

INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE.

MARRIAGE is an institution peculiarly important; of divine appointment; coeval with the existence of the human race; and the source of families and national continuance. It distinguishes man from the brute creation, excludes the disorders of licentiousness; surpasses all natural ties; and cherishes the sweetest affections of the heart. No agreement exists in its quality so familiar, in its obligations so binding, and in its consequences so momentous. Hence, that opinion which would either banish or degrade it, has always been held by the wise and virtuous, most vile and injurious, equally destructive of morals and social happiness: and many Heathen legislators and philosophers were peculiarly solicitous to sanction, encourage, and regulate this ordinance. But upon every subject which is favourable to the felicity of mankind, the gospel of our salvation is pre-eminent. The sacred volume classes the prohibition