

with Aristotle's doctrine, that it is politic to give as many persons as possible some share in the government of the country, because there are always some persons who will imagine that, being excluded from political influence, they are oppressed, and there will always be another class of persons eager to rise into importance by fanning this feeling into a flame. It may be true, moreover, that there is a certain virtue of moral and intellectual training in the exercise of the franchise that ought not to be overlooked. Perhaps also, as Dr. Paley said, the discussion of political questions over a mug of beer in a village pot-house may save from worse recreations. This is a view of the matter, indeed, to which individually I attach little or no weight, because my observation seems to teach me that politics is a trade which, generally speaking, does more to debase than to elevate those who have much to do with it ; and I cannot see how entering with keen interest into all the selfish details of political partisanship should contribute anything towards making a man more intelligent, more virtuous, or more happy. I could point out to the working classes many more rational ways of spending their idle hours than in blowing storms in some civic or ecclesiastical tea-kettle. But if they will have it otherwise, let it be ; only let me have a vote as well as you ; let learning be represented as well as labour ; do not, while you claim political influence for yourselves, insist on having in it such a way as will virtually disfranchise all other classes of the community, and give us a House of Commons dictated by mere numbers. In one word, save us from America !

In accordance with all that has been above argued, the three points to be kept before the eye of the statesman in the preparation of a British Reform Bill for the year 1867 should be—(1.) The securing of an adequate representation to the working classes ; (2.) A special representation for the civic, moral, and intellectual aristocracy of the people ; (3.) The provision of such a variety of entrances to the House of Commons as shall rescue the country from the danger of a one-sided and one-idea'd assembly of councillors elected under the swamping influence of an impassioned majority.¹

¹ The importance of this point was recognised by Alexander Hamilton, one of