

use and benefit it was intended eagerly assisting in the erection. For the support of the minister or ministers who might be appointed to serve the cure, he made provision by devoting the tithes or tenths or thirds of certain lands to that purpose. This was done for the glory of God, and of his own free will and choice. It was, besides, a permanent endowment conveyed by regular deed, signed, sealed, and delivered. The tenth part of the produce of certain portions of the soil was for all time coming devoted to the use and service of the gospel. No property could be more securely possessed, or more honourably and honestly acquired. It speedily increased, as each successive landlord, desirous of emulating the beneficence of his predecessor, and experiencing, in the improved morals and manners of those by whom he was surrounded, the advantages of a religious training, gave much to the Church while living, and still more in his last will and testament. The manor soon became a parish; its inhabitants, parishioners; its pastor, the parish minister. Over the whole land the people gradually came to regard themselves more as Churchmen than as subjects, as owing duty and fealty less to Cæsar than to God. The religious element in society began to preponderate. The Church became not only an institution, but the most influential and important of all institutions. Then, the various orders of monks, after having overrun the southern, crowded into the northern kingdom in quest of new spheres of duty and labour. They succeeded in recommending themselves to the powers and dignities so well, that rank, honours and emoluments were conferred upon them without stint or limit. Monasteries arose on every hand, and the regular clergy speedily rivalled the secular in popularity and usefulness. Notwithstanding the bad odour which now attaches to such establishments, they were undoubtedly, at that period, of great public use and benefit—at once the schools, the almshouses, the hospitals, and hostels of the day. Though latterly overtaken by the corruption and degeneracy which fell like a blight upon the Church in all lands, they had acquired a just title, by the services they had rendered, to the princely revenues and the high consideration they enjoyed. At the time of the Reformation, more than half the property of the country was in the hands of the clergy, who had acquired it, as such property is still acquired, by free gift and contribution.

The events which succeeded the Reformation are well known. In 1560 the Estates of Scotland passed the famous Act which overthrew the Romish, and substituted the Protestant Establishment. From 1560 to 1592, the clergy of both persuasions—those who were out and those who were in—starved throughout the land. The legislature had wilfully neglected to make any provision for the maintenance of the Reformed ministers,

and the priests were of course excluded by law from any claims on its consideration. The fact was, that, as in England under Henry VIII., the Church was considered and treated as a prey, to be stripped and plundered by whomsoever had the will and the power. The nobles, thieves by profession and hereditary descent, deftly appropriated the lion's share,—the court being too feeble to contend with rivals so accomplished in the work. Glebes, tithes, lands broad and rich, were speedily absorbed by that ravenous crowd of harpies, and the patrimony of the Church—property devoted by deed and testament to pious uses—for a brief period entirely disappeared. Regent Morton pocketed the revenues of whole bishoprics, and why should not the example of one so notable, so high in place and power, be followed by all inferior rulers and dignitaries? It is related of the Earl of Cassilis, that he bribed a monk to forge a document conveying certain lands attached to a certain abbey to his safe keeping, and that, in order the more effectually to conceal his guilt, he further induced a retainer to murder the monk, and his brother to hang the retainer. It was in vain that the Assembly remonstrated, that Knox thundered from the pulpit, against the avarice which had beggared the Church. The ministers had no armed vassals to back their remonstrances, and the nobles listened complacently. "Sacrifices we are willing to make," said Knox, "for the public good. We are not greedy—we do not want the whole. Give us one-third—the poor one-third, the remainder to the establishment of parochial schools";—a large-hearted proposal worthy of the man. At length the memorable expedient of *titular* bishops was devised by Morton, and these ragged ecclesiastics required some little alimment to enable them to support, however poorly, the dignity of the mitre. A beginning thus being made in the work of restitution, James VI., on his accession to power, induced his parliament, in the year 1592, to confirm the title of the Reformed Church, to establish its polity on a firmer basis, and to make an appropriation out of their own revenues for the maintenance of the parochial clergy. It was a scanty pittance; so scanty that, in order to eke out a livelihood, many had to combine secular callings with the work of the ministry. In 1633, in the reign of Charles I., and while the Church was under Episcopal rule, the adjustment which controls the temporalities to this day was arranged by the parliament and sanctioned by the king. Since then, though the income has increased enormously through augmentations granted to individual parishes on different occasions, the kind of property available for such a purpose, and the rate of valuation, were then settled and remain unchanged.

The provisions of this important enactment merit explanation. The subject is not difficult of comprehension. First, then, the