristic recommendation. It comprehends all; and if it do not enter into converse, it at least proposes converse with all. It may not introduce Christianity within the precincts of every family; but it brings the overtures of Christianity or of Christian instruction, to the door of every family. The lessons of the gospel are brought by it to every door; and our experience is, that, when once brought thus far, in the vast majority of instances an entry is permitted—and so these lessons are carried by it across almost every threshold. It is our further experience, that, when this system of aggression on the households of a newly assigned parish is kept up and perpetuated by the clergyman—not only does it secure a private ministration to the inmates on a week-day; but these inmates are at length evoked by it into the act, which in time ripens into the habit, of attendance on the public ministrations of the Sabbath. From a parish of aliens, they may in less than half a generation become generally and upon the whole a parish of church-goers; and, if not all converted to religion in the full life and power of it, almost all of them undergo a visible reformation of utmost importance to the well-being of society. If not all transformed into the citizens of heaven, they are bettered as citizens of earth; and, in respect to the courtesies and the proprieties and the companionable virtues of our present existence, almost all of them are greatly humanised.

2. And perhaps it will give in your eyes less of a Utopian, and more of an experimental character, to our anticipations of a result so general—if we ask you to consider the just observation of Mr. Wilberforce, on the effect of Christianity, even beyond the circle of its own proper and genuine disciples. It elevates the general standard of morals, in every country or neighbourhood which it enters. Even though it should but spiritualise the few, it civilises the many. Over and above its direct influence on those whom it converts, it has, through the medium of their example and their virtues, a reflex or secondary influence on the families of every little vicinity around them—insomuch that the sanctities and the extraordinary graces of a small number, with the influence of a purifying and preserving salt on the general mass, tell, by a certain overawing power, in restraining the profligacies, and so in raising the character for decency and morals of society at large. This will be remarkably seen in any parish that is under a reclaiming process from the out-fields of heathenism, if the experiment be but well and vigorously conducted. We do not say that the minister will christianize all; or that he will introduce the worship of God, the voice of psalms, into every family. But the melody that is heard in the habitations of the righteous, will have a certain softening and subduing effect on the

inmates of other habitations; and it will be found no romance, but in strict accordance with the realities of human nature—if, by means of his schools and of his other parochial institutes; and (of no small account either) if by means of his own frequent and various intercourse with the people, and the dignifying effect upon all the householders of their personal acquaintance with the clergyman, and of the personal cognizance which he takes of them and of their families—he will mollify, and to a very great degree, the general aspect of that parochial community over which he presides; and bequeath to his successors a far blander and better generation, than he had to encounter himself at the outset of his great undertaking.

3. It will now be seen, that, for the accomplishment of these blessed ends, a territorial establishment is indispensable—an establishment that the people might be served with the ministrations of the gospel, either at no price at all, or at a price which they can afford; and that a territorial one, that, instead of being left to come to these ministrations of their own accord, the ministrations might in the first instance be brought to them, and with all that power to conciliate and draw forth, which lies in the frequent, the importunate, but withal the well-timed attentions, of a wise and benevolent clergyman. It will also be seen wherein it is that the secret of its great strength lies. It lies in the first movement being laid on the right party. The thing to be effected is, that the teacher and the taught shall be brought into juxta-position with each other; and the question is, which of these two shall begin the approximation? If we wait till the taught seek after the teacher, we shall have to wait for ever; for in reference to the great mass and majority of an alienated parish, there is no taste, no predisposition, for the lessons of the gospel; and nothing therefore to originate a right impulse among the people. The only thing which remains then is that the teacher shall seek after the taught—a movement to which he is or ought to be prompted, by a sense of official duty, and the actuating benevolence of the gospel. We shall look in vain for a spontaneous or primary movement, in a desire on the one part to receive the moral benefit. The spontaneous and the primary can only be looked for, in a desire on the other part to confer the moral benefit. In other words, the work of christianization, even onward to the stage of its last and minutest subdivision, is at all times and essentially a missionary work. The missionary spirit, or the missionary effort, is required for short as well as for long distances. It is needed to reclaim a parish, as well as to reclaim a continent; and never, but by a system of aggression on the households of any given territory, shall we ever be able to retain and far less to recover a parochial congregation.

