

speculation and controversy. It is not to be wondered at, if men who had long ceased to think on such matters for themselves, found prejudice easier than reason, and thought their only safety consisted in getting as far away from the creeds, forms, and practices of Popery as possible, and mistook in their flight obstinacy for conscience, and submission to authority for a compromise of principle.

In consequence of the celebrated Germanic protest, all those both on the continent and in Britain, who dissented from Popery (although distinguished from each other by some peculiar name, derived from their teachers or their creeds), assumed the general appellation of Protestants. While they made war on the ceremonies of Rome, they retained her bigotry, and though they denied the power of dispensation to the Pope, they found no difficulty in absolving themselves from the obligation of their oaths of allegiance to their Sovereign. They clamoured, and suffered or fought for the exercise of private judgment and liberty of conscience. This they all united in, demanding to its fullest extent; and the singular interpretation they gave these terms is a remarkable instance of unanimity among a people who differed on almost every other subject. Each sect claimed exemption from persecution for itself, because it sincerely *believed* what it professed; but the right to persecute