

Our Synod sustained the Basis with a few alterations necessary to vindicate themselves, and to prevent any from supposing or saying that we gave up a single principle of scriptural attainment. But although it is thus sustained yet much of its ambiguity remains, and although we can explain it so as to retain our peculiar principles, yet we see that the Free Church can do the same. Now we cannot give an unqualified approval to a Basis which makes different parties explain it differently. There would be a seeming want of honesty in doing so which we dislike, and as we would not be accused of disingenuousness, nor would have any of the Free Church suppose that we had adopted their views, or our own Church to say that they had adopted ours, on subordinate points, we exceedingly regret this want of perspicuity. For it shuts us up to explain the Basis, particularly the fourth article, to support our own views. If this article is to remain, although we think the basis would be far better without it, let us give it some definite meaning, to which all parties can subscribe in the same sense and without hesitation.

We will almost reach this uniformity by excluding not only the Note but the fourth Article itself from the Basis altogether. For whilst we can go all, or almost all, the length with our Free Church brethren, as we have endeavoured to show, regarding the universal supremacy of Christ, and the obligations of all men to worship and glorify Him, we wish them now to understand as our reason for wishing to suppress the fourth Article, that we differ from them entirely as to the foundation of much of such obligation. With them we hold, though in a different view, and in one we think scriptural, that Christ is not only King of the Church, but King of nations. At the same time we dissent from them entirely in supposing that Christ being King of nations lays civil rulers under obligations to serve and obey Him. His being King of nations is not the foundation of the Magistrate's duty, nor of the duty of any man in whatever position he may be. Christ being King of nations has nothing whatever to do with the power of the civil Magistrate, or with the duties devolving on him. This may appear startling to some of our Free Church friends, but it is true and scriptural doctrine, or if not, it is for the Joint Committee, as our guides to union, to prove it to be otherwise.

Our Church, we fear, has been in danger of being misled by some leading men in the Free Church, who, although good men, are in utter darkness respecting the scriptural nature of Christ's headship over the nations. We have searched the writings of the Fathers; we have examined ancient documents, both in print and manuscript; we have perused all the Confessions of Faith from the Genevan one at the Continental Reformation, and the Scottish one of 1560, when the Reformation was there established, and others down to the last Confession completed at Westminster, with the Catechisms, which form our own subordinate standards; but in all our searching we do