

REIGN OF THE SAINTS.

The notion of the saints' reign, because we find it in the Holy Bible, is not to be torn out, but must have its true sense assigned it. And if there be a time yet to come, wherein it shall have place, it must mean that a more general pouring forth of the Spirit shall introduce a supervening sanctity upon rulers, as well as others; not to give every man a right to rule, (for who should then be ruled?) but to enable and incline them that shall duly have a right to rule better. And so the kingdom will be the saints, when it is administered by some, and for others, who are so. If God have allowed to men, as men, any rights, *i. e.*, that are claimable against other men; and should again give a right to Christians in other men's properties; to what a strait and distress were the rest of the world reduced! Might not any of them say, 'Since one must be a man before he can be a Christian, what am I to do in this case? must I unman myself, and lose the rights I have, as such, that I may recover them by being a Christian? I had them as a man before, sufficiently to secure me against the claim of all others.' What, but not against Christians? Then are they an unmanned sort of men. And whereas obligations accompany rights, what lawless men are these Christians!

But whereas God hath in great compassion to the world appointed it to be Christianized, he hath with equal wisdom chosen the fittest methods for it; *i. e.*, not to commission Christians to divest other men of their all, unless they become Christians; but to let men see Christianity had no design to disturb the world, or disquiet them in their former possessions, though they should not be Christians; but that they might enjoy them with higher advantage, if they be, in order to another world. If God has made

Christianity the measure of civil rights to mankind, his sovereignty were not to be disputed; but he never exerts acts of sovereignty but by the directions of his wisdom. Wheresoever the sound of the Christian name comes, if it carried that avowed principle with it, that Christians, as such, had a right to oust all other men of their birth-rights; instead of becoming the religion of the world, nothing could more directly tend to engage and inflame all the world against it, and make them endeavour its utter extirpation, as a thing intolerable to mankind. Nor could they have any so plausible pretence against it besides; having nothing in itself, but what must render it most amiable and self-recommending. Did the Spaniard's methods for Christianizing America, recommend the Christian faith to that miserable people? And if God himself would never give such a power, for introducing the very substance of the Christian religion itself; how intolerable must it be for any sort or church of Christians, to claim and use it for the introduction of their own additions to Christianity, as the church of Rome hath notoriously long done! And time will show the event, as common reason doth the tendency of it.

PRAYER THE BEST DEFENCE.

Upon one occasion of great difficulty, Melancthon and Luther had met together to consult about the best means to be adopted. After having spent some time in prayer, Melancthon was suddenly called out of the room, from which he retired under great distress of mind. During his absence, he saw some of the elders of the reformed church, with their parishioners and families. Several children were also brought, hanging at the breast; while others, a little older, were engaged in prayer. This reminded him of that passage, "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings