

on our part, which it is our wish to avoid; we know, however, that there is often a wide difference between the term, as well as the real character of "man" and "gentleman," but it is not our purpose to discuss here that question, or to canvass on which side of the scale preponderates real worth, but simply to notice the supposed antecedents of these gentlemen), descended from the ranks of the old aristocratic families of England. They had, of course, been deeply imbued with the exalted notions of class privileges held at the date to which we are now alluding. They had been, from earliest infancy, held aloof from contact with what they were pleased to call the lower orders.

As a general thing, they traced the line of their ancestry to the companions in arms of William, the Conqueror of England; hence it was presumed that a purer blood flowed in their veins than in the veins of the common people; while, as a privileged class, they held a monopoly in the few leading seats of learning then in the land, which had the tendency to still more widen the chasm above alluded to. They had also, from time far back in the history of the nation, laid special claim, as a not to be disputed right, to all places of trust and emolument both in Church and State; all tending to the result of an oppressive and extravagant government and a bigoted and an intolerant Church, while the masses of the people were neglected, ignorant, and immoral.

Then we may naturally suppose that these gentlemen would not be much improved in their morals when relieved of the very slight restraints that may have held them while under the parental roof, and of the