

EUROPE.
ENGLAND.
Imperial Parliament.



(Continued from our last Page.)

This should lead them to be-think themselves well of the state in which they stood with regard to the whole people of the realm; and the practical conclusion would be, that every thing to be done should be conducted with deliberation and candour; and every thing should be left undone that could tarnish their reputation as counsellors of the King, and legislators for the people. All desultory rambling and personal attacks, all unprofitable discussions should be avoided;—[hear.] they should abandon the worst practice of the last Parliament, and adopt the better practice of former Parliaments. One word, now as to two subjects that had been touched upon—the use of the Sovereign's name, and the interference of government in the elections. His experience had told him that at no period had government interposed its influence less than at present. On the other hand Noble Lords had spoken without reserve of their connexion with elections. The Noble Marquis had talked of "my election affairs," and "my election interest."

The Marquis of Londonderry rose to explain. He had not said a single word about his election affairs, or his election interests. The Lord Chancellor had then misunderstood the Noble Marquis, but he had thought he never heard words more distinctly, and some noble Lords about him thought the same. With respect to the use of his Majesty's name, he thought it remarkable that the noble Earl himself had, in his speech, named the Sovereign, and said that he might have given leave to his servants to bring in the bill, but might change his mind, or have advice given to him by other persons. He (the Lord Chancellor) knew that when his noble friends had been turned out of power, on the question of Catholic emancipation, which had since been carried, some advice had been given to the Crown; but in the present case there were no secret advisers, or if there were, they would be treated, with soon by an honest, upright, and straightforward prince. If there had been any of these intrigues, all would have gone on smoothly, and there would have been no complaint of the use of the King's name. Was it unfair for a minister of the crown to say that the Sovereign approved of a measure which the permitting his ministers to pronounce was a proof that he did approve? But it was right to tell truth, it was not right to tell a foul falsehood. Yet at the corner of every street the King had been printed about, sung about; it was said, "You talk of dissolving the Parliament; you cannot dissolve it, the King will not let you." Was that not using the King's name? But it was a perfectly false and most foul slander of our gracious and eternal and most popular monarch. [Hear.] In 1806 and 1807, in the period of "No popery," the King's name had been used in debates both within and without Parliament. The noble and learned Lord concluded by apologizing for the time he had taken, and with repeating that he should be ready to enter upon the discussion of these subjects at the proper time. The Bishop of Ferns and Earl Roden defended Lord Fyfe. The latter noble Lord said, that the tranquillity of Clare was the tranquillity of gunpowder.

The question on the Address was put and carried.

The Earl of Shaftesbury was chosen for the 17th time chairman of the committees. The sessional orders were moved, and the House adjourned at half past three o'clock on Wednesday morning.

In the House of Commons, on the 21st, after the return of members from attending at the delivery of the King's speech, notice of motions was given by Mr. Hunt, Mr. Alderman Wood, and others, and by Lord John Russell, for calling up the Reform Bill on the 24th.

THE ADDRESS.

Mr. Pelham moved the address, in a short speech, congratulating the House on the result of the election declaring, that it was decidedly favourable to reform, and, in speaking of Ireland, observing, that he viewed its condition with horror, being unable to understand how the owners of estates there could act as they did.

Sir J. Johnston seconded the address. He considered the result of the elections to be a most triumphant defence of the conduct of ministers; and he hoped that the house would join in promoting the measures urged by the King and the ministers to amend the representation of the people; but, at the same time, he did not consider that members pledged themselves to any specific plan of reform in agreeing to the address.

Sir Robert Peel said he should not object to the address on such understanding. He adverted to the absence of Lord Palmerston as a cause for not speaking on our foreign relations; and remarked, that the inconvenience of such absence ought to make some hesitate about the perfect character of the plan of reform that had been heretofore proposed. He also complained of the manner in which the Parliament was dissolved, contending that, though "stoppage of supplies" was urged, the dissolution was resolved upon before the vote regarding the supplies. He could not approve of the late dissolution, and his sentiments, with regard to the reform Bill, were still unaltered. He might regret that his opinions were adverse to the great body of the people; but no consideration would induce him timely to acquiesce in a measure which he thought injurious, however small the minority by which he should be supported.—[Hear.]

Lord Mahon let off a violent tirade against ministers, whom he accused of truckling to the enemies of the constitution, the honorable member for Middlesex and his brother radicals, who supported the reform bill only as a step to universal suffrage and vote by ballot.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied, that if any remarks were required, the absence of Lord Palmerston ought not to prevent their utterance, since every minister was equally responsible with Lord Palmerston. As to the dissolution, the resistance to the supplies, as well as the vote thereon, had contributed to its being carried into effect, though it might not have wholly guided the decision.

