

gion, will say, 'We can do without them, as we have done heretofore; we can apply our money to better purposes; let us extend our schools, and improve our roads!'"

I am aware, Sir, of the wretched and unphilosophical argument often advanced, that the people will be sure to take care of what essentially pertains to their interests, that the higher the benefit, the more vigorous will be their effort to secure it. I shall content myself with the words of Dr. Chalmers in reply to such attempts at argument—a name and authority that perhaps will be revered by some of the instigators of the present movement:—

"It is, perhaps, the best among all our more general arguments for a Religious establishment in a country, that the spontaneous demand of human beings for religion is far short of the actual interest which they have in it. This is not so with their demand for food or raiment, or any article which ministers to the necessities of our physical nature. The more destitute we are of these articles the greater is our desire after them. But the case is widely different when the appetite for any good is short of that degree in which that good is useful or necessary; and above all, when just in proportion to our want of it, is the decay of our appetite towards it. Now this is, generally speaking, the case with religious instruction, the less we have of it, the less we desire it. It is not with the aliment of the soul as it is with the aliment of the body. The latter will be sought after, the former must be offered to a people whose spiritual appetite is in a state of dormancy, and with whom it is just as necessary to create a hunger as it is to minister a positive supply. In these circumstances it were vain to wait for any original movement on the part of the receivers, it must be made on the part of the dispensers. Nor does it follow that because Government may wisely abandon to the principle of demand and supply all those interests where the desires of our nature and the necessities of our nature are adequate one to the other, she ought, therefore, to abandon all care of our interest, when the desire on the part of our species is but rare and feeble and inoperative; while the necessity is of such a deep and awful character that there is not one of the concerns of earthliness which ought for a moment to be compared with it."