

land ought to impress on us, it is this, that the purity and the liberty of a Church established or endowed by the State cannot be guarded with too jealous care—and when you think of these things, we do not doubt you will feel, that the conduct of the Synod in leaving an open door for the Ministers and office-bearers of the Established Church of Scotland, has furnished an additional justification of our conduct in withdrawing from her communion.

5. The fifth reason is—

"Fifth—That they have rendered the relation in which they stand towards the Established Church of Scotland so doubtful and equivocal, that even their declaration of spiritual independence is necessarily deprived of all significance and weight, that the terms in which their endowments are held, have been in effect declared to be such as are incompatible with the proper regulation of their intercourse with other Churches,—and even with free action in many other matters of greater importance, and that moreover, they have cast away the opportunity of placing this Church on a basis which might have gathered around her all the sound-hearted Presbyterianism of the Province."

A Church without spiritual independence is, it is manifest, directly responsible for the principles and procedure of the Church to which she is subject, and of which she virtually forms a part. On this account it became plainly a matter of the utmost importance, after the disruption of the Established Church of Scotland, that the spiritual independence of the Synod should be rendered clear, complete and free from any clogs or conditions, which could make it at all a subject of question or suspicion. We have always held that the Synod in connexion with the Church of Scotland was possessed of complete spiritual independence, but as her peculiar relation to the Established Church of Scotland, led some to doubt the reality or at least the completeness of that independence, we felt that there was a call for a full, unambiguous and decided declaration of such independence, and with this view we proposed, in the resolutions submitted to the Synod, a declaration of this kind. The Synod, you are aware, have professed to make a similar declaration, and so far may seem, at first sight, to have done in this matter what was required; but we would beg you to remark, that there are circumstances connected with their recent decision which deprive even this declaration of spiritual independence, of all significance and weight.

First, their declaration does not include the assertion of their right to determine the relation in which they shall stand to the Established Church of Scotland. And, secondly, it does not repudiate, but virtually homologates the opinion avowed by many, and held as you have seen by the Established Church, that they hold their endowments on the ground of their continuing in connexion with that Church.

We hold that a Church, which is bound by her constitution to be in friendly connexion with another Church, is deprived of power to act in one great matter, by which her spiritual interests must necessarily be very vitally affected—and so far she is destitute of spiritual independence. And we hold that a Church enjoying endowments, on condition of continuing in friendly communion with another, is placed under temptations, which of themselves would render the theoretical possession of spiritual independence a nullity and a fiction.—She is thereby placed in circumstances—a position in which no Church is entitled to place herself—so fitted to clog and hinder her faithfulness in the assertion of her spiritual independence, especially in her relations with that Church (as for instance in the admission of her Ministers), that it is scarcely possible to expect, that the assertion of such independence can be fully and faithfully maintained.

And with the above most material defects attaching to their declaration of spiritual independence, and leaving the relation in which they stand

to the Established Church of Scotland altogether doubtful, equivocal and incompatible with the idea of their perfect freedom of action in some most important branches of spiritual jurisdiction, may it not be said that it really amounts to nothing at all, and at all events not to that which the circumstances in which they stood made so urgently desirable.

Nor, in connection with what we have now stated, is it an objection to their action in this matter which ought to be overlooked, that they have perpetuated thereby the national and exclusive character of the Synod. In a country like Canada, the Presbyterian population of which is composed of immigrants from all quarters of the world, the idea of the dependence of the Synod on the Church of Scotland has operated as a hindrance to the entrance within her pale of Presbyterians from other Churches, and prevented that Catholic and comprehensive growth and development to which she might otherwise have attained, and amidst a population which should have furnished her with members from all Presbyterian Churches, she has been little better than a Church for the Scotch, or rather we might say, the Scotch of the Establishment. A splendid opportunity was presented in the providence of God for putting an end to this national and exclusive character, by satisfying all Presbyterians that she was really and thoroughly a Free, Independent and Catholic Church—a Church around which all Presbyterians might rally, because adapted and intended for all. By their defective declaration of independence, this opportunity has been cast away, and the Synod rendered a just object of suspicion to all Presbyterians of enlarged and Catholic spirit.

And did not, we again ask, the action of the Synod in this matter, furnish us with an additional reason for the secession which we made from her?

