

sent age to establish is *the spiritual character of Christ's kingdom*, particularly as affecting its relation to the kingdoms of the earth and the world at large.

Our Lord taught that his "kingdom was not of this world." When his disciples misunderstood its nature, he instructed them by the declaration, "The kingdom of God is *within you*." Its subjects are spiritual. "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." When men desired its establishment amid the pompous decorations of earthly grandeur, he taught them that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation." All its services are spiritual. "God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Its privileges are spiritual. When two of the favored disciples asked that "they might sit, the one on his right hand and the other on the left in his kingdom," he said, "Ye know not what ye ask," and he promised that their reign should be with him hereafter in glory. And, especially, it is to be maintained and advanced by spiritual means. "If my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight." "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal."

Now we do not say that the great truth of the Church's spiritual independence was unknown before, but we do say that it was never fully appreciated, we do say that its full bearings in application were never fully understood. Hence the Church at all former times sought to be established by the civil power, and regarded this as the greatest of earthly advantages. Yet now it is beginning to be seen as the teaching of all past history, that this necessarily tends to the secularization of the Church. It has destroyed the spiritual character of its membership, confounding the subjects of the State with the membership of the Church. It has dimmed the spiritual glory of its worship by surrounding it with the pageantry of worldly glory—"the might and mastery," as Dr Chalmers called it, of an established Church. It has connected civil immunities with the observance of religious ordinances; and, especially, it has substituted for the simple spiritual means which the Church's King has appointed the carnal weapons of the civil power. Indeed, whatever be the particular regulations of an established Church, its very foundation principle is a dependance on carnal weapons for the promotion of the interests of the Church.

It has been and still is the work of the age to establish the important truth of the spiritual character of the Church and its independence of all worldly powers. This was the great principle of the Voluntary controversy. This was the principle at the foundation of the noble struggle of the Free Church, though those most deeply interested in that struggle did not understand the full bearing of the great principle for which they were contending. They had to learn (but they are now learning) the truth that the Church has as much to fear from Cæsar's gold as from Cæsar's sword, and the great principle that God has given her all the resources requisite for the work which she has to accomplish in the world.* Secessions have also taken place in France,

* The author regrets to hear that these sentiments have been considered offensive to his brethren of the Free Church. Nothing could be farther from his intention than to utter any thing of the kind. He has not felt it necessary to alter any thing that he has written. He may be wrong in his opinion, that the principle of the spiritual independence of the Church, for which the Free Church has been contending, must lead to the relinquishment of all dependance upon the civil power for support. He may be wrong in his belief that Free Churchmen are changing their opinion regarding the efficacy of the Voluntary principle, and the value of State support to religion. He believes that he can adduce high authority in the Free Church in support of his view. But whether right or wrong, he cannot believe that intelligent and candid members of that body will object to the free expression of his sentiments on this subject, particularly when in this very paragraph he has shown every disposition to do justice to the Free Church, in what he had there called their "noble struggle."