

discussions which have taken place within its judicatories, there is room for questioning whether the attribute of superior union belong to it above others. The 'Relief' Church relieves, no doubt, from the yoke of patronage, but so do the Churches already named; and many more who have not founded on this circumstance a distinctive appellation. We must not, then, be frightened by a schismatic nomenclature, or imagine that dissensions and designations are of commensurate prevalence. Passing from mere names, and looking into principles, we find a marvellous accordance very general in Scotland, as to doctrine, discipline, and government." Taking this, Dr. King's, view of the subject, which, in reality, is the true one, it would appear that there ought to be very little difficulty in the above-named Churches becoming, ere long, the One Free and United Presbyterian Church of the Scottish people.

"But the Voluntary principle, it may be said, interposes an insurmountable barrier. Perhaps it does; perhaps not. The Voluntary controversy is, we trust, at an end, so far as regards the unendowed Presbyterian Churches in Scotland, consequently, the angry spirit evoked by that controversy need no longer disturb, embitter, or even confuse our discussions. We ought to be able now to investigate the subject with as much calmness as we would any abstract question in theology or philosophy—to write or reason on it as deliberately as if we were inquiring into the freedom of the will. If this were done, it might be found, that, in the heat of controversy, both parties had oversteered their own arguments, and misunderstood those of their opponents. What, then do we really mean by the Voluntary principle? One who thinks himself a Voluntary may answer, 'I mean, that professing Christians ought voluntarily, and as a Christian duty, to contribute to the support and propagation of the gospel.' A member of the Free Church would answer, 'In that I perfectly agree with you, both in principle and in practice; but I regard that as the Voluntary system—not the Voluntary principle.' 'What, then, do you understand by the Voluntary principle?' 'By the Voluntary principle, I understand its advocates to mean, that the civil magistrate has nothing whatever to do with religion, that he owes no allegiance to Christ, and that he ought to show equal, not impartiality, but indifference, to all religions; and this I regard as a principle involving national infidelity, if not national atheism.' Almost every Voluntary would at once disclaim all intention of holding any such conclusion; and the question might become a purely logical inquiry, whether the position that the civil magistrate has nothing to do with religion, does indeed necessarily involve a conclusion which both disputants agree in rejecting; or, it may be, that the Voluntary would endeavour to retaliate, and would charge his opponent with holding a principle which necessarily subjected the Church to the power of the State, even in spiritual matters, and, at the same time, infused into it the spirit of a corrupting secularism. This the member of the Free Church would instantly repudiate, and would triumphantly appeal to recent events, as proving, unambiguously, that, in his view at least, the principle of an Establishment did not involve any such subjection, but the very reverse, as he had proved, and was still ready to prove at all hazards.

Some such course of thought appears to have been engaging Dr. King's attention, as the following extract will testify:—"Perhaps it might be found, in a friendly conference, that the difference was not so formidable as has been sometimes alleged; that the Free Churchman has no wish to secularize religion, by connecting it with the State; and the Voluntary Churchman just as little designs, through a dissolution of this connection, to make governments infidel. On both hands, it might be allowed that Christ is Head over the nations; and that, if there be any question, it does not respect the fact, but only the mode

of his rule." We hail this statement with sincere delight. We regard it as a token for good. And we feel persuaded, that if the leading men among our brethren of the United Secession Church will enter upon and prosecute the line of thought indicated by Dr. King, there will not long remain any insurmountable barrier between us. It is our thorough conviction, that a very considerable proportion of those who regarded themselves as Voluntaries, have never deeply studied the great idea of Christ's mediatorial sovereignty, not only over the Church, but also over nations; and that when they come to do so, apart from the disturbing elements of controversy, they will then see why the Free Church still holds the principle of an Establishment, which we regard as involved in Christ's great title, "King of kings, and Lord of lords."—Free Church Magazine.

HEADSHIP OF CHRIST.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF THE CONTENTINGS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND IN BEHALF OF THE SPIRITUAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE CHURCH, AND IN OPPOSITION TO THE ERASIAN INTERFERENCE OF THE CIVIL POWER.

I.

THE GOOD REGENT—KNOX.

At the Reformation in England in 1534, the supremacy of the pope as visible Head of the Church was abolished; but while the supremacy was denied to the pope, it was sinfully and strangely declared to belong to the King. By an act of parliament, "all authority, civil and ecclesiastical, in England, was declared to belong to and to flow from the crown; and by the thirty-seventh article of the Church's Confession of Faith, drawn up about the same time, the king was declared to be "supreme in all causes, civil and religious." "So delighted," says a modern writer, "was Henry VIII. with his title of supreme Head of the Church, that he caused it to be enacted, that it should be for ever joined to the other titles of the crown, and reckoned one of them, and even caused a seal to be cut for public use in his new ecclesiastical office; and when dreading a visitation of the whole clergy of England, dated the 19th of September, 1535, added those: 'Under our seal that we use in ecclesiastical matters, which we have ordered to be hereunto appended.'"