4. The immense moral importance of this territorial method, will now be palpable; nor can we imagine a higher object of true and enlightened patriotism, than the piecemeal application of it, one by one, to each district of a town and to each section of the country at large. But we ask you to conceive how impossible it is, to combine the full advantage and efficacy of this method, with the endowment of different sects. For, in the first place, how upon this system shall we parcel out the territory so as to make sure of a thorough ecclesiastical surveillance—reaching overhead to all the families of any given portion of it? For shall we say first to the Baptist minister,—You take charge of these contiguous streets in one part of the city, and of the two thousand people by whom they are occupied? Secondly to the Independent minister,—Here is the outline of your vineyard, in another part of the city, comprehending so many of the courts and lanes and alleys which are to be found in it? Thirdly to the Episcopalian, we assign

to you this square with its various outlets, stretching onward till the families come up to such a number as you can still overtake? And, extending the same system from the town to the country, shall it in like manner be pieced out geographically—so as, along with the principle of a general endowment, by way of equal justice to all the sects, you may also secure the principle of a territorial operation, as being the only one by which to penetrate and pervade the mass of a community? At this rate, we shall have here a Presbyterian village; there a Methodist township; somewhere else a landward domain, marked off either by natural or artificial boundaries; and within which the business of the paid instructor will, just as it happens, be to make Baptists of all, or Methodists of all, or Episcopalians of all, or Presbyterians of all. Each shade of opinion will have its own limits and its own localities; and, on the other hand, each locality, whether it be of town or country, will have its own theological designation. At this rate the fair face of our island would be like the skin of one of Jacob's cattle, spotted, speckled, ring-streaked, with all the hues and varieties of sectarianism. At present the men of all parties can conveniently enough arrange themselves into congregations. But the government will not find it so convenient, if, attempting to be even-handed with all sects, and at the same time to provide a Christian education for all the people, it shall make the further attempt of arranging them into parishes.

5. It is quite obvious, that the people cannot thus be made over, at the arbitrary will either of civil or ecclesiastical superiors—cannot thus be made over, in sections of contiguous households, to this one or that other denomination, just according to the locality in which they happen to reside. And if, to avoid this inconvenience, each shall be left to choose their own denomination, and Government to endow all without respect to the territorial principle—then, on this system, all who choose to be Methodists may have their minister supported by the state; and all who choose to be Presbyterians may have theirs; and all who choose to be Episcopalians may have theirs; and all who choose to be Baptists or Independents, or of any other sect that is comprehended within the limits of scriptural and evangelical Protestantism, may have theirs. But what in the mean time becomes of that number, who relinquish, or never acquired, the habits of church-going, and choose to be nothing at all—a number altogether left by this system without guardianship and without observation; and who are therefore sure to increase every year, and that either with or without an increase of population? There are no territorial ministers to look after these, or take any charge of them. Each minister is employed with the hearers of his own sect; and as to all others, he may presume that they belong to the minister of some other sect—and that, at all events, they lie without the scope of any care or cognizance on his part. It is obvious, both from the nature of the arrangement and from experience—the experience of America when it had its endowed ministers of various denominations; and of Britain, when its parishes became too populous to be made the subject of territorial cultivation—that the families were left to recede, and accordingly did recede in larger multitudes every year, to the out-fields of entire heathenism. They who choose to have Christian instruction, may, under this economy, have some one or other of their own peculiar tenets, to whose ministrations they can repair; and they who choose not, abide outcasts from every ministration; and there is no certain provision by which to recall them. There is no counteractive force set up, by which to make head against that bias of the human will, where-with it gravitates, as if by a sort of constitutional necessity, towards the

alienation and lethargy of nature. The system, in fact, is tainted throughout with the disease and impotency of voluntarism. Men are left by it, if they so incline, in voluntary exile from the ordinances of the gospel; and it wields no aggressive influence, by which either to restrain or to recover them. There might be men labouring in every neighbourhood, for the souls of those, who, in obedience to the summons of the weekly bell, repair to some one assembly or other of worshippers. But in every neighbourhood, there is an accumulating number of human beings, who yield no such obedience; and there is no man, although they stand in preëminent need of such a moral superintendence, whose peculiar office it is to care for their souls. The only functionary suited to their special condition, is a territorial minister; for they fall through, or fall between, into their own native irreligion among the congregational ministers who are labouring on every side of them. In these circumstances, the rapid degeneration of the community seems unavoidable; and the only adequate remedy is a well-worked territorial establishment. But government, on the one hand, cannot set this machine agoing in the complicated way of having to do with men of different bodies and different denominations—instead of providing for the Christian education of its people, through the medium of one correspondence, and with the simplicity of one management. Neither, on the other hand, can the people be made over in aggregates and geographical divisions—each to its own variety of those multiform sects into which Protestantism has severed. To avoid this double inconvenience, the attempt to combine the territorial principle with an equal treatment of all the denominations, must be given up as impracticable; and some one denomination must be singled out, for an establishment whose ministers are to be charged overhead with the Christian education of the whole country—and each in his own sphere to have an oversight and a certain responsibility laid upon him for the religious knowledge and habitudes of all the families.

