

REV. BAPTIST NOEL.

Correspondence of the Edinburgh Witness.

London, Nov. 27.

The rumoured intention of so remarkable a person as the Rev. B. Noel to secede on grounds of conscience from the Established Church, has occasioned in London, as it must have occasioned everywhere, a profound sensation. Since his resolution crept out in the beginning of last week, it was the principal theme of conversation amongst all classes of people; and it was curious to hear the variety of comments made by the quick-witted Londoners upon this impending movement, the reasons which occasioned it, and the consequences that would probably result. Dissenters are disposed to hail it as an accession of strength to the Voluntary principle. Our own section of the Presbyterian Church sympathise with Mr. Noel, and wish him well personally,—for he is greatly esteemed,—but are at a loss how to define his position, and are rather afraid that the results of his secession will be altogether negative in their character. The Episcopalians look upon the event with various feelings; some condemning—some lamenting—few if any sympathizing with it; and none that I have met with entertaining the very slightest shadow of apprehension that the abandonment of the National Church, by so distinguished an ornament as Mr. Noel, will endanger its existence, or enfeeble its powerful hold on the popular mind. As it was generally expected that he would make a declaration of his intention from the pulpit after Divine service, I, with hundreds of others, wended my way at an early hour yesterday morning to St. John's Chapel, Bedford-row. Through the kindness and urbanity of one of the wardens, I was provided with excellent accommodation, in one of the front seats of the gallery, and nearly abreast of the pulpit. The house was crowded in every part. After the morning service,—to me most wearisome, for it lasted one hour and twenty minutes,—Mr. Noel entered the pulpit, and introduced his work by a short *extempore* prayer. I was much gratified by his appearance. He is tall and well proportioned, with an open countenance, beaming with intelligence and benignity,—his complexion is blonde, and in his contour he bears a striking resemblance to Dr. Samuel Miller. The resemblance is so manifest, that they would be taken for brothers by any one ignorant of the fact. There is no doubt a perceptible difference. D. S. Miller is emaciated by infirm health, Mr. B. Noel is as yet robust and fresh. His text was Matthew, xxxii. 31. Of course his subject was the death of Christ. He had no notes, not a scrap of paper, and gave us a clear, simple, impressive discourse upon the precious doctrine of the various sacrifices of the Cross. His manner is quiet and unimpassioned, and would be considered tame by a Scottish audience. But here it is much admired as chaste and solemn, the very “beau ideal” of manner in a preacher of the gospel. Towards the close, as he spoke of the glory of the redeemed, and expressed his heartfelt conviction that many of his beloved flock would spend eternity with himself in singing the praises of the Lamb; and again, when