

any individual. Nor does the act oblige parents to have their children baptized, in order to render their parentage legitimate; or what would become of the children of Jews, Quakers, Baptists, &c. ? Yet Mr. Attorney General said, in the presence of Mr. William Laing, " You have no right, Mr. Bentom, to baptize, &c. to legal purposes ;" implying, what the Episcopalian party constantly affirmed in the plenitude of their piety and wisdom, that the children I baptized would have no legal proof of their parentage ; the marriages I solemnized, were invalid in law ; and that there would be no evidence admissible in a court of justice of the deaths by me enregistered ! What an horrible principle of persecution, more odious than any ever acted upon by the arbitrary House of Stuart ! it makes my hand tremble whilst committing it to paper ! yet shocking as the idea appears, it is what my persecutors insist on ; and unless some vigorous measure were adopted to prevent it, would I fear succeed in establishing such a wicked doctrine as the rule of practice in Canada, in respect of ministers of the gospel unfashioned by the smiles of episcopacy, and the law officers of the Crown.

As the register act does not interfere with the state of religious liberty, so neither must it be supposed to do so for not being passed as the constitution prescribes acts creating burthens, penalties, &c. in respect of religious worship, to be passed ; it would be virtually saying the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council had broken the Constitution, to assert this statute excludes any minister whatever from the enjoyment of the civil and religious liberties he enjoyed previous to its formation. Mr. Attorney General may make such an assertion ; but I should fear to do so, unless I had a signed and sealed pardon in my pocket.

The Attorney General in his information, admits my congregation to be a protestant church, and declares Clark Bentom, gentleman, to be doing the clerical duty thereof. It then follows from the register act, if the assertion be true, as it certainly is, that it is the duty of Clark Bentom, be he gentleman, or no gentleman, being the congregation's acknowledged minister, to have and keep registers, according to the regulations of the said act.

If I am no minister, as some wise men assert, pray what has the register act to do with me ? nothing in the world ; no more than with one of Mr. Sewell's clerks. So then, be I a minister, or no minister, the information against me is groundless and absurd. Upon the whole, my obedience is