6. It is a most rightful wish, on the part of a government, that its people should be placed under an effectual system of Christian education; and if this cannot be done, but by means of a territorial establishment, then is it shut up unto the necessity of resolving on such an establishment, and that it shall be territorial. And again, if this cannot be well done but by a church of one given denomination, then is it further bound to select some one denomination, whose ministers it shall entrust with the high office, and maintain in return for the great service of teaching morality and religion to the people of the land. Now it is at this point that the question is laid upon us—On what principle ought the selection to be made? We have already seen that the principle is a very obvious one; and respecting which even statesmen, if but men of large and liberal education, should feel no difficulty, on which to reject that church which would subordinate the authority of Scripture to the authority of man—or even place the decisions of their own sovereign pontiff, on the same level with the declarations of the Bible. But there are other churches, other ecclesiastical bodies, that have all agreed in abjuring this corruption; and are alike free from any participation in it. Many, we should say the great majority, of our Protestant sects, hold the authority of Scripture paramount to all other authority; and are so far agreed in the interpretation of it, as to hold the same fundamental tenets; and, while differing in circumstantialia, to be at one on all the great and essential articles of faith. The government may be at no loss for reasons to eject Popery; but it may be at great loss for reasons to determine its preference of one shade or variety of Protestantism over all the rest—and that too in very proportion to the near-

ness of their agreement with each other. The difficulty is enhanced, when it comes to be regarded as a question of equity between sect and sect; nor is it readily seen, when there is a substantial unity of doctrine betwixt them, on what principle one should be admitted to the bowers of an establishment, while all others are suffered to abide outcasts from its emoluments and its honours.

7. Now this question, full of perplexity as it may seem, we think might be easily and at the same time be rightly and on a clear principle disposed of. And our first observation is, that the great, the primary design of an establishment is wholly misunderstood by those who view it as a question of equity between sect and sect. The object of such an institution is not this, but wholly distinct from this, which is to provide a Christian education for the people. What does or what ought to move a government in the adoption of such an economy, is not that it may prefer one church or one order of clergymen over another; but that it may possess itself of a good and efficient organ, through which to distribute the lessons of sound morality and religion among the families of the land. Grant that either of two, or if you choose that any one of twelve sectaries, is equally accomplished for this great task—that may be a sufficient vindication for government taking any one it may choose into its employment; but no reason why government should alike employ them all. Nay, it is incumbent, morally incumbent, on the government to employ but one, if, in so doing, it retains the territorial principle, rather than employ all, if, in so doing, it must give up that principle; and so inflict the deepest injury upon the population. There may be no very distinct ground of preference in the overpassing merits of any one of these rival competitors, on which to guide the selection that the government should make. It may be difficult to allege, and still more to vindicate, the superiority of any one of these denominations to all the rest; in which case, the government should not suspend, on the determination of this question, an immediate measure for a sound Christian education to the families of the commonwealth. In so doing, it singles out for the national establishment some one of these various denominations; and this, of course, involves the exclusion of all the others. This, regarding it in one aspect, may be viewed in the light of an injury to them; but, regarded in another aspect, it should be viewed in the light of a benefit to society. The so-called injury to the sects is a collateral effect, which forms no part of the wish, perhaps comes not within the contemplation, of the government at all. The benefit to the country at large is the moving principle of government, the object of its sole and single-hearted prosecution. It is not to be endured, that a great, nay, the greatest of all national objects, shall be thwarted and impeded, because minute differences in theology have arisen; and theologians, with their respective followers, have chosen, upon these differences, to fall out among themselves. The moral well-being of the nation is not to stand at abeyance, till an adjustment shall have been made among controversies not yet determined, and perhaps indeterminate. The government does right in resolving on a territorial establishment, and in selecting the ministers of one denomination to work it. Should it, because of this, incur the complaint of not doing equal justice to all the sectaries, it can allege, in its defence, the far higher consideration of doing equal justice to all the families of all the population, by so adapting the church which it pays and takes into its service—by so adapting it to the country, that it may reach all, and be comprehensive of all. It is neither for the exaltation of one sect, nor for infliction of a stigma on all the rest, that government confines its overtures to one only. It is

