

tution of the Jewish State, in which their religious economy was identified with their civil polity—and the administration of both vested in the supreme magistrate—we find no parallel except in the Mahomedan States, in which the Khoran serves at once as the directory of Faith and rule of Civil Government. Besides, his Lordship should have recollected that the dispensation of Moses was abrogated and superseded by that of the Gospel. The latter, indeed, stands every where contrasted in the Sacred Writings with the former; Antithesis would, therefore, in this case, have been a much better ground of argument than analogy. Were the principle of assimilating the Christian to the Jewish economy admitted, it would lead to the revival of circumcision, sacrifices, &c.

The argument from the establishment of Christianity, in the fourth century, under Constantine, is equally feeble. For this was the age in which “the interests of virtue and true religion suffered grievously. Two monstrous errors, which were almost universally adopted, became a source of innumerable calamities and mischiefs in the succeeding ages.” Of these maxims one was—“*That it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when by such means the interests of the Church might be promoted;*” and the second, equally horrible, though in another point of view, was—“*That errors in religion, when maintained and adhered to, after proper admonition, were punishable with civil penalties and corporeal tortures.*” *

Nor is the Bishop more happy in his attempt to strengthen his argument by claiming for its support the sanction of our early Reformers. Most of our Reformers, as is now universally admitted, entertained very erroneous notions with regard to religious liberty; and holding the latter maxim—relating to the justice and expediency of punishing error by civil penalties and tortures—considered it the duty of the civil magistrate to enforce by these means the true religion, (that is, what they esteemed such) as well as to oppress and destroy all who dissented from it or opposed it; and, in consequence, became the advocates of intolerance and persecution, and displayed one of the worst features of that Church whose corruptions in other respects, they had so successfully laboured to expose and correct.

The question with respect to the construction of the Act of Parliament is one into the details of which we shall abstain from entering, as it belongs rather to the province of the lawyer than of the divine. Suffice it to say, that we believe His Majesty's Scottish subjects in a British Colony have a just claim to equality of rights, privileges and advantages, civil, commercial and religious, with their fellow subjects from England and Ireland, or natives of these Provinces.

On the 4th article of the Union of the two Nations, we consider our right to be founded as upon a rock; for, if there is any faith in the most sacred treaties and covenants between nations, we are persuaded it is most solemnly pledged in this contract—which, be it observed,

* Musheim's Ecclesiastical History—Book 2, Part 2, Chap. 3, Section 16.