Mr. Hume observed, that the complaints relative to the dissolution of Parliament were exceedingly unfair, coming as they did from honorable members who, in the last Parliament, had defied ministers to adopt the very course which they had pursued. He hoped that a new bill, or a different bill, was to be introduced.

ed. He would not believe such a statement. He trusted that the bill would be carried through both houses, and receive the royal assent without any alteration, excepting in such details as might be fully or by the introduction of such minor improvements would not be inconsistent with the scope and spirit of the whole measure.—[Hear.]

The address was then agreed to nem. con.

THE REFORM BILL.

Lord J. Russell moved that that part of the King's Speech which referred to the Reform Bill be read by the Clerk. This having been done, the Noble Lord said he rose for the purpose of proposing in the name of His Majesty's Government, a measure of Reform which was calculated to maintain full and entire the prerogatives of the Crown, and the rights of both Houses of Parliament, and the rights of the people.—[hear.] He could not but recollect what took place in the last Parliament, when he brought forward this subject, and when he did so he requested that Hon. Gentlemen would favour him so far as to give him a patient attention while he entered into an explanation of the measure which he was about to submit to the consideration of the House.—[Hear.] He hoped that that species of gesticulation, and contortion which certain Hon. Gentlemen, who had banded themselves together for the purpose of scuttling the bill from the House during the last Parliament would not be practiced in this. But the King's Ministers had not yielded to taunt or threat, nor to misrepresentation nor libel, by which it was attempted to disgrace the Bill, nor to the able opposition which it had received in that House, nor from the more dangerous weapon which had been used by the opponents of Reform, namely, declaring that the will of the Sovereign was different from that of the people. Not all these representations could prevent the King, his Ministers, and the people, from pursuing an object dear to them and to all those who love liberty, and who respect and revere the British constitution.—[cheers.] Of the conduct of the King to his Ministers, it did not become him to speak but he could not at all sufficiently express his admiration of the Noble conduct of the people of England respecting the manner in which they had placed the seal of their approbation upon the great measure of Reform.—[hear.] The zeal and devotedness shown by the humbler classes of the people of England on the subject, was an example of which England might well be proud to the latest generation.—[hear.] It has been said that passion, not reason, guided the people during the late elections.—[hear, hear, from the Opposition benches.] He did not deny that passion had its influence on the occasion.—[hear, hear.] But it was a passion that had its rise from a love of country.—[cheers.] It was nothing but this feeling that could have induced many of them to give up rights which they possessed, for the sake of benefiting the millions who inhabited these realms. He would now speak of the measure which he meant to bring before the House; but he would not enter into the details of it, particularly as they were in all respects the same as when the measure was before the House during last Parliament.—[hear, hear.] and whatever slight improvements might have taken place in these details, [hear, hear, from the Opposition.] was only intended to carry into operation more effectively the great principle upon which the Bill was founded.—[hear, hear.] These improvements, however, he should not advert to until the Bill went into Committee. As, however, this House was called together for the purpose of considering this great question, which so materially affected the constitution of this House, he thought it would be respectful in him to state to the House what our ancient representation was, what it now is, and what it is likely to be under the new system proposed by the Bill which he was about to bring in.—[hear, hear.] The Noble Lord then took a review of the ancient system of representation which existed in the early times of Edward the Third, as we understood him, from which it appeared, that the Sheriffs were directed by the King to send to Parliament for certain cities and boroughs two citizens. The Sheriffs were in the constant habit of making returns, either complying with the call made upon them, or stating why they did not do so, by showing that the borough had so far declined in population and wealth as not to be entitled to the power of sending Members to Parliament. This system continued for 250 years. From the time of Henry the Sixth down to the period of the Tudors, 55 boroughs had been either restored or created, and it was curious enough, that of these 55 boroughs 45 were included within schedule A. He mentioned these facts for the purpose of shewing that there was not any settled or regular system in ancient times by which members were returned to this House, and therefore, to make a revision of the existing system of representation, was not a departure from the course of conduct that had been practised heretofore; [hear, hear.] Indeed, there had never been any settled system for any fifty years together. The Constitution, in this respect, had constantly varied, according to circumstances. [Hear.] Well, if the representative system were not settled in the reigns anterior to the Stuarts, it could hardly be said to be so during their time. A foreign writer, adverting to this period of our history, called it a revolution of fifty years. The Noble Lord then adverted to the changes under Cromwell, to the opinion of Lord Clarendon, who admitted the necessity of a Reform in the representative system, when they had the warrant of authority and better times to attempt the change. That time had now arrived, and the effort ought to be made; [hear, hear.] The Noble Lord then passed along to the period of the Revolution, from which some Gentlemen were inclined to date the existence of our Constitution.—[Hear.] What was the first Act that was passed at that time? Why, that Elections should be free, and that the Lords of the Cinque Ports should have no power in the election for members for these places and that neither force of arms, nor menaces should be used at elections. Now, were these laws adhered to under the existing system? Were elections free? Were menaces never used? [Hear.] Why it was notorious that many of the Members of that House were there, not by the free will of the people, but by the power of a particular individual. Was therefore that House what it was represented to be, namely, the Commons House of Parliament? [Hear.] Certainly not. The object of the Bill which he was about to bring in, was to make the House of Commons what it was supposed to be, but what in reality it was not. [hear, hear.] The Noble Lord then adverted to a work by Brown Willis, respecting the representation of boroughs, for the purpose of shewing that, while the constituent body of certain boroughs were greatly lessened, the trade, population and wealth of the towns had increased; and that, therefore, it was unjust towards the towns generally, that the present system should be permitted to continue. The system of representation in England had for the last fifty years been a matter of deep consideration by able men. Lord Chatham and Mr. Pitt, in early life, were for a change in the representation. The latter, in 1788, thought that, but for the French revolution, a change ought to have taken place. Amongst those who opposed Reform, were Mr. Burke and Mr. Canning; and

certainly, latterly, Mr. Pitt expressed himself in opposition to it; [hear hear.] After such a length of time in which the question had been debated, it must be generally admitted that the question was ripe for consideration. The Noble Lord then referred to the case of Scotland, in which the representation was cut down one third, and this too by a man whom the advocates of no innovation were constantly lauding, namely, Lord Somers, who, in answer to a protest signed by Beauclerk, Buckingham, and Stowell, against reducing the representation of Scotland, said that certainly too sudden changes were always dangerous, unless the most manifest danger resulted from too great a delay of these changes; [loud cheers.] His Majesty's Ministers had followed in the footsteps of Lord Somers, and conceded Reform because they believed to delay the measure much longer would lead to dangerous consequences; [hear, hear.] The Noble Lord then referred to the change that had been made in the representative system of Ireland at the time of the Union, by no innovating hand, namely, Mr. Pitt's [hear, hear] whose name, it appeared, was used as a token and a talisman by certain gentlemen who met at public dinners for the purpose of opposing Reform. The Noble Lord also contended that the case of the disfranchisement of the forty shilling freeholders was a strong argument in favor of those who wished to alter the representative system to make it more perfect? The present state of the representative system was this: certain Members were returned by nomination boroughs; in other boroughs the most shameful practices existed; certain cities were free and open; the counties, too, were free and open; but the expenses attending upon county elections were such, that gentlemen were deterred from contesting these elections. The Noble Lord adverted to the election of 1832 in support of this assertion. Looking at this House, it shocked him to see Members in it, who were sent there by a few individuals. It offended him, too, to think of the drunkenness and immorality that was committed at the time of sending Members to Parliament. It also shocked him when he recollected that the people of England generally had so little influence in the election of Members for that House.