because in this way the business of a general Christian education is most thoroughly done, and most fully overtaken. The government is not to be diverted from this object, of highest and most catholic policy, by the differences which have broken out in the Christian world. Notwithstanding of these, it does right in keeping by the ministers of one certain denomination, provided they be vitally and essentially right; though, in so doing, they pass over the ministers of other denominations, who though vitally and essentially right also, have chosen to isolate their body into a separate communion, and to stand out on certain circumstantial peculiarities of their own. Nevertheless, the duty of government remains a stable and unaffected element, which is to ordain a right system of good and efficient education for their subjects; and leave the sectaries to settle their differences as they may.

8. Of these two parties—the government on the one hand, who have established and endowed the right-thinking ministers of a certain denomination; and the ministers of the denominations, as right-thinking it may be as the first, in all the leading articles of the faith and weightier matters of the law, and who may complain, that, while equally sound and scriptural with the clergy of the national church, they have been so unequally treated by the reigning power of the state—we say of these two parties, the state and the sectaries, the state should, in the question between them, be less at a loss for their own justification. It is true, that, for the sake of a great moral blessing to the community, they have selected one set of ministers, to whom they have made over, in sections or parishes, the Christian charge, and entrusted the Christian surveillance of all their population. In so doing, they may have left out, let us imagine, five other sets of ministers—all of them equally deserving of such preference; and who may therefrom complain of the partiality. But the government cannot, for their sakes, break up the territorial principle, that great barrier against the inroads of heathenism; and, on the other hand, we ask, in the name of Christian charity, whether the existence of their minor differences forms a worthy or sufficient cause for the barrier being taken down? Must the conveniences of an object so mighty as the Christian education of the people, be on this account trampled under foot; and we ask, whether it would not be far more beautiful and good, that these distinctions between sect and sect should be offered up a sacrifice on the altar of one common faith, and for the well-being of our common and general humanity—than that a cause so dear, both to piety and patriotism, as a universal schooling in the lessons of sound principle for all the people of the land, should be given to the winds? This were really straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel.

9. We do not speak of the sin of schism in the abstract. There is much said on this subject by certain domineering churchmen, who arrogate a mystic superiority to themselves, while they would consign all others beyond the pale of Christianity—wherewith we cannot in the least sympathise. It is not on any pretension of this sort, that we would vindicate the establishment of the churches, either of Scotland or England. We do not feel it necessary for such a purpose, to depress immeasurably beneath us, either the creed or the government of other denominations. We most willingly concede of sectaries we could name, that they are at one with us in all which is vital, and only differ from us in certain minute and insignificant peculiarities; and yet the establishment, the single the exclusive establishment, of our existing churches in their respective countries, might be made to rest, we think, on a firmer because a more rational basis—on a far

clearer principle than is alleged by those, who claim for their ministers the immaculate descent of a pure and apostolic ordination. We disclaim all aid from any such factitious argument,—an argument which could have been of no avail against the Popery that we rejected, and should be of as little avail against those denominations of Protestantism which have been left unendowed. We contend against Popery as unscriptural. We contend, not against all Protestant denominations beside our own as being unapostolical, but, which is truly a different thing, we contend against the endowment of more than one denomination for one country as incommodious, and not fitted to the great object for which an endowment is desirable—and that is the general Christian education of the people of the land. In reasoning against Popery, the more erroneous, or the wider the difference from us, the more easily their case is disposed of. In reasoning, not we repeat against the Protestant sectaries, but against the endowment of them all save one—the less erroneous, or the nearer they are to ourselves, the more easily their case is disposed of. If people will but attend to the distinction between one thing and another, they will find that there is no paradox here. It was on theological principles that we stripped Popery of her endowments. It is on the principles of a right fiscal, or a right economical arrangement—that, while recognising the substantial unity of two, three, or more of the Protestant bodies, we but endow one of them and leave out the rest. To the question by which it was thought they would have gruelled us, When the difference is so insignificant between the Church and the sectaries, why treat them so unequally?—our reply is, When the difference is so insignificant, why keep up that difference at all?—Why do sectaries keep aloof from the Church, on considerations which are confessedly insignificant and paltry? We hear of their common faith, that is, of their agreement with the Church, on all vital and essential topics; and this, in opposition to the bigots within the Establishment, we heartily accord to the great majority of the Dissenters in both parts of the island. But if they agree in all that is essential, what is the character of the topics on which they differ? There can be no other reply to this, than that they must be the non-essentials of Christianity—the *nugæ triviales* if not the *nugæ difficiles* of doctrine or government—the caprices, or whimsical peculiarities, in which, through the very wantonness of freedom in this land of perfect toleration, men have chosen to besport themselves, and so broken forth into their party-coloured varieties; each having a creed, or rather I would say (for substantially speaking nine-tenths of the people in Britain have all the same creed), each having a costume and a designation of their own. Meanwhile, if of the four, five, or six denominations it be granted—which we do most cordially, such being the character of their variations—that mainly and substantially speaking they all of them are right—The government, after having done what was theologically right in rejecting Popery, would still be theologically right, in transferring the endowment of the national church to any one of these denominations. And if theologically right in fixing upon some one, then, on another ground—that is, for the sake of the territorial principle, with all its mighty benefits to the population, it would be fiscally or economically right in keeping by that one. We see no way of escaping from this conclusion, but by unchristianizing the Church of England; or the bigots without the Establishment becoming as outrageous in their way, as are those bigots within the Establishment who would unchristianize the Dissenters. Enough for government, that it has taken a scriptural church into its service; and vindication enough for its not taking more, that its

