

lasting Testimony against Episcopacy, Independency, and every species of Sectarian principles," add, "They strike with equal force against those who call themselves the Presbytery of Relief, whose principles and measures have a visible tendency to lead off professing Christians, in this nation, from any steadfast attachment to the Reformation principles of the Church of Scotland.—This scheme stands upon the ruins of the grand distinguishing principles of the Reformation; in as much as all the abettors of it are animated by a spirit of uncommon opposition to the nature and design of our covenants, the national and solemn league; the moral obligation of which, they absolutely deny, and treat with the utmost contempt. Many of their ministers, contrary to the standing laws of the church, deserting their charge in the establishment, or elsewhere, without the consent or intervention of ecclesiastical authority, are chargeable with a most glaring schism, while they pretend to be still within the bosom of the established church, and actually hold communion with her; and yet have erected ecclesiastical judicatories distinct from and independent of her."—"They have evidently perverted the doctrine of our Confession of Faith, relative to the COMMUNION OF SAINTS: and their terms of communion are indeed very different from those of the Church of Scotland in her best times; and are so general and undetermined, that they will admit Protestants of every denomination. They seem to be under too little concern to keep pure and entire ALL the ordinances of Christ, according to his express command: and while they separate the privileges from the discipline of the church, not duly considering that the latter is the guardian of the former, they attempt to put asunder what God hath joined together, to the open encouragement of immorality, by neglecting the exercise of some of the most essential branches of church government and discipline."

The Antiburgher Synod, in their Narrative and Testimony which was published in 1804, and which was drawn up on New Light principles, after giving a narrative of the progressive defection of the Established Church of Scotland, say, at p. 80, "we shall subjoin a short view of the rise and peculiar principles of some of the other religious denominations in our native land, against which we are obliged to bear testimony." Among these they include the Relief, of whom they

say (p. 88), "They subsisted a number of years before they had determined with what denomination of Christians they would hold communion. At length, however, at what they call a 'consultation meeting,' held in the year 1773, they found, that 'their principles did not allow them to hold communion with such as are unsound in the essentials of the Christian faith;' but, that 'it was agreeable to their principles, to hold both ministerial and Christian communion with those of the Episcopal and Independent persuasions,' though it is said they have receded from the last part of this declaration since."

"In consequence of their still declining to give the world a full account of their principles, or any distinct declaration wherein they agree or disagree with other Churches; we are obliged to have recourse to the publications of individual ministers, who profess to give the principles of the body; and to their practice and public ecclesiastical procedure, for an account of these principles. From these, taken in connection with the above decision respecting church-communion, the following appear to be principles held by them.—That though they have made a separation from the National Church, yet they have freedom to join with her occasionally, in the most intimate acts of church-fellowship.—They avow the warrantableness of promiscuous hearing even in churches that are very corrupt.—They are known, with a very few exceptions, to be enemies to the duty of public covenanting; and they distinguish divine truths into what they call *essential* and *circumstantial*; by the latter of which, some of them say, are meant, those things in revelation about which men may differ, and yet be real Christians. These they hold to be of such a trivial nature, as not to be worth contending for, at least not so far as to break up communion with persons' on account of any opposition which they manage against them.

"It appears that if they adopt the Confession of Faith as a test of orthodoxy, they neglect to enforce conformity to it. Though some of them, it is hoped, preach the doctrines of the gospel, yet it appears from their publications, that some of their members are accustomed to use erroneous expressions as to some of those doctrines, which lie very near the foundation of the hopes of sinners for eternity."—In a note, this charge is sup-