

and acrimoniously engaged in contentions, not for the great cause of religion itself, but for articles of faith and opinion, for external modes of *profession* and *worship*. And, indeed, it is much to be lamented, that in the general enlargement of the human mind, and extension of the policies of the world, we continue to view this great subject in a narrow light,—that we do not seem sufficiently disgusted with those distinctions which heretofore embued the hands of our ancestors, in the blood of persecution, and distinguished and disgraced the periods of ignorance and superstition.

In all other Protestant countries in the world, all religions and all persuasions mingle and are involved in the public cause;—and religious distinctions, by not being marked out by the laws, cease to be distinctions at all.

Amongst these noble instances of wisdom and simplicity, which have formed the policies of the most western part of the world, permit me to mention *that pious spirit of toleration*, which *unites*, and *strengthens*, and *populates* the colonies of America.—*That*, indeed, is the bond of union and brotherly love, which, whilst it indulges every man in the liberty of his own religious opinion, unites every part in the interest of the whole. In those countries, the being deprived of *civil rights*, in consequence of a peculiarity of *faith*, is a thing utterly unheard of and unknown.