By the place thus assigned to the king or civil magistrate in the Church of England, it belongs to him to appoint from himself Church officers, to decree rites and ceremonies, to convocate or interdict at his pleasure the Church's assemblies, to receive appeals from ecclesiastical courts, and to review, ratify, or rescind their decisions, and in one word, to appoint and to regulate the whole of the Church's government, worship, and discipline. To ascribe power like this to the civil magistrate is, indeed, as was remarked at the time, "to change the pope, not the popedom; the head, not the headship." So unscriptural an encroachment is this in the constitution of a Christian Church, it is really not to be wondered at if some have doubted how far the Church of England is to be considered a Church at all. Certain it is, that while this strange dogma of the king's supremacy and headship of the Church is itself a great corruption, it has been the source of innumerable others, and is destined, at no distant day, to work out the Church of England's utter overthrow.

While the conduct of the English reformers, in accepting a creed and constitution so thoroughly Erastian, is to be regretted, it is cause of great thankfulness that our Scottish forefathers were more wisely guided of the Spirit of God, and had more regard to his word. The supremacy of the pope that had been resisted in Scotland for centuries, after it had been acknowledged in other countries, in 1560; by an Act of Parliament, was formally abolished. This it was in these memorable words, "The Three Estates, understand-

ing that the jurisdiction and authority of the bishop of Rome, called the pope, used in this realm in these parts, has not only been contumelious to the eternal God, but also hurtful to the commonwealth of this realm. Therefore it is statute and ordained, that the bishop of Rome, called the pope, have no jurisdiction nor authority within this realm, in any true coming." In his Confession of Faith, ratified by the same Parliament, the Church of Scotland declared to whom the supremacy or Headship, so impiously assumed by the bishop of Rome, rightfully belonged. Thus it did in the following words, "The Mediator, Christ Jesus, whom we confess and avow to be the only Head of his kirk, our just lawgiver and only high priest, in quihk honours, and offices, gif man or angel presume to intrude themselves, we utterly abhor and detest them as blasphemous to our sovereign and supreme governor, Christ Jesus." Thus in Scotland was the crown of Christ removed from the head of an impious usurper, and set on the head of its rightful owner. Then also, when our reformers had not only completed the "Confession of Faith," but the "First Book of Discipline," containing "a good and godly policy," or form of Church government, was "the reverend face of the primitive and apostolic kirk reduced again to the eyes and knowledge of men." The great instruments, under God, to whom we are indebted for the overthrow of the papal supremacy, superstition and tyranny, and the re-construction of the Church of Christ in this country, as it had existed during the days of the Culdees, were Knox and the Good Regent. The first thing this great Christian magistrate did on entering the government, was to pass an act of parliament, by which the Presbyterian Church of Scotland was declared to be "the true kirk and immaculate spouse of Jesus Christ," that "there was na other face of religion than that established within the realm, and that there should be na uther jurisdiction ecclesiastical acknowledged, within the realm, uther than that quihk was, and should be within the same kirk, or that quihk flowed therefrom." The Church of Scotland was now pure, prosperous, peaceful, and free. This state of things, however, was not long to last. Two years after the above act was past, the Good Regent was killed by the hands of an assassin, as he rode through the town of Lauder, and the Great Reformer soon followed him to the grave, and with them, for a time, departed the "chariots" of the Church of Scotland, and "the horsemen thereof;" with them, for the time, her "weapons of war perished."

(To be continued.)

PAPACY.—On a late occasion in London, the Rev. Dr. Vaughan, who had lately been at Rome remarked,—"I have recently been watching popery at its head-quarters, and I stand before you to-day, to tell you, and, through you, to tell the friends of missions, that Popery is still what it always was. I come to tell you that that system, vigorous as it is at its extremities, and corrupt as it is, every where, is, nevertheless, trembling at its centre, and if God does but give you grace to enter upon that effort to which you are called; it is not my opinion only, but that of very many persons capable of discerning the signs of the times, that the appointed epoch for the fall of the great enemy of Christianity is drawing near. I care not who notes my words. I repeat them, the fall of the great enemy of Christianity is not far distant."

IRELAND AND ROME.—A deputation, including some Roman Catholic laymen, with two or three dignitaries of that Church, will be immediately nominated to represent the Irish Roman Catholics at the Holy See, and afford such explanation of their position and objects as may be deemed necessary to sustain their own interests, as well as for the information of the Sovereign Pontiff. It is not likely that Mr. O'Connell himself will proceed to Rome, but it is stated that his son, Mr. John O'Connell, the member for Kilkenny, and Lord French, will form part of the deputation.