

tion on the subject, it is not unworthy of notice that the mode adopted by him and his brethren of stating the grounds of difference betwixt the two Synods, is ingeniously fitted at once to create an unjust prejudice against the Free Church, as if they held persecuting principles, and to divert attention from the matters with respect to which those who have embraced the New Light have departed from the principles of those whom, with little regard to truth, they persist in calling their "fathers of the Secession." It is on the ground of this departure from principles formerly held; that the Free Church cannot, in consistency with her obligation whereto she had already attained to walk by the same rule, to mind the same thing, enter into a union with such; and it is to the fact that there has been such a departure from principles formerly professed that attention must now be directed.

There is perhaps no one element of Bible doctrine on which the sentiments of the original Seceders stand out in bolder relief, than that which regards the duties which the Civil Magistrate is bound to discharge in behalf of the true religion. The general principles of this doctrine are stated in the following terms, by one who had thoroughly imbibed the spirit of the original Seceders, and who, although involved in the charge of holding persecuting principles which has been so audaciously brought against the adherents to the Old Light, was one of the most enlightened expounders of the rights of conscience and of the true principles of civil and religious liberty with which the last generation was blessed. The late Dr. McCrie, in his "Statement of the Difference," Pp. 78-81, says, "That more special concern which certain persons have with religion, particularly in consequence of their being placed, according to divine institution, in offices properly religious and ecclesiastical, in which the immediate administration of religious ordinances is committed unto them, and unto which they are to 'give themselves wholly,' does not set aside the more general concern which other persons have with it as connected with their office and station, and those powers and duties which are founded in nature and more clearly unfolded by revelation.—When masters and parents employ their authority for promoting religion, they do not interfere with the office of ministers of the gospel, nor does their power thereby become ecclesiastical, but still remains

herile and parental. In like manner, when civil rulers employ their authority for the same purpose, they do not encroach upon the proper business of church courts; their power remains civil and political, and does not become ecclesiastical or spiritual, although it be exercised about objects religious and ecclesiastical. To set aside or deny the powers belonging unto any of these, because we may not be able exactly to define their limits, or because they may interfere with, and encroach upon one another (which, in real life, and among erring and corrupt men, may be expected), would be unreasonable and absurd. In large and extensive societies, in particular, which are co-ordinate, such as a Kingdom, and a church of equal or nearly equal extent, and consisting chiefly of the same individuals, there must be more danger of such interferences, with the jealousies consequent upon them; yet as these do not arise from any formal or particular alliance [witness the interference of the Court of Session with the United Secession, in the Falkirk case referred to in the seventh Article], but from circumstances resulting from their co-existence and acting, so far from being an objection against every connection and alliance, they, on the contrary, demonstrate the propriety of agreeing to and establishing such rules as may bid fairest for preventing these evils, and for conducting matters so as that both societies may gain their ends more fully to their mutual benefit."

Having referred to the necessary distinction between church and state, and the independence of the former upon the latter in all her intrinsic jurisdiction and administration, he proceeds to say in his own name and in the name of the brethren who were associated with him in protesting against the deed of the Antiburgher Synod in favor of the New Light—"But, in full consistency with these principles, they think they can maintain, that civil authority may be lawfully and beneficially employed in the advancement of religion and the Kingdom of Christ.—The care of religion, in the general view of it (in which respect the consideration of it is previous to that of the form which it assumes in consequence of supernatural revelation and the erection of a church state), belongs to the magistrate's office; and it is his duty to watch over its external interests, and to exert himself in his station to preserve upon the minds of his subjects an impression of its obligations and sanctions, and to suppress irreligion,