

state, which a single instance will sufficiently demonstrate. The belief in a future state of rewards and punishments, the entertaining just ideas of the moral attributes of the supreme Being, and a firm persuasion that He superintends and will finally compensate every action in human life (all which are clearly revealed in the doctrines, and forcibly inculcated in the precepts, of our Saviour Christ), these are the grand foundations of all judicial oaths which call God to witness the truth of those facts which perhaps may be only known to Him and the party attesting. All moral evidence, therefore, all confidence in human veracity, must be weakened by irreligion and overborne by infidelity. Wherefore, all affront to Christianity or endeavors to depreciate its efficacy, are deserving of human punishment." *Blackstone was wrong.*

Burke, in 1773, in a speech in the House of Commons, alluding to the argument that if non-conformity were tolerated, atheism would gain protection under pretence of it, said: "If this danger is to be apprehended, if you are really fearful that Christianity will indirectly suffer from this liberty, you have my free consent: go directly and by the straight way and not by a circuit; point your arms against these men who do the mischief you fear promoting; point your own arms against men . . . who by attacking even the possibility of all revelation, arraign all the dispensations of Providence to man. These are the wicked Dissenters you ought to fear; these are the people against whom you ought to aim the shaft of the law; these are the men to whom, arrayed in all the terrors of Government, I would say: You shall not degrade us into brutes. These men—these factious men, as the honorable gentleman properly called them—are the just object of vengeance, not the conscientious Dissenter. . . . Against these I would have the laws rise in all their majesty of terrors to fulminate such

vain and impious wretches, and to awe them into impotence by the only dread they can fear or believe. The most horrid and cruel blow that can be offered to civil society is through atheism. Do not promote diversity: when you have it bear it; have as many sorts of religions as you find in your country: there is a reasonable worship in them all. The others—the infidels or outlaws of the Constitution, not of this country, but of the human race—they are never, never to be supported, never to be tolerated. Under the systematic attacks of these people, I see some of the props of good Government already begin to fail—I see the propagated principles which will not leave to religion even a toleration.

. . . Those who hold revelation give double assurance to their country. Even the man who does not hold revelation, yet who wishes that it were proved to him, who observes a pious silence with regard to it, such a man, though not a Christian, is governed by religious principle. Let him be tolerated in this country. Let it be but a serious religion, natural or revealed—take what you can get—cherish, blow up the slightest spark.

. . . By this proceeding you form an alliance, offensive or defensive, against those great ministers of darkness in the world who are endeavoring to shake all the works of God, established in order and beauty. Perhaps I am carried too far, but it is in the road which the honorable gentleman had let me. The honorable gentleman would have us fight this confederacy of the powers of darkness with the single arm of the Church of England. Strong as we are, we are not yet equal to this. The cause of the Church of England is included in that of religion, not that of religion in the Church of England." *Burke was wrong.*

Paley writing in 1785^(a) perceived "no reason why men of different religious persuasions may not sit upon

(a) Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy, Bk. VI., Chap. X.