

to the secular power, or in receipt of any emolument from that source. All State paid churches, are made to a greater or lesser extent, the subject of State legislation; they are in some respects, therefore, under *civil law*, as well as "under law to Christ." Now, a Voluntary Church, not only does not recognize the rights of any earthly power to interfere with it, but feels bound to "contend for the faith, once delivered to the saints," and so to oppose any interference as a daring invasion of the rights of Him "who is head over all things to the Church." A voluntary Church is composed of those who voluntarily associate together for the promotion of their spiritual welfare in accordance, as they view it, with the authority of Scripture. They of course, engage voluntarily to support their own institutions, by their "*freewill* offerings."

Now it is plain that in such a state of things, the persons concerned, necessarily involve themselves in responsibilities, and obligate themselves to discharge duties peculiar to their situation. In regard to the members of a State-allied Church, *their* duties are confined to the mere observance of christian ordinances and the manifestation of christian principle in heart and life. They are not allowed to have an opinion, or, at least, not generally to exercise it, in regard even to the minister under whose pastoral care they may be placed. Or if the Church is only sustained by civil funds, not, strictly speaking, *established* by civil law, her members, in such case, have few, if any, responsibilities or duties in regard to her temporalities. In regard to all things pertaining to the general interest of such a church, her support, government and discipline, her members do their duty *best* when they give themselves *no trouble*. This much we state simply *by way of explanation*. The members of a voluntary Church, on the other hand, enter that church in a way purely voluntary; and not because they reside within certain limits. By their *own choice* then have they become bound, also by the very act of uniting with it, to care for its interests, and to the utmost in their power, to advance them. In this respect, such a Church is just like any other association into which persons may enter, for the mutual benefit of their common interest. Every thing connected with the progress and management of the association, belongs to *each individual member of it*; and Scripture and common sense concur in intimating that the interests of the *whole* should be dear to *each*. Such a Church's affairs, in the way of secular business, are the affairs and the business of *each member*; and the duty of promoting the welfare of the whole, both from a regard to individual benefit and to the divine glory, is a duty which devolves on *each*—a duty to which *each* has become obligated by *freely* associating with the body. It has been well said, that "the principle of a voluntary Church, is neither more nor less than just the exercise of a *willing mind* in serving God. It is the principle that *all acceptable service* must proceed from an enlightened and willing mind. It embraces the whole revealed will of God, and consists in being *willing* to learn what he teaches, *willing* to do what he commands as is reported concerning those "who obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to them," willing to suffer what He inflicts, as He did "who endured, as seeing Him who is invisible"—willing to receive what He bestows, as it is written, "Of his own fulness have all we received, and grace for grace," and *willing* to