work can be better done by one such servant than by several. To the remonstrance of the excluded sects, Why when we differ so little do you not take us in? it may well be replied, Why when you differ so little do you keep yourselves out? Truly it is not for government to make the adjustment here; nor is there another way of bringing the adjustment about, but by means of a larger intelligence and a larger charity both in the Church and among the sectaries themselves.

10. We trust it is now palpable—that, whereas, in proportion to the nearness which obtains between the endowed church and the unendowed sectaries, it has been thought all the more difficult to justify the selection of the one and exclusion of all the rest, it in very truth is all the other way. Let us overlook for a moment their circumstantial peculiarities, and grant them to be all equally well fitted for tutoring the families of our population in the lessons of a sound and scriptural Christianity—the government theologically could not be wrong, in adopting any one of them for the national establishment; but government fiscally and economically would be wrong, in thus adopting more than one—for it would embarrass thereby the operation of the territorial principle, and so endanger the great object of a universal Christian education. If you tell me of twenty sectaries, that they are all very near right—this is just telling me that government, in having taken one of these into its employment for the services of a national church, is not very far wrong. You may thus reduce it to a question of insignificance, which of them it shall be—while there is no insignificance, but the weightiest and most momentous of all national interests involved, in some one or other of them having this distinction conferred on it. Government, after having made the preference, and so standing acquitted of the greatest duty it owes to the commonwealth, leaves the whole charge of insignificance and folly to rest upon those who, for the sake of paltry and insignificant differences, will thus quarrel and fall out among themselves.

11. It is no purpose of ours to wound the feelings of our dissenting brethren, whose services in the cause of our common Christianity cannot be too highly estimated. It is true that we venerate the Church of England as a Christian church; but, so far therefore from laying a stigma on the sectaries, there are several, and these comprising a very large majority of the Nonconformists throughout England, who, in our apprehension, are so near in theology to the Establishment, that, for ourselves, we cannot make out a principle in any of the differences, on which they continue to stand without its pale. Yet we refuse not the credit of principle to themselves; and not because we hold them in error, but because we desire an effective Christian surveillance for all the families in the nation—which can never be accomplished without the responsibility and the charge being laid, not on the ministers of all, but on the ministers only of some one, and that at the same time a scriptural and right denomination—It is on this account, and on this account alone, that we contend for the endowment of one and of one only. On this subject we are altogether at one with the dissenters of a former age, as Baxter and many others, who would have felt the abandonment of a national support for the clergy to have been a national abandonment of Christianity; and who, without ever once dreaming of such a support for themselves, demanded no more, and would have been fully satisfied, with liberty and toleration.

12. I will not relinquish the hope of a consummation to all these differences; and that some high achievement of charity, a great and noble sacrifice at the shrine of true Christian patriotism, is still awaiting us.

