

to serve themselves its heirs. We should rather have expected that they would have hung their heads with shame at the idea of any connexion with them. True they may plead their different conduct now. But this is only like the Jews when they said, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets," and they might very well remember the warning, "Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves that ye are the children of them that killed the prophets." If they did not exactly kill them they put them out of the Church and persecuted them to the extent of their power.

We are gratified with the liberality of Sir George's views in so freely conceding that those Presbyterian bodies, not connected with the Free Church, hold the great principles of doctrine and discipline held by the Church of Scotland as originally founded; and we cannot but regard it as narrow minded bigotry in the body of Free Churchmen regarding themselves as the only body that does. We think however that he has scarcely brought out what is held by most dissenters regarding what constitutes the true Church of Scotland, and what we regard as the simple and scriptural view of the subject. *The Church of Scotland* consists in their view of all the people of God in Scotland in whatever ecclesiastical connexion they may be. For any body there to set itself up as "the Church," and all others as separatists from it, we regard as a piece of Presbyterian Puseyism which should never have been allowed to raise its head north of the Tweed, nor indeed any where else.

In our next we shall give farther portions of Sir George's letters, particularly those which give his views regarding Voluntarism and State connexion.

VOLUNTARIISM.

WHATEVER virtue or benefit there may be in Voluntarism, it is the duty of those who profess it to practise it; and if, in circumstances, there be a temptation to set it aside, the necessity only becomes the more imperative that men do not swerve from their own creed. The bearing and importance of these remarks will be understood by those who have read a paragraph, which has gone the round of the newspapers, to the effect that the Greenock Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church have agreed to take steps in relation to the religious bequests made by the late Mr Ferguson of Irvine. According to the newspapers, the Rev Mr Swan, who introduced the subject, said—

"The fund would require to be allocated among the various congregations according to their respective circumstances, which would be a work of time and previous examination. . . . Some doubt existed as to the manner in which the sums allocated should be secured—whether the trustees should apportion the money in the way of fixed annuities, or hand over the money in the aggregate and allow the respective congregations to invest the amounts themselves. This was an important consideration for their ministers, elders, and managers, as he believed the latter plan was that which the trustees thought most advisable in the circumstances."

We know nothing of the destination of the funds save what this paragraph furnishes, and we accordingly write under correction. Although doubt was expressed as to the mode of allocating the funds, the two modes have the same result—in the one case Mr Ferguson's trustees, and in the other each congregation, would invest the amount in the shape of an annuity or endowment.

A very delicate and important question is raised here—whether congregations, professing to hold and to live by the Voluntary principle, can accept an endow-