

the history of the Church of Christ, and one of the greatest blessings to christianity, that has ever occurred; little was it supposed that in this sermon was laid the foundation of those auspicious movements by which a great number of the best of Scotland's ministers and people were led to shake off the unhal- lowed fetters of a civil establishment of religion, and originate the Free Church in a manner so honourable to themselves, and so gratifying to the friends of Christ in other scripturally constituted denominations. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth."

This sermon did not remain unanswered. In the *Christian Instructor*, then conducted by Dr. Andrew Thomson of Edinburgh, that celebrated and indefatigable champion of the evangelical party, it was reviewed a few months after its publication. The article was elaborate, and written with much plausibility. It was hailed by many in the Establishment as a suitable reply to Dr. Marshall. It was soon afterwards published in a pamphlet form, and widely circulated. The misrepresentations and sophistries in which it abounded were soon after ably exposed in some Letters in the *Glasgow Chronicle*, and in two learned and ingenious articles in the *Scots Times*. But after much hesitation Dr. Marshall himself felt that, from the importance of the subject, it was his duty to answer the Review more fully, and in a less fugitive form; and, therefore, not wishing to deal with an unknown writer, and regarding Dr. Thomson as responsible for anonymous papers in his Magazine, he published, in Dec. 1829, a long and energetic Letter to that individual on the subject of ecclesiastical establishments of religion. Even Dr. Thomson, it is said, felt its force, and could not answer it, because his conscience acknowledged the truth of its statements. As a specimen of its object and tenor we make the following quotation.

"Were it not that the subject is so very important,—were it not that at the present moment it is exciting so great a degree of interest among all classes of readers,—especially, were it not that the able discussions I have referred to, having only appeared in the columns of a newspaper, may possibly not soon reach some quarters where the *Christian Instructor* is read, I should certainly have consulted my ease, and entered no further into the controversy. Even when I do come forward, I wish it to be understood that the answering of your review is not my sole, nor my principal object. I would enter on a somewhat wider field,—I would perform a more important service to the great cause of truth and reason. Unequal as I may be to the task, I would examine the more essential points of difference between those called Churchmen, and those called Dissenters,—would expose the iniquity, as well as the folly of all human usurpation in matters of religion, and would exhibit in its true colours that system of anti-christianism, which has laboured so long, and with so much success, to destroy the distinction between the world and the church, and to forge chains for the understandings and the consciences of men.

"I am aware, indeed, of the consequences to which I expose myself: I am aware that you will be apt to deem your craft in danger: I am aware that the jealousy of your corporation will be awakened, and that if for your own credit you hide or repress the fiercer and less honourable passions, you will not fail to cry out against the attempt as a wicked one, dictated by envy, savouring of impiety, an unhallowed touching of the ark, a removing of the hedge from the vineyard of the Lord, so that the boar out of the wood may waste it, and the wild beast of the field devour it. I will, however, repel the charge: I will meet it with a broad and unqualified denial: I will assert as loudly, and as strongly as you can do, that you misrepresent me, and do me wrong. I will tell the public, to whom the appeal is made, and who are in general intelligent enough to perceive where the truth lies, that what I would touch is not sacred but profane,—not from heaven, but of men,—not sanctified by Divine authority, or even by utility, but solely by what has sanctified every ancient abuse—prejudice and time: and I will add that my aim is only to purge the temple, not to overthrow it,—only to cast out of it the buyers and sellers, and changers of