

never wavered, but from what he regarded as his intolerant spirit. The narrowness of their views, and the illiberality of their spirit, were exhibited in forms, which to the present age would be almost incredible. For example, they would suspend a man from church privileges, for hearing sermon in a parish church. A young man of excellent character and promising talents, when nearly ready for license, went to hear sermon from a relative, who had just been ordained in the Established Church. For this he was summoned before the church court, and threatened with suspension if he did not express sorrow for his offence. He offered to express his regret, that he should have done anything that would have given offence to his brethren, but he could not acknowledge anything sinful in what he had done. They refused to accept this, and he left the body, and became a useful minister of another. At the time of which we speak, much of this illiberality had passed away, but so much of it still remained, that it would appear that he scrupled for a time about becoming one of its ministers. This also manifested his strict conscientiousness. It may be mentioned, that the liberal spirit which he thus early imbibed from the study of the word of God, characterized him through life. While none could be more strenuous in maintaining those views of truth, which he had conscientiously adopted, none was more ready to acknowledge excellence, where he found it, in brethren of another name.

Another feature manifested by the above letter, is the independence of his mind. From Dr. Keir's rigid adherence to the old Theology, an impression might have been made on some minds that he would have received his Theological system implicitly from his tutors. Instead of this, it appears plainly from the above letter, that he adopted his views from no human system or human teacher; that he called no man master, and that he drew his knowledge of divine truth directly from the original fountain of wisdom. This appeared, as we shall hereafter notice, in his labors as a teacher of Theology, both from the pulpit and the Professor's desk.

But perhaps the most noticeable feature of the above letter, is the rebuke which it administers to that spirit, not yet extinct in the church, expressively denominated, heresy hunting. If there was one man in our church more than another, in whose soundness in the faith the whole body had confidence, that man was Dr. Keir, and yet it would appear from the above letter, that such was the keen scent for heresy of some would be zealots for the truth, that when a young man, he was suspected as unsound upon a vital point, and had to pass through an investigation, to test the accuracy of his views. It