To alter this system was what was proposed by the means which he intended to introduce to the House, altering however as little as was possible, under the circumstances; [laughter, and cries of hear, hear.] Under the Bill, the election for Members would be by counties, cities, and boroughs. There would be 150 Members sent to that House by the counties of England and Wales; by the great cities and towns, not omitting, as was now the case Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, &c. 180 Members would be returned; and the residue of the representation would be returned by a class of boroughs that would add considerably to the value of the representative system. It was the object of the Bill to extend the suffrage in counties and towns.—The right of suffrage in counties was to be extended to copyhold and leaseholders. With respect to the latter, it was proposed that a leaseholder of £50 a year, holding for a term of seven years, and not fourteen, as heretofore proposed, should be entitled to a vote; [hear, hear.] With respect to towns, the right of suffrage was to be extended to all persons holding houses of £10 a year. The Bill contains provisions against bribery and corruption, and provides for taking the poll in two days; this latter provision he thought would go far to do away with bribery and corruption.—[hear, hear.] But with respect to bribery and corruption at elections, he had to inform the House, that the laws relating to this subject were under the consideration of his Majesty's Government, and he believed he would be enabled to bring in a Bill respecting those laws during the present Session, by which their operation would be more effective. It could not be allowed that men should name members to that house as a matter of barter and exchange. The first objection to the measure is, that it was more extensive than necessary.—[hear.] Those who introduced the measure were not bound to any particular principle of Reform. The Lord Chancellor, and other Members of the Administration, did not bind themselves to any particular plan, and the extensiveness of the proposed Bill went to prove that the Government had deemed an extensive Reform necessary, and they felt bound to do away with Gattion and Old Sarum altogether, and not leave any grounds for fresh discussions. [Cheers.] Had they adopted a less limited and extensive measure, they would leave the question of Reform incomplete and imperfect. [Cheers.] By the adoption of the proposed Bill, the country would be satisfied. [Hear.] The practical evil that the country had felt, required redress. The plan of the opponents of the measure required that Gattion and Old Sarum should send as many Members as towns of great population. It was admitted that some Reform was necessary, which at once admits the necessity of a change. The opponents did not stand upon the high ground of Mr. Canning and the Duke of Wellington, who denied the necessity of all Reform. The Government had made inquiries respecting the population of certain boroughs, which justified the course pursued. The Noble Lord then enumerated the boroughs that would contain a numerous and respectable body of constituents under the proposed Bill. He found the returns to the tax office incomplete, and would not have proved a proper guide in regulating and instructing the Legislature on the subject. The population returns were the most correct, upon which a fair and just line could be drawn. He proposed that Downton should be included in the schedule of disfranchisement, and also the borough of St. Germans, which was only inhabited by a few fishermen. In including those two boroughs, they had departed from the original line laid down; but it was impossible, upon reconsideration of the measure, to avoid doing so. [Hear.] He had gone through the detail of the measure, and it was for the consideration of the House, as to the benefit to be derived from it by the country. When he proposed that the people should send into that House their representatives to consider their interests, he proposed a great change for the benefit of the people. The laws would be deliberately considered and made, and ultimately the people would feel a great and strong desire to preserve the institutions of the country, and attachment to the laws. He attributed the present state of Ireland to the want of a good Government and good laws. He concluded by expressing his conviction, that the proposed Bill which he was about to move for, would improve the condition of the people, and secure their attachment and loyalty to the Crown. [Cheers.] The Noble Lord then moved for leave to bring in the Bill.

Sir R. Peel said, that the noble Lord was much mistaken in believing that the proposed Bill would be allowed to go to a Committee without the sense of the House being taken upon it. [Hear, hear.] The Noble Lord would be good enough to allow the opponents

of the Bill to express their sentiments upon a measure of such vital importance to the country. [Hear.] He did not, however, intend, if it was the opinion of the House, to press a division until the second reading of the Bill. He avowed his readiness to allow the Bill to be brought in, and to forego the great temptation to reply to the speech of the noble Lord. [Cheers and laughter.] If he avoided a discussion, he trusted that his silence might not be mistaken: previous to going into a committee, he would take the sense of the House on the Bill. He hoped that the noble Lord would grant a sufficient space of time between the first and second reading, in order that the subject might be fairly and attentively considered. He hoped, before that discussion took place, the House would be put in possession of the Reform Bill intended for Ireland. [Hear, hear.] It was very material, that, before the English Bill was discussed, the outline of the Irish and Scotch Bill should be laid before the House. All he wanted to know was, the main provisions of those Bills. [Cheers.] He hoped the noble Lord would yield to those two points, name a convenient day, and put the House in possession of those two Bills. [Cheers.]

Viscount Goderich stated, in reply to a question, that it was the intention of Government to introduce, in the course of the present session, a bill on the subject of emigration. The Lord Chancellor intimated in the course of the discussion which arose on this subject, that the Government and himself individually had taken the subject into consideration, with a view to propose a measure not indeed to operate contemporaneously with the regulations for emigration, but, somewhat after them in order of time, to make a more general provision to prevent the recurrence of the sad necessity of the country's best souls leaving her shores.—[Hear.] That object was to be obtained by a revision of the poor laws, notwithstanding the immense and fearful difficulties which such a task imposed. It was known that, so early as the years 1816, and 1817, he had applied his mind to this subject. From that time downwards he had not given up the investigation: and at length he believed that he saw daylight amidst the darkness which had hitherto enveloped the subject. He should not say a word as to the plan which he had decided upon; but he had taken the advice of his Majesty's Government upon it, and he hoped and trusted, that not many months would pass before a measure on the subject would be introduced to their lordships, so matured as at least to deserve their favourable consideration.—[Hear, hear.] He would not promise that it would be brought forward later than the next. It was intended to be preparatory to another measure for the consolidation and simplification of the existing acts on the subject of the poor laws.—[Hear.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS, JUNE 24.

