

therefore, some or all of the steps by which you reached it are false.

The subject is so delicate an one that we almost fear to remark upon it at all; yet surely it cannot be wrong that an independent voice should be uplifted somewhere to warn these excellent young gentlemen that they really must abstain from cross-examining English women upon such subjects. With the great bulk of the middle classes they can do but little harm, for there they have to deal with occupied and educated people. The sect to which Mr. Poole belongs may be fashionable for a season in Belgravia and other polite quarters, but it came in like crinoline, and like crinoline it will go out. In those regions its success is based upon the idleness and ennui of the population and generally of that graceful and interesting section of it which is composed of young ladies under 25 years of age. With the humbler classes the evil is greater, for with regard to them, no doubt, the priest has the advantage of knowledge and position, as opposed to ignorance and no position at all. The machinery of charities, and doles, and customers, and employers, and lady-visitors, too, can be thrown into gear for their benefit with startling effect. It is just the old story of electioneering oppression as applied to matters of religion. Certain of the humbler classes are at the mercy of their employers and patrons, and these persons choose to establish a religious test as the price of their favors. We