

been pleased to make known his divine will to man, it is as much the business of the Legislative authority to secure to the people the blessings of the divine law, as it is to provide for the administration of justice or any thing else calculated to secure the public tranquillity and happiness and to promote the public good. Hence it is an object of the first importance for the Legislature of a Country to provide for the religious instruction of the people by such an ecclesiastical establishment as shall best promote this grand object, and secure to them the blessings of it in its purest form. This subject was duly appreciated by the heathen legislators of old. Religion was never overlooked by them, and they either framed a system of religious worship themselves for their people or gave the stamp of their authority to the popular creed.

Indeed the necessity of a religious establishment cannot be denied, even by infidels; and, when the authority of the State has not thought fit to establish one particular form of church government, or give its patronage to one sect of Christians, exclusively, it has yet found it necessary to make such laws and regulations as shall secure to the people religious worship of some form or other. But when an establishment like that of the church of England is professed in its genuine purity of doctrine and discipline,—a doctrine which no candid adversary, if any such there be, can deny to be in perfect accordance with those Scriptures which she professes to take for her guide, and whose discipline, pure and reformed as it is now professed, if not modelled after the express commands of our blessed Lord himself who left no special written directions for the government of his church, is yet in perfect accordance with the practice of the Holy Apostles of our Lord, who, in all things pertaining to the church, wrote and acted under the immediate influence of the holy spirit, one cannot but pity the obtuseness of that man's feeling or