

land, as the said Confession was received and approved by an Act of Assembly 1647, Sess 23; and likewise the whole doctrine contained in the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, compiled by the same Westminster Assembly; to be founded upon the word of God: And do you acknowledge the said Confession as the Confession of your Faith: and will you, through grace, *firmly and constantly adhere to the doctrine of the said Confession and Catechisms, and to the utmost of your power, assert, maintain, and defend the same; against all* &c? That this language was employed as meaning—what it so distinctly expresses—an adherence to the *entire* doctrine of the Confession of Faith, is put beyond the possibility of doubt, by the way in which the Associate Presbytery express themselves in their Answers to Mr. Nairn. This Mr. Nairn, who had been admitted into their body, and who was placed over a congregation at Abbotshall, adopted the views with respect to the existing civil government of the British empire which are entertained by the Reformed Presbyterians, to whom he afterwards joined himself. The differences between him and the Associate Presbytery were brought out in connexion with their proceedings about renewing the Covenants. He was dissatisfied with a sentiment which they had expressed in a particular paragraph of their acknowledgment of sins; and, after some proceedings, having given in a paper containing the reasons of his dissent, he separated from the body. The Presbytery, in their answers to these reasons of dissent, take notice of a particular gloss which Mr. Nairn had put on the fourth article of the twenty-third chapter of the Confession of Faith, and say: “4. The *whole* Confession of Faith, and consequently the passage of it now pointed at, was received by the Church of Scotland as truth, and that among us; which appears from the Act of Assembly (August 27, 1647, Sess 23), bearing this clause: ‘The General Assembly do hereby therefore, after mature deliberation, agree unto and approve the said Confession, as to the truth of the matter; and also as to the point of uniformity, agreeing for our part, that it be a common Confession of Faith for the three kingdoms.’”

This statement of particulars may be tiresome and distasteful to some, but it is necessary in order to do justice to a question which is important in itself; and it is necessary in order to do justice to

the character of the Free Synod of Nova Scotia, who, having expressed their concurrence in a Basis of Union from which they have no wish to resile, are held up to reprobation and scorn, as if they had been acting insincerely, by the very parties who, after professing to adopt the same Basis, do not in point of fact adhere to it. This statement shews, too, how little Mr. Trotter could have known what he was writing about, when, in his first Letter, as formerly quoted, he says, “the Church of Scotland in August, 1647, Sess. 23, received it (the Confession of Faith) with certain specified exceptions and limitations; and the Secession Church from which we are descended, and whose principles we profess, has at every revision of her subordinate standard, down to the last, proclaimed her adherence to it with the very same exceptions and limitations.” In direct contradiction to this confident assertion, the documents which have been quoted shew that the Church of Scotland received the Confession of Faith *without exception*, they shew that the *first* Seceders knew that the Church of Scotland had received the Confession of Faith *without exception*, and they shew that these first Seceders, in adhering to the principles of the Church of Scotland, against the moderate “prevailing majorities” of that day, in like manner received the Confession *without exception*. Had Mr. Trotter been a little better informed on the subject, he would perhaps have refrained from questioning the members of the Free Synod of Nova Scotia as he does, when, in a tone which he has no right to assume towards them, he says, “Do you, or do you not, receive the Confession of Faith with the exceptions and limitations with which it is received by the Church of Scotland?” In one sense, indeed, he is quite right in thinking that, if they answer at all, they must say, Yes; for, as the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland did, in 1647, so do they receive the *entire* doctrine of the Confession: but what is to be thought of the man who, at the very time when he admits, with respect to himself and his brethren, “*we do not receive the entire doctrine of the Confession of Faith*,” ventures to say, “I know that you must say yes, if you answer at all; and if you do so, I beseech you in the name of all that is fair and honourable in conduct, to attempt no more to excite the prejudices of the ignorant against us for doing precisely the same thing!” Let the reader say who it is