

It is plain from His supremacy over them, that they ought to accept His word as the supreme rule of faith and manners, frame their laws in accordance with Scripture, and take special care in all their acts to conduct themselves toward their subjects, and toward others, on the principle of common equity: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And they are to do this not merely because the thing is proper in itself and expedient, but out of due regard to the divine authority and will of Christ, the Lord of all.

Again, since God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; since He receives all into communion with him who believe in Jesus, and since he commits to them, as his church, the power to edify themselves according to the Gospel, and extend the benefits of redemption to all that can be persuaded to come into Christian fellowship; therefore, it is the duty of political authorities, as they regard the good pleasure of the Lord, not to infringe on the liberty and office of the peculiar people of God, by making laws for the internal support and administration of the Church, not by undertaking the work of conversion which the head of the Church empowers her to carry on by the help of his presence, but to respect her peculiar rights, interests and duties, as they ought to respect their own, and concede to her the common civil advantages of lawful association, and to aid her by securing, as far as it is in their power, that all their subjects and all the world with whom they negotiate, shall have perfect external freedom, to be influenced by the means of grace, and to declare their actual judgment, be it right or wrong, as long as they do not take occasion to act uncivilly and break in on the equal rights of their fellow-men.

The Pope in a letter lately addressed to the Cardinal Vicar of Rome, deploras that certain parties have come into various provinces of the "States of the Church" and announced, that "God has endowed man with freedom of opinion, both in matters political and religious," thus setting at nought the authority established by God on earth, and to which obedience and respect is due; denying also, the immortality of the soul, which, when it passes from this transitory to an eternal state, must render a faithful account even of its religious opinions to an omnipotent, inexorable judge, learning then, but too late, that there is only one God and one faith, and that every one who leaves the ark of unity will be swallowed up in the deluge of eternal punishment. Protestants with Popish or Erastian tendencies conceive of liberty and authority in much the same way as the arch-bishop of Rome, and quietly assume that the heart-searching God, the judge of all, in order to provide graciously for the temporal and eternal weal of mankind, has given his whole government on earth into the power of mortal potentates, and required every soul to yield up all its liberty of thought and action and of course its accountability to them, who undertake to govern us in entire accordance with the will of God, and to conduct us to the greatest possible earthly and heavenly excellence! We spurn such a theory of Divine Providence as false, impious and anti-Christian. Establishing the Christian con-