Lord John Russell brought in the new Parliamentary Reform Bill, which was read once and ordered for a second reading on the 4th of July. The speech of his Lordship went over the old ground, and embraced the usual topics. Sir R. Peel stated that he should oppose the Bill at the second reading.

The Bill, as now introduced, will be found to be unchanged in principle. The only material change in that which extends the right of voting in counties to leaseholders paying fifty pounds a year of rent, or holding tenements of fifty pounds a year value for the term of seven years and upwards, instead of fourteen, as formerly proposed. Two boroughs, which before escaped attention, are now to be included in the list of disfranchisement. St. Germans, which was not previously included, because it is situated in a large parish of the same name, and was in itself, from being a mere collection of fishermen's huts, too insignificant for a separate return in the population abstract; and the borough of Doncaster, to which Lord John's attention has been directed by its noble proprietor (Lord Radnor). His Lordship is a reformer. The proprietor of St. Germans (the Earl of St. Germans) is an anti-reformer, so that the alteration cannot be called partial; for the loss is fairly balanced.

The following will be found a pretty accurate summary of the other alterations now introduced into the Bill.

"The right of voting in counties is extended to Leaseholders for seven years, and whether determinable on lives or not.

"In case of property mortgaged, the mortgagee in possession to have the vote.

"The period of possession for a freeholder or a copyholder is to be six months, instead of thirty days, as in the former Bill; and for leaseholders, one year instead of two years.

"The period of possession to be dispensed with in the case of property coming by descent, will, &c. This is the law at present.

"Borough Votes.—Land occupied in conjunction with a house, ware-house, or counting-house (held under the same landlord), and amounting altogether, to the annual value or rent of £10, shall confer a vote.

"No vote to be acquired by a tenant, if his rent is payable more frequently than once in every half year, or if his landlord compounds for the poor rates; but where, under any local Act, the landlord is liable for the rates, the tenant may claim to pay the rates, and thus acquire a vote.

"Parliamentary Commissioners to be substituted for committees of Privy Counsellors. "Registration.—The Lists to be published on two Sundays instead of three, on or near the church doors.

"Power of inspecting tax assessments and arrest, for the purpose of ascertaining the value and occupancy of property.

"The voter, at the time of polling, may be required to swear that his qualification is still subsisting.

"Scrutiny before the returning officer expressly taken away.

"Polling in Counties.—Counties to be divided by Sessions into Districts, and a central Polling-place to be appointed for each District. "Booths to be allotted for the several Parishes in the District, and no man to vote except at the Booth allotted for the Parish in which his qualification is.

"Penalty for personating an elector, and for voting twice at the same election.

"Chambers in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge not to give a right of voting for the city of Oxford or town of Cambridge."

ADDRESS TO THE KING AND ANSWER TO THE SAME.

To the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

Most gracious Sovereign,—We, your Majesty's dutiful subjects, the Archbishop, Bishop, and Clergy of the province of Canterbury, in convocation assembled most humbly entreat your Majesty to accept our assurances of sincere affection and loyalty. It has been the wisdom of our Sovereigns, and of those more particularly of your Majesty's illustrious house, to secure to their sub-

jects the inestimable blessings of sound doctrine and the regular ministrations of religion, by affording their special protection and countenance to the established church. In this faithful adherence to the charge committed to Christians by Divine Providence, your Majesty has adopted the principles of your ancestors, and acted on their example,—a consideration which, in this season of danger and difficulty, tends much to our encouragement and comfort. Yet, Sir, we must not conceal that we are not altogether free from anxiety. Since last we had the honor of addressing your Majesty, the tranquillity of the country has been partially disturbed by a spirit of violence which prevailed for a time over the moral restraints essential to the well-being of society, and which, though now provisionally quelled, may again be called into action. Among the means of averting such a calamity, your Majesty will unquestionably look to the professional exertions of the clergy. We trust, Sir, that, taken as a body, with reasonable allowance for human infirmity, we cannot be justly accused of inattention to our sacred duties, and we humbly venture to promise, that, with the blessing of God on our resolutions, no supineness or negligence on our part, no want of moderation, or zeal, or disinterestedness, shall obstruct the success of our pastoral cares and labours.

