

of some persons unknown, to mislead the public mind as to the character and views of our Church; and, as far as they could produce any effect, to *create* a state of things which they would fain have it believed to be that which already exists—because if it did exist, it would remove or diminish the necessity of our being supported in the decided character of an establishment. But the manner and spirit in which these particular attacks have been conducted are reprobated, I fully persuade myself, by the respectable members of other denominations, and the mischief will be made ultimately to return upon the heads of its authors.

At the same time, there appears to be a great difference of opinion between ourselves and parties, who are worthy of our christian regard, with respect to the justice of some claims which, whatever may be the issue of the pretensions advanced on either side, it is in the mean time impossible for us to forego. My experience of twenty years in this Diocese in different capacities, and with particular and very extensive opportunities of becoming acquainted with its religious condition—opportunities which, according to my ability, I trust that I have not neglected to improve—assures me that the cause of the Church of England is not now to be abandoned like a wreck, nor are her circumstances and prospects such as to justify, on our part, any voluntary surrender of her interests, or to call, in themselves, for any diversion into other channels of the means provided for her as *THE ESTABLISHED RELIGION OF THE COUNTRY.*

In using this expression, I am very far from meaning to say, that either the positive advantages of our own Church, or the relative situation of other religious bodies, are, or ought to be, here, what they are in England or Ireland. In this Country there are no civil or political distinctions founded upon those which are religious; nor is there any contribution drawn for the support of the Church, from those who profess a creed different from hers; and there are privileges not conceded at home, enjoyed here by the branches of other Churches established in Europe, of which I should be the last person upon earth to wish them deprived. In some instances, I should be heartily glad that the benefits extended to individuals of these Churches, should be greater than they have yet been made. But ours is, and has been declared and constituted, and (according to my belief) provided for, as *THE RELIGION OF THE STATE.*

I do not purpose in this address to discuss at length the several points which are under debate, but as it has always appeared to me that some wrong assumptions are apt to be made in treating the question, and some material facts and arguments very subject to be overlooked, I shall simply state the outline of our whole case, according to the view which I entertain of it in the conviction of my own mind—in which view I recommend that it should calmly and temperately be represented whenever the argument is raised. If it be not known, or if it be indistinctly understood, upon what we rest our claims, or whether upon any thing which has a tangible shape—we shall, of course, be supposed to be making unfounded and exorbitant pretensions.—It should be seen that we are not actuated by the mere tenacity inspired by possession; that we are not grasping at that for which we can neither exhibit a good title, nor prove that we have any need—but that, even if we are thought mistaken, we proceed upon grounds, which, we hope, may well excuse our mistake. It should be shewn with a reference to the existence of any established and privileged Religion, that in Christian Countries, the *State* ought to be *Christian*, and, *being Christian*, must have a form of Religion of its own; that with whatever indulgence for those who decline compliance with this form, or whatever extension, in some cases, of support to their institutions, it is *some one form* which the Government must recognise and identify with itself. It should be pointed out that God himself connected together the civil and religious polity of the Jews; that the pious Kings of that people took all the established provisions for Divine Worship under their own protection and controul, regulated the mode of religious services, and effected religious reforms. That it was ordained in the counsels of the Almighty, and foretold in his oracles, that “Kings should be the nursing Fathers and Queens the nursing Mothers” of the Christian Church. That the Jewish precedent of incor-