

from veterans like myself, because we have seen accomplished that which I look upon as the very root and groundwork of everything that is good in England. We have seen religious equality established. (Cheers, and cries of "No, no.") I know there is one question which we have been told will probably at some time divide us—the question of what is called Disestablishment and Disendowment; but that question has not yet reached, they tell us, "the region of practical politics." Putting, however, that question for a moment aside, leaving each of us to have his own opinions, I should like to know what are the disqualifications, comparing Churchmen and Nonconformists, now remaining. I remember very well when a Nonconformist could not be even a town councillor, when a Roman Catholic could not be anything, when a Jew could not enter Parliament, when the "tithe pig" was so much in the ascendant, that actually in my county, Cheshire, in some cases the collector took every tenth gooseberry off the tree, and every tenth cabbage and cauliflower out of the garden. Then those who were connected with my church had the pleasure of taxing every Nonconformist, and making him pay church rates. As for ourselves, we could go to Oxford and Cambridge, and places of that kind; we could study, we could graduate, we could gain prizes, we could take honours, we could become teachers and principals of our colleges. The Nonconformist could not. Well, the exertions of those with whom I have been associated for all that long period of time have done away with all that; and I say, putting aside for a moment the question of the Church of England, whether it is a source of liberty and enlightenment, or whether it is a source of tyranny and unenlightenment—apart from that, I say that my friend Mr. Sampson is more free to day than the clergymen of the church to which I belong. Perhaps he will contradict that; I will prove it. Now, if our good friend the vicar, who, like your representative, somehow or other appears to attract opposition occasionally, was ambitious of senatorial honours, he would first of all have to give up his living, to take off his gown and cease to be a church clergyman. Now, my friend Mr. Sampson, if he thinks that my notions and my antecedents are so pestilent and so improper that I deserve the most rancorous opposition,—in case you and I should agree that it would be discreet for your interest that I should be a candidate,—why, he might stand against me—(cheers and