But we humbly represent to your Majesty, that the exertions of the ministers of the church, however assiduous or able, must fail in too many instances of their full effect, while the truths of Divine Revelation are publicly held up to derision by professed teachers of impiety, and writings, replete with sedition and blasphemy, are extensively circulated, in open defiance of the law. We do not object to the fullest discussion of religious subjects, or the freest and most judicious on the church or its ministers, where either may seem in fault. Even when the intention is hostile, the result may be the elucidation of truth, or the removal of blemishes or defects. But, Sir, no excuse can be offered for a course of proceeding, which, poisoning the morals of the young, and emboldening the ignorant to scoff at their Creator, and reject the instruction which would render them happy in themselves and estimable and useful in society.

At the same time we beg leave to assure your Majesty, that in every disadvantage we may have to encounter, we shall find an additional incentive to the diligent use of the means which the mercy of God has placed in our hands, for the benefit of our fellow creatures. To the mischievous delusions of infidelity and immorality on the one hand, and enthusiasm and superstition on the other, we shall persevere in opposing the doctrines, and precepts of the Gospel. And while, in humble reliance on aid from above, we inculcate the necessity of personal holiness, and cheerful obedience to the laws, we shall never cease to pray, that your Majesty may long continue to reign beloved at home and respected abroad, in peace, prosperity, and honor.

THE KING'S ANSWER.

My Lords, and the rest of the Clergy,—I thank you for your loyal and dutiful address. Deeply sensible of the necessity of ensuring to my subjects the blessings of a pure religion, my constant care will be directed to the support of the Established Church in all its just rights and privileges.

I rely with confidence on the moderation, zeal, and disinterestedness of its ministers in the performance of the important duties assigned to them; and I receive with the highest satisfaction your assurance, that, not objecting to the utmost freedom in the discussion of religious subjects which can be fairly required for the elucidation of truth, you will persevere in opposing the doctrines, and precepts of the Gospel to the delusions of immorality and infidelity on the one hand, and to enthusiasm and superstition on the other.

A due enforcement of the powers of the law shall not be wanting on my part, whenever it may be required for the protection of the true interests of religion; and to your professional exertions, directed by a just sense of duty, and by the meek spirit of Christian charity, I trust, under the blessings of Divine Providence, for the defeat of all attempts which may be made to pervert the feelings of a moral and religious people, or to shake their belief in those holy truths on which their present and their future happiness equally depend.

RETROSPECTIVE VIEW OF PUBLIC OCCURRENCES.

From an English Periodical.

The results of the appeal made by the King to his people, under the advice of his Ministers, by the dissolution of Parliament, and a new election, render the passing of the Bill for reforming the constitution of the House of Commons so probable, at least in its substantive form, that we shall not go too far in asserting that that measure is now determined; and that henceforth we are to look for a state of things in many aspects new, and in all important.

That the changes must prove of a widely influential character seems admitted by all parties; and indeed this is a conviction which no one can exclude from his mind. Our prayers ought therefore to be the more earnestly offered to God, that it may be overruled for the benefit of our beloved country, so that by his merciful interposition the evils which some fear from it may be averted, and the good which others anticipate may not elude us, for want of duly acknowledging Him "from whom all good counsels and great works do proceed."

The great feature of the Reform Bill we take to be the shifting of a large mass of power from the upper to the middle and lower ranks of society; or, in other words, from the few to the many. That this is a great experiment no one will be found to question, who takes the character of society into account, and the corruptness of human nature. A perfectly good state of society would scarcely need human government at all; the generally ignorant and immoral condition of a community renders government in its strongest form necessary, in order to maintain the very existence of the social relations; in proportion as knowledge and virtue spread among a people, governments must and ought to become the more mild and popular. These are principles upon the truth of which all history is an instructive and confirmatory comment; and the well-working of those alterations which must now take place will altogether depend upon the quantum of real knowledge and virtue which exist among us, to bear upon those contrary qualities which are still so largely diffused. A problem arises here, which has yet to be solved. It cannot be denied but that great evils are existing in our political condition; nor is it a matter of surprise, that, being exempt from foreign wars and dangers, and since a state of peace has not brought that prosperity which it was become proverbial to attach to it, the nation should look narrowly into its domestic affairs, and trace up its depressions to their real or supposed sources with somewhat excited feelings. It has, by the result of the elections,