6. The sixth reason is—

"Sixth—That they have given additional weight to the practical arguments against Establishments, furnished by the present position of the Established Church of Scotland—strengthened the hands of those who, in this Province, are denying the lawfulness and expediency of all national endowments for religious purposes, and rejected the opportunity which God in his providence had afforded them of proving to the world that entire freedom of action, and a jealous determination to guard against the encroachments of the Civil Power, were perfectly compatible with the enjoyment of the countenance and support of the State."

The Free Protestant Church came out from the Establishment in Scotland on the Establishment principle, and on the same principle have we seceded from the Synod. We have given up none of the principles which we formerly held, still less the principle, that it is the duty of the State, while respecting the independence of the Church, to encourage and support her. Neither are we insensible to the advantages which the Synod derived from the countenance and support which the State has hitherto vouchsafed to her. We have therefore no quarrel with those from whom we have separated, with respect to the abstract principle of Establishments, but we have a quarrel of another kind—holding the principle of Establishments in common with them, we have to charge them with having done by their recent decision, a most grievous injury to the cause of pure and free Establishments.

One of the sins chargeable against the Established Church of Scotland is, that by her recent procedure she has furnished one of the strongest practical arguments against Establishments, which has ever been furnished to their enemies, since first they were known in the world. Once when men doubted whether a Church could be established and yet retain her purity and her independence, it was deemed a sufficient answer to point to the Established Church of Scotland—now the enemies of Establishments point to that Church as a confirmation of all that they have ever alleged against them. Once her case was appealed to as a con-

clusive argument for the extension of national christianity—now it is referred to for arguments against even the recognition by the State of Christ, as King of Kings, and King of Nations.

And yet, Brethren, the Synod by their recent decision, have resolved to fraternize with and encourage the author of this scandal and disgrace to the cause of Establishments. They might still have lifted up a banner for the cause of Establishments, they might have proved to the world, that there was still a Church endowed by the State, and yet uncorrupted and untrammelled by her endowments. A more splendid opportunity of showing, that a Church might be allied to the State, and yet fearlessly determined to resist any attempt by the State to encroach upon her freedom, has seldom been afforded to any Church—but this opportunity she has despised and thrown away, and now she stands side by side with the degraded and Erastian Establishment of Scotland, a source of weakness to the cause of Establishments, an occasion of ridicule and of triumph to its foes.

Brethren, have we not done well in separating from such a Church?

7. The seventh and last reason is—

"Seventh—That in a matter in which the consciences of many of their Brethren were aggrieved, and for refusing relief in regard to which no moral necessity could be pleaded on their part, such relief has nevertheless been refused."

In submitting our resolutions to the Synod, we earnestly impressed upon our Brethren, that our consciences were so aggrieved by the relation in which the Synod stood to the Established Church of Scotland, that unless that relation were changed, unless the connexion between them were terminated, we could not with a clear conscience continue any longer in communion with the Synod; and we solemnly urged it upon our Brethren whether their consciences would be so aggrieved by the adoption of our proposals, that in the event of their being carried, they would be compelled to withdraw. We think the character of our conferences and discussions in the Synod, warrants us in saying, that our Brethren who now remain in that body—at least a large proportion of them—could not say, that their consciences would be aggrieved to the extent we have stated, by the adoption of our Resolutions. Yet they refused to concede what was necessary to the relief of our conscience.—They willfully and deliberately preferred to let matters come to a disruption, rather than concede what they could have conceded to our consciences without doing violence to their own.

How far they acted in a christian spirit and gave us reason to regret our separation from them, by this treatment, we will allow you to decide.

Such, Dearly Beloved Brethren, are the numerous and powerful reasons which have weighed with us in separating from the Synod of Canada in connexion with the Church of Scotland, and viewing them together, we feel that we can rest upon them with all confidence, for securing your verdict in our favour. We shall not further enlarge upon their exposition, but leave you to pronounce upon them as your consciences shall direct.

Before concluding, we would only briefly announce to you, the present position and prospects of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, and point out the duties to which, in the present emergency, and more especially by the formation of that Church, we conceive you to be called.

The name which we have given to the Church formed by us—the Presbyterian Church of Canada—has been selected for its appropriateness to the independence which we intend to maintain, and especially from its Catholic character as fitted to conciliate and attract all Presbyterians coming into the Province.

The standards by which we hold are the good old standards by which we have hitherto held. We have not changed any of our standards, and we are determined, through grace, to preserve them in all their purity. The only thing in reference to our standards worthy of further explanation is, that we