

crifice, she holds that the occasion was worthy of the sacrifice, and she rejoices to claim kindred with a body that has proved so faithful in the maintenance of principles which she believes to be founded in the word of God. Willing to hope that the Presbyterian Church here, a branch of the Secession, had not abandoned Secession principles, that they had not been carried away by the movement which had made so many of them in Scotland not Seceders but Dissenters; and giving the brethren of the Presbyterian Synod credit for being possessed of sufficient information to know that the Basis of Union just bound them to those principles which it was the object of the first Seceders, by their Secession, to maintain—what else indeed could be expected in a Basis of Union that met the approval of the late Mr. Robb?—the Free Synod had every reason, they conceived, to expect that these brethren would acknowledge an identity of principle with the Free Church of Scotland, or, that if there were to be any difficulty as to this, it would be, as in the case of the Constitutional Associate Presbytery (the Old Light Antiburghers) from a desire to obtain a more explicit declaration of adherence to old reformation principles.—This expectation, however, has not been realized. There is no sympathy manifested with the Free Church of Scotland. There is no intention of joining in the upholding of her standard. In these circumstances, what other conviction could have been entertained than that expressed by the Free Synod, in their Letter declining the Union, when they say, "that you and we do not entertain the same views either of the Basis of Union, or of the Confession of Faith to which it specially refers"? Is not the conviction fully warranted by the facts of the case?

The Synod of the Presbyterian Church, in their Reply, say of the Free Church brethren, "They do not object to our faith or practice." But is it not a fact that the Presbyterian Synod object to the faith, and, consequently, would object to the practice that is consistent with the faith, of the Free Church? Mistaking the import of the Basis of Union—conceiving that it left them at liberty to set aside some portions of the Confession of Faith as being exceptionable—had the union been consummated, they would have been in immediate collision with those who were anxious to maintain the truth, and to act consistently with its injunctions. Boasting, too, as they do so

much, of their numerical strength, it would not be difficult to foresee that they would little regard the remonstrances and appeals of the minority; and that, having so little understood the history of a Church whose principles they were professing to uphold, they would, notwithstanding the Basis of Union to which they were pledged, not only suppress, but denounce as mischievous error, the truth which it bound them to proclaim. The steadfastness with which individual ministers, in their proposed new position, might still have maintained these principles, could not supersede the charge of unfaithfulness against the Free Church as a body, were it to cease, in its corporate capacity, to uphold them. Nor does it relieve the difficulty to speak disparagingly of these truths as mere minor points of religion. Their relative importance is not the matter in dispute. What the Free Synod had to consider is this: Are they truths of God's word? Are they truths which God has been pleased to reveal, in order that his Church, the pillar and ground of the truth, might receive them, and teach them? Are they truths to the knowledge and profession on which the Free Church has attained? Are they truths which the ministers of that Church were solemnly engaged to teach? Are they truths which, when receiving ordination, every one of them, in the face of the congregation, had bound himself to assert, maintain, and defend? All these questions, they knew, must be answered in the affirmative. It necessarily followed therefore that, if they were to act an honest part, it they would guard against the sin of indifference to revealed truth, of disobedience to God's command, of backsliding, and of violating engagements entered into with all the solemnity of ordination vows, they must decline the union that was proposed, remembering the words of the Apostle, "Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."

That these are views which, however stigmatized by some as bigoted and sectarian, should not be objected to by those who profess to be Seceders, may appear from a consideration of the following extract from the Re-Exhibition of the Testimony; published by order of the Associate Synod, in 1779. It is the third of the conclusions deduced from a consideration of the documents which are given in the collection. The extract is long, but it is not unworthy of insertion.