

BRIEF REASONS, &c.

In giving his reasons for secession, the writer of these pages does not put them forward, as all that might be urged; nor as the weightiest in themselves; nor yet as the most likely to have weight with others; and still less as possessing much originality; but simply as *his* reasons; the reasons, such as they are, that have influenced him, in taking this step.

He would also observe that the change of opinion, effected by them, is not a sudden one; secession is far from being with him a new idea. For many years past, he has heartily disliked, and openly condemned, many parts of the Established Church-system.

So much so, indeed, that he has often seriously questioned with himself, whether so much disaffection to a system could rightly co-exist with continued adhesion to it.

And it has only been the conviction (now believed to have been erroneous,) that the Established Formularies were unexceptionable in point of doctrine; coupled with the unenquiring adoption of the current idea, that corruption in doctrine can alone justify separation from a national Establishment; that has, for some time past, reconciled him to remaining in the Established ministry.

He must now however avow, that, whilst his views of the evils of the system have been greatly corroborated and extended by the perusal of Mr. Noel's recent publication, he has also risen from that perusal, and from the reflections induced by it, at once impressed with the untenableness of his subscriptions; and deeply convinced that whilst, on the one hand, the Established Formularies are not unexceptionable in regard to doctrine; there may be, on the other hand, other evils, apart from doctrinal corruption, which will justify and demand separation from a system which perseveringly and hopelessly maintains them. And further, he has been convinced, that such evils not only exist in the Establishment, but are indissolubly connected with it. The writer must likewise confess his debt to Mr. Noel for a juster appreciation of the voluntary question than he previously possessed. In making these avowals of obligation to that eminent individual, the cost has been counted; the consequences are understood. To approve what others condemn—to justify what all agree in reprobating—to confess one's self influenced by a book which, it seems, not only the sixteen thousand ministers of the Establishment, but some Voluntaries and Presbyterian Free Churchmen, affect to depreciate as weak and worthless; this is evidently, if not happily to escape censure,