When once the habit of the Christian world is to think more on their articles of agreement, and less on their articles of difference; or, in other words, when they come to think more on that which is great, and less on that which is little—when principles on the one hand, and points on the other, shall hold their just relative proportion and place in the estimations of men—then will the gravitating power which unites bodies to a common centre, prevail over the repulsions which are almost all associated with the now rapidly fading, and we trust soon to be forgotten, wrongs of former generations. When once the Church of England shall have come down from all that is transcendental or mysterious in her pretensions; and, quitting the plea of her exclusive apostolical derivation, shall rest more upon that wherein the real greatness of her strength lies—the purity of her doctrines—her deeds of high prowess and championship in the battles of the faith—the noble contributions which have been rendered by her scholars and her sons to that Christian literature, which is at once the glory and the defence of Protestantism—the ready-made apparatus of her churches and parishes—the unbroken hold which, as an establishment, she still retains on the mass of society—and her unforfeited possessory right to be reckoned and deferred to as an establishment still—When these, the true elements of her legitimacy and her power, come to be better understood; in that proportion will she be recognised as the great standard and rallying-post, for all those who would unite their efforts and their sacrifices in that mighty cause, the object of which is to send throughout our families, in more plentiful supply, those waters of life which can alone avail for the healing of the nation. But the best and highest sacrifice of all were by the Dissenters of England, those representatives and descendants of the excellent ones of the earth—the Owens, and Flavels, and Howes, and Baxters, and Henrys of a by-gone age—who rejoiced to hear of all the Christianity which there was in the Church; and to see all which the Church did, if but done for the Christian good of the people. We speak not of the sin of schism, of which we have sometimes heard, in language far too strong for any sympathy or even comprehension of ours. But we speak of the blessings of unity; and we confess how greatly more it is endeared to us, since made to perceive, that, only by an undivided church, only by the ministers of one denomination, can a community be out and out pervaded, or a territory be filled up and thoroughly overtaken with the lessons of the gospel. Tell, whether it is of greater consequence that minor differences be upholden, or that the universal Christian education of our families shall be provided for? But, in truth, these minor differences may coexist with the operations of an effective establishment. We want not to overbear the consciences of dissenters; but, if possible, disarm their hostility to an institute, of which we honestly believe that its overthrow were tantamount to the surrender, in its great bulk and body, of the Christianity of our nation.

13. The question which has so long engaged us, is not one of justice between sect and sect; but, of a far higher character than this, a question of justice to the population. It is ever to be deplored, when a greater question is transmuted into a lesser, and the moral interests of the community should thus be suspended on the adjustment of a matter which affects but the personal feeling or the secular advantage of some one or more orders of ecclesiastics. It is thus, we fear, that the great boon of a parochial system of education has been so long withheld from the people of England. Is it right, or seemly, that the difficulties of a harmonious settlement between churchmen and dissenters, should stand in the way of a great

national blessing to the families of the working classes? We trust that the legislature is now awakening to the truth, that no popular education can be of avail for the well-being of the community, which is not based upon religion. And then on the question of, What religion? we have not to speak over again the argument of principle which leads to the preference of Protestantism over Popery. And neither should we have to repeat that other argument, not of principle but of convenience and effect, which leads to the selection of one denomination of Protestantism, and not to the employment of all, for the territorial charge, whether of the Sabbath or week-day education of the people. In as far as parochial schools are laid under an ecclesiastical superintendence, it should be the superintendence of the ministers of the ecclesiastical establishment—while open to all the population. In Scotland there is little or no resistance to this arrangement; and, while there is enough of jealousy and adverse feeling between the Church and the sectaries, there is, on the whole, a general and practical acquiescence in our scholastic economy. Our schools have been the nurseries of Christianity; but not, that we are aware, have they ever been complained of as giving an undue advantage to the Established Church—nor, although it be the general practice of our dissenters to send their children to these parish seminaries, have we ever heard them spoken of as the nurseries of a proselytism that was all on one side, while injurious to every other denomination. Must religion, on the one hand, be excluded from education for the sake of harmony; or must education, on the other, be kept in abeyance for the sake of those minor differences, which separate the Church, and at least nine-tenths of the Protestant sectaries from each other? Let us hope that Christian philanthropy will prevail over all these difficulties; and that we shall soon have a sufficiently thick-set establishment of schools for the families of England—Protestant, in deference to the high behests of principle and truth—Parochial, and therefore connected with the Church,—that education, as well as religion, might have the full benefit of the territorial principle. The attempt to harmonize Catholics with Protestants in a common habit of attendance on unscriptural schools, and that in the vain hope of a great moral regeneration to ensue from the experiment, proceeds on an entire reversal of the apostolic order—it is an attempt to be first peaceable and then pure. The attempt to harmonise the churchmen with the dissenters of England, in a common habit of attendance on schools where the theology of the Establishment is taught, is the direct footsteps of that order—it being “first pure, and then peaceable.”

THE END.

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