

ejected ministers ought to have accepted the Indulgence, because it was impossible to do so, without sacrificing the fundamental and essential principle of the Presbyterian Church, that which constitutes its glory and its life, *the sole sovereignty of Christ.*

2nd. Were those stricter Presbyterians who refused the Indulgences, justifiable in declining ecclesiastical fellowship with those who did accept them? We enter upon the examination of that question with a deep sense of the evil of schism in the Church of God. It is a sin of no ordinary magnitude, to break the bond of ecclesiastical fellowship on trifling grounds. The Church of God is one *really*, and ought to be one *visibly*. And when things shall be restored to their right condition, there will be not only "one Lord," but also "one faith" and "one baptism." It is also an un doubted fact, that in the whole Church of God, there were none more deeply sensible of the evil of schism, than those who most rigidly adhered to the national Covenants, one of the great principles of which was the recognition of the duty of endeavouring to promote union and uniformity amongst the Churches of Christ, not only in Britain, but throughout all lands. That there was a separation, and that there was sin in that separation, are facts that cannot be disputed. But on which party did the guilt of schism rest, is the question at issue.

It will serve to throw some light on that subject to suppose a parallel case. An association is formed on the basis of a definite constitution, and all is in harmony for a time. At length a party in that association pursues a course in entire opposition to its known and recognised principles. The faithful members of the society cry out against the defection. They say: "You are pursuing a divisive course; you have broken your pledge; we cannot recognise you until you come back to the ground you have abandoned." On whom does the guilt of the disruption rest in that case? Most assuredly not on the faithful party, but on those who have made defection. The Church of Scotland was precisely an association of that kind. She had a most definite constitution, the corner stone of which was the explicit and practical assertion of the exclusive Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ, his exclusive sovereignty in and over His Church, and her consequent independence of all state control. That was the great principle of the Church of Scotland. Now, they who accepted the royal Indulgences, plainly resiled from that principle. They made defection from the very constitution of the Church, and therefore it was upon *them* that the guilt of schism rested, and not upon the faithful few who determined to adhere to their principles, at all hazards. It is true that the former were the majority; but majorities never settle the morality of questions. The history of truth in its conflicts with error in past ages, demonstrates that on great moral questions, the majority has frequently been in the wrong. As well might a train of railway cars, that has been switched into the wrong track, cry schism to a single car that they could not drag with them into the wrong direction, as that the majority in the Church of Scotland, that had been switched off the right path by royal Indulgences, should try to fasten the odious epithets, exclusive, narrow-minded, schismatic, etc., upon Cameron, Cargill, Renwick, and their followers, who heroically resolved to keep in the track of the Covenant, even though it should lead them to the dungeon, the rack, and the scaffold.