

in that sense, it was no departure from Secession principle to refrain from asking of their office-bearers an approval of "compulsory measures in religion;" but it has been also seen that, in that sense, the preamble did not cease to require of them an approval of the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith respecting the power of the civil magistrate, and, consequently made no opening for the admission of Voluntaries. That they themselves understood that the repudiating of compulsory measures in religion was something very different from the admission of Anti-establishment principles, is evident from the language of the Rev. George Lawson, in a pamphlet which he published at an early stage in the controversy.—As quoted in Mr. Willis' pamphlet, (page 58), he says, "The truth of the matter seems to be this: the greater part of us detest compulsion in matters of religion; and have been extremely unwilling to believe, that there is any thing in our venerable standards which gives the least countenance to it. Perhaps, we have too obstinately shut our eyes to the light, from an excess of veneration for our fathers, or an unwillingness to cut ourselves off from that body with which we are connected, and from every body of Presbyterians in the kingdom. Many paragraphs in books, and even a whole book has been published, to shew that the articles in question contain nothing inconsistent with the unalienable rights of men to judge for themselves in matters of conscience; but the attempt is fruitless. This, at least, is certain; that the result of consideration in many of the brethren has been a fixed conviction, that compulsory principles are contained in them, and that it would be inconsistent with integrity in themselves any more to require that unlimited profession of adherence to them which has been hitherto given for the most part, without scruple." Now, it is evident that those who concurred with Mr. Lawson in the view which he here gives of the principles contained in these standards, the unlimited profession of adherence to which had been hitherto given for the most part without scruple, did ask for what *they regarded* as a change from the profession which had been hitherto made; although those who, with the first Seceders, took a more correct view of what were the principles of these standards, knew that, in point of fact, they were not consenting to any change of profession, when they acquiesced in the preamble as not requiring from their office-bearers an approval of

"compulsory measures in religion." Yet in as far as the enactment of the preamble met the views of Mr. Lawson and those who agreed with him, in giving the relief which they sought from that profession which they conceived had been hitherto made, *they* had no right, upon their own showing, to pretend to lead evidence that no change had been effected in the profession of the body. If they were sincere in thinking that, before relief was obtained by the preamble, persecuting principles were professed by the body, they must have believed that a change had taken place when, under the operation of the preamble, no such profession was required. Mr. Lawson, however, in pleading for relief from the profession of principles which he considered "inconsistent with the inalienable rights of men to judge for themselves in matters of religion," was very far from intimating that the relief which he desired meant, that the Synod should cease to hold what he knew the Secession had always maintained—establishment principles. In a series of valuable articles on this subject in the Church of Scotland Magazine (vol. 2. p. 347,) he is still further quoted as saying, "All the power in religion which can well be allowed to him (the magistrate) by the enemies of compulsory measures, is a power to protect the church in her administrations, and to make a comfortable provision for her ministers. *I see no reason any man has to deny such power to the civil magistrate, and I suppose it will not be denied to him by those who say he has no power at all in religion.*" With all his detestation therefore of compulsion in matters of religion, he did not say that any man had reason to deny the magistrate's right both to protect and to endow the church, nor did he admit that, in allowing that the magistrate had such power, he was conceding to him any power in religion—any jurisdiction, or right to dictate to his subjects in matters of religion. Aware of this essential difference betwixt establishment principles and what are properly called compulsory principles, the leaders of the movement desired to get the overture for forbearance passed, in order that *the whole subject of the magistrate's power concerning religious matters* might be left an open question. They were dissatisfied with the decision of the Synod adopting the preamble as a final settlement of the question; and some of them, apparently foreseeing the use that would be made of it, in their reasons of dissent from the deci-