

ed. They revived, and endeavoured to carry out in practice, the fundamental law of the Church that no man should be intruded upon a parish contrary to the will of the congregation. They gave their proper standing in the Church to those who had hitherto occupied the anomalous position of ministers of Chapels of Ease. They set themselves in right earnest to secure an increased supply of the means of grace for a population that had far outgrown what had been as yet provided. They shewed also their determination faithfully to apply the discipline of Christ's house. Both within and without the Establishment, it was often asked, Has not Scotland now a free, a faithful, and a reforming General Assembly? Where are the Seceders to plead their Protest before them?

Alas! the greater number of those who were called Seceders were now such only in name. Having been themselves long excluded from the temporalities of an Establishment, and having seen much injury resulting from its mismanagement, they could no longer see any advantage but rather thought that there was much evil, in a connexion betwixt Church and State. They were no longer, in that particular case, disposed to do justice to the very obvious distinction between the right use of a thing, and the abuse of it. They had ceased to hold by certain important principles in the Confession of Faith, and instead of hailing the reforming character and the vigorous actings of the Church of Scotland, as that which, through the blessing of God might soon realise what the early Seceders had earnestly prayed for—a Church acting fully and boldly on what are well known as the principles of the Second Reformation, they endeavoured to impede her progress, and to thwart her in her aims.—They joined in the opposition which was made—but too successfully—to the attempts to remove the impediments which had prevented the subdivision of large parishes, that endowed churches might be erected to meet the wants of an overgrown population. They subscribed petitions to Parliament, which were sent up in opposition to those that prayed for a repeal of that law of patronage, which had been the cause of so many evils, and which had been passed in violation of national engagements. In their hostility to the Establishment, they had lifted up the cry of Rase her, rase her; and having failed in that, they helped on those who were bent upon enslaving her, that

if she were still to exist, it might be in such a condition that she might be as inefficient as possible for good.

But while such were the feelings manifested, and the proceedings followed out, by a great many of those who still bore the name of the Secession, there were others of the same name who acted in a very different manner. There were many of the United Secession, who had little understood the nature of those changes which had affected their own body, who sympathized with the Church of Scotland in her struggles, and prayed that she might be enabled to remain steadfast, and to succeed in her aims. There were also the two bodies, popularly known as the Old Light Burghers and the Old Light Antiburghers, who had not been carried along in the movement of the New Light. These bodies marked with deepest interest the improved aspect of the Church of Scotland, and although the latter still stood aloof, as distrustful of the extent to which the independence of the Church would be maintained, and a return prosecuted to attainments formerly reached, yet the former rejoiced to admit that they did now see a free, and faithful, and reforming Assembly. Negotiations accordingly were entered into, in conducting which, on the part of the Original, or Old Light Burgher Synod, the late Mr Robb, at that time minister at Strathkinnes in Fife, subsequently here in Halifax, and ultimately at Hamilton in Canada; and Dr. Willis, at that time minister in Glasgow, and now the accomplished Professor of Divinity at Toronto, had a principal share. These negotiations resulted in the return of a considerable number of congregations to the bosom of the Established Church, as a body in connexion with which they could now prosecute those reformation objects for the attainment of which their fathers had formerly seceded. The Church did prosecute these objects; and having, in the Assembly 1842, the last of the free Assemblies held by the Church of Scotland as an Established Church, agreed to a petition for the repeal of the Act of Patronage, and to the important document styled the Claim of Rights, on the refusal of the State to look at this Claim, and to redress the grievances of which it complained, she renounced the benefits of the Establishment, rather than barter her liberties for its temporalities, or act inconsistently with the principles which she professed. The Free Church of Nova Scotia regards this as an immense sa-