

all felt, that in the decision to which they came, not so much the comfort of many hundred households, as the welfare of the national Christianity was involved. It may be right to mention in a few short sentences what had brought it to this conjuncture.

The Church of Scotland was founded on the principle, that not only is the Bible the only rule of faith, but the only statute-book by which the Lord Jesus would have His Church on earth governed. It assumed that Christ Himself has given certain office-bearers for the administration of His Church, and that He has given to these office-bearers their Directory, their only book of Canons in the written Word. And it farther assumed, that in the administration of the Church, civil rulers and secular magistrates ought not to interfere with the servants of Christ, but should leave it to them to rule Christ's house—His Church on earth, according to Christ's own laws. And it still farther assumed that in the event of the Church entering into any connexion with the State—accepting an endowment for instance—the Church was not at liberty to surrender any spiritual privilege as the price of protection, or pecuniary support. This was the theory. And at the Revolution, this theory became the statute-law of Scotland; and at the Union, it was stipulated that this should abide the statute-law of Scotland for ever.

Well, nine years ago, the General Assembly, whose counsels, in consequence of the wide revival of Evangelical religion, had become more Scriptural, *restored* to the communicants in the different parishes of Scotland a privilege which they enjoyed up to the Union, and for some time afterward, the right of being consulted in the appointment of their ministers. In the event of a