

of vassalage and political subserviency without precedent in the country since the people acquired standing-room within the pale of the constitution. It has been well remarked by Paley, that the more direct consequences of political innovation are often the least important, and that it is from the silent and unobserved operation of causes set at work for different purposes, that the greatest revolutions take their rise. In illustration of the remark, he adduces that provision in the Mutiny Act, introduced with but little perception of its vast importance, which, by making the standing army dependent on an annual grant of Parliament, has rendered the king's dissent to a law which has received the sanction of both houses too perilous a step to be advised, and has thus altered the whole framework and quality of the British constitution. He adduces, further, the arrangement, at first as inadequately estimated, which, by conferring on the crown the nomination to all employments in the public service, has well-nigh restored to the monarch, by the amount of patronage which it bestows, the power which the provision in the Mutiny Act had taken away. And thus the illustrations of the philosopher run on, — all of a kind suited to show that "in politics the most important and permanent effects have, for the most part, been incidental and unforeseen." It is questionable, however, whether there be any of the adduced instances more striking than that furnished by this indirect consequence of the Reform Bill on the tenantry of England. The provision which conferred a vote on the tenant-at-will abrogated leases, and made the tiller of the soil a vassal. The farmer who precariously holds his farm from year to year cannot, of course, be expected to sink so much capital in the soil, in the hope of a distant and uncertain return, as the lessee, certain of possession for a specified number of seasons; but some capital he must sink in it. It is impossible,