

enjoy the advantages of a society without performing the duties which its laws exact.

But though he agrees generally to the propriety of this oath, he finds great fault with most of the clauses in it ; which he says, " are " mortifying to the Catholics, by obliging them " to disclaim certain opinions, there specified, " which their ancestors are supposed to have " entertained, and which supposition is false " and groundless." For these " calumnious " misrepresentations" he assigns a reason, " that the legislature was composed of men " who knew Catholics only by vague report ; " and saw their principles disfigured in flying " sheets and pamphlets ; or as they were " painted in times of general commotion, and " great irritation, by men interested in sup- " pressing Catholicity through political views ; " or from the aspersions of some clergymen, " who had abjured the Catholic communion."

Whether the laws against Papists were of too sanguinary a nature, I shall not enquire, but I believe our ancestors, who introduced those clauses into the oath, had good reason for that precaution ; and were certainly full as well acquainted with the Catholic religion as we can be. They had seen it in every possible situation.. Till the reign of *Henry the VIII.* it was the established church. At the reformation it was in a militant state, and in the disputes which took place, the minutest articles were thoroughly examined, discussed, and probed to the bottom.. In *Queen Mary's* time,

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