

under consideration to pass into a law.—He then observed, that there was no room to complain of too great restraint being laid on private judgment in matters of religion in this country, as every man here may freely enquire into all the grounds of his belief and practice in matters of religion, and judge as he thought fit—might profess what he pleased, and privately worship God according to his own notions, whatever they might be, provided that nothing he did or professed tended to disturb or weaken the Civil State.—He then observed, that the writ *de hæresico comburendo* had been taken away above a century.—That the Act of Toleration had granted many privileges and liberties to the Protestant Dissenters, and in some cases more than the members of the establishment had.—That the restraints which were put on this Act by the Schism and Conformity Acts, had been taken off by an Act in the reign of George the First; and that there did not exist now one restraint on private judgment in matters of religion, as long as men conducted themselves with decency and good order; and then shewed at large that such decency and good order could never be sustained, if there did not remain on our statute book the law of the 9th and 10th of William, or some similar law. The Bishop then described the disorder and confusion that would arise, were the latitude now contended for granted.—He said, that instead of one Meeting house for Atheism and Blasphemy, we should have one in every street.—In this part his Lordship alluded, as he said, to a chapel of this sort in the neighbourhood of Lincoln's Inn Fields, which was suppressed about thirty years ago after many fruitless attempts, so tender were our Courts lest they should bear hard in any decision on the right of private judgment. After this the Bishop proceeded to give an answer to what had been said respecting the Canons of 1603, as if they had no authority to bind the Clergy. This the Bishop did very briefly by observing that no Canons can have authority in this country, unless the Convocation is called by the King's writ, and proceeds to make the Canons by his order, and then the Canons must have the royal assent. These points, he observed, were settled by the 25th of Henry the Eighth, Chapter 19; and as the Canons of 1603 were made in all respects conformable to this statute, they were certainly binding on the Clergy.—The Act which took away the High Commission Court took away also the ecclesiastical jurisdiction from the Archbishops and Bishops, and the operation of these Canons was suspended by that means;—

but on the repeal of that Act in the 13th of Charles the Second, the Ecclesiastical Court recovered its authority, and together with it the Canons.

The Bishop of St. Asaph (Dr. Halifax) in a very well wrought, logical, and convincing speech supported the same side of the question. His Lordship argued most ably upon the various parts of the subject. He rescued the Canons of the Church from the harsh construction put upon them by the Noble Earl, and contended that the noble Earl's arguments were grounded on a misconception of their purport and tendency. He admitted that the Laity were not bound by those Canons, but asserted that the Clergy were, and assigned a variety of cogent reasons in proof of his assertion. After giving a very pointed and circumstantial answer to the whole of Earl Stanhope's speech on Monday the 18th of May, he adverted to the great danger of innovation in matters of serious importance; and after descanting with abundant show of reason on the danger of a hasty repeal of a long catalogue of statutes, all from their import passed at the time with very full and mature consideration, stated that amongst the Locrians, if any man proposed a new law, with a view to alter and annul the existing law of the country, he was obliged to have a rope round his neck, when he ventured to bring forward his proposition. His Lordship concluded with a quotation from that able commentator on the laws of England, Sir William [late Judge] Blackstone.

The Bishop of St. David's (Dr. Horsley) made one of the most able speeches we ever heard from any Member of the Reverend Bench, against the Bill.—His Lordship's manner is made up of a happy mixture of the authoritative and the familiar; it persuades while it commands; and at the same time that it strongly interests and impresses, it engages; and if it were not too light a word for the subject, we should say, it entertains, for it renders attention easy, and amply gratifies the greedy ear. The Bishop began his speech with acknowledging, that at that day laws existed, that did no credit to the spirit of the times in which they were made; that some Acts of Parliament were on the Statute Book which did not merit to be there, and that laws breathing such a spirit of persecution, would always appear inconsistent with the mild religion that we professed. He was ready also to declare, that the peace of the present day, the dormancy of religious oppression, the moderate temper of the times, and the natural conclusion, that the Statutes complained of were not likely to be enforced, in his mind formed no