deputy-registrar of Sarum and the parish clerk of Brentford should be summoned to the bar of the House, to prove that Mr. Horne Tooke had received priests' orders; and this fact, being easily settled by the testimony of the witnesses, was alleged to be conclusive of the question. A committee of inquiry was appointed, who, after investigation, reported that since 1641 only one instance had occurred of an ordained clergyman having been elected as a Parliamentary representative. This was the case of Mr. Edward Rushworth, who had been returned in 1784 as one of the members for the borough of Newport, in the Isle of Wight, and who, though petitioned against, was allowed to retain his seat. Lord Temple then moved that 'a new writ should be issued for the election of a burgess to serve for the borough of Old Sarum, in the room of the Reverend John Horne Tooke, who, being at the time of his election in priests' order, was, and is, incapable of sitting in this House.' His lordship disposed of the solitary exception by stating that Rushworth was only a deacon, and that it was on the strength of this fact that his counsel had pleaded for his eligibility. 'I may be told,' his lordship added, 'that other clergy have actually sat in this House. The fact may be so, yet it does not alter my case. It is a very old and a very true law adage that no blot is a blot till it is hit. Peers, minors, aliens, clearly ineligible, may have sat, and may at this moment be sitting in this House. . . . . All I contend for is that, in every instance, without one solitary exception, where the House has noticed a priest within its walls, the individual so noticed has been expelled, and the principle laid down of the ineligibility of the clergy.' Lord Temple then stated the danger that would result to the Constitution from the admission of a fourth estate into Parliament, and the immense acquisition of power which the minister of the day might gain by holding out the temptation of Church patronage to ecclesiastical members. His lordship next adverted to the defence which Mr. Horne Tooke had already set up—that he was no longer a clergyman, having divested himself of his orders—a proceeding which, both by canon and common law, was impossible. He finally administered a solemn rebuke to Mr. Horne Tooke for the use he had made of ludicrous and unseemly phrases in the former debates on the subject, adjuring him that, as he had administered the sacrament in times past, he should, therefore, recollect that solemn office, and tremble when he talked of getting rid by quarantine of the infection of duties which he assumed at the altar of his God.

"Lord Temple's motion was opposed by Mr. Addington, the Prime Minister, who seemed resolved at all events to maintain the rights, in order that he might retain the services of the once formidable agitator and reformer. But his speech was a confused mixture of arguments, in which the defence of his new ally was mingled with the repudiation of any wish for the establishment of such a fourth estate as that which his lordship had dreaded. He deprecated the entrance of such an element at such a time, when one-third of the livings of the clergy were disposable at the will of the crown. But the law was still indistinct as to the right of the clergy to hold a seat in Parliament. As to the clerical character, there was no difference between a priest and a deacon, and therefore the case of Mr. Rushworth was not conclusive on the subject. In this case, if they rejected Mr. Horne Tooke, he might be re-elected by his constituents, and admitted to his seat by a committee, through the authority of the Grenville Act,* let the House decide to the contrary as it pleased, and thus the recurrence might be perpetual, unless the legislature applied a remedy by which the whole evil would be at once removed. To effect this, a Bill should be prepared for the purpose of excluding persons in holy orders from a seat in Parliament, and upon this principle there would be a general agreement, although there might be some difficulties in its details.

"Mr. Horne Tooke then rose to answer for himself, and his speech was a talented, but rambling, discourse, characteristic of the man and his case of appeal. He commenced with a statement of the circumstances of his earlier life, to prove that he was no lover of personal controversy, although in truth he had been one of the keenest of controversialists. He then proceeded, as a philologist, to the report that had been given in by the committee of inquiry, and stated that whoever drew it up was utterly ignorant of the Anglo-Saxon language, having mistaken the character no less than eleven times in transcribing a manuscript of the time of Henry VI., containing no more than twenty-one lines. It had also omitted to state that all the persons named in it who were declared ineligible actually continued to sit till they were disqualified by Act of Parliament, and no Act, as yet, had disqualified any one from sitting in the House who had been in holy orders. To elect representatives, and to represent electors are privileges inseparable; and as the right of electing knights of the shire had been conceded to

* By this Act every disputed election was to be left to the decision of a committee, and the House was not to interfere except where it was absolutely necessary.