

ocean and infected almost every part of the North American Colonies. A great portion of those who first settled in them, had been sufferers for Non-conformity, and brought into their new settlements a disaffected, if not a hostile spirit to the Church of England, and either formed themselves into separate congregations after the independent manner, or lived regardless of any public celebration of the solemnities of religion. Such a state of things, if constant in its resistance to regulation, can no where result in any thing else but a fatal corruption of religion or a scornful rejection of it. The servile spirit of man bends him prostrate before the vilest idols and superstitions; the defying spirit of man, distorts and mutilates, and at last confounds and destroys religion. Great is the interval indeed between these extremes, but the middle space is clearly the field marked out by the hand of the Great Creator as the dwelling place of truth and virtue and holiness, and ever as any race of men best performs its duties, and best fulfils its destiny, it is known to approach the nearer to this central dominion consecrated to order and intelligence and a loved obedience to God's eternal laws. But if the interval is great, great also is the space occupied by the extremes of servility and defiance, and hence we see the heathenism of the Pantheon holding in servile bonds, the spirits, I know not of how many millions, and Christianity broken into so many pieces by the spirit of defiance, and that sacred name given by it to so many forms of stupid error or fanaticism or vain philosophy, that few of mortal men, even with