

Church, a reason for declining the union"? The United Secession, in that portion of her Testimony just quoted, very properly held up the Church of Scotland as responsible for the doctrines promulgated by her ministers. The United Secession had a similar responsibility for the doctrines promulgated by the ministers of her communion. The responsibility was shared by the Relief, when these two bodies became united with each other. The Presbyterian Synod of Nova Scotia, as adhering to the United Presbyterian Church, is involved in the same responsibility; and the Free Synod would have been placed in a similar predicament, by uniting with the Presbyterian Synod, on the terms which they proposed. Under that responsibility they very properly refused to place themselves.

The next sentence in the Letter of the Free Synod is, "If we look again to the Relief, with whom the United Secession are now associated, we find them agreeing with that body, but differing from us, in refusing to subscribe the Confession of Faith without qualification; at the same time also that their doctrine with respect to open communion is what we cannot concur in."

In 1752, Mr. Thomas Gillespie, minister at Carnock, was deposed by the General Assembly for refusing to take part in settling Mr. Richardson as minister at Inverkeithing, against the will of the people. In 1757, Mr. Thomas Boston, son of the celebrated Boston of Ettrick, gave in to his Presbytery his demission of the charge of the parish of Oxnam; and, in a state of separation from the Established Church, was settled in the pastoral charge of the people of Jedburgh, whose wishes had been disregarded in the settlement of Mr. Douglas as the parish minister. These two ministers agreed to assist each other in dispensing ordinances to such as might adhere to them in seeking relief from the grievance of Patronage, which had occasioned the separation of both from the National Church. The people of Colinsburgh were the first that applied to them for relief; and they gave them occasional service. That congregation built a meeting house, and chose as their pastor Mr. Collier, originally from Fife, but then settled in a charge among the dissenters of England. It was in 1761 that the "Presbytery of Relief" was first constituted, by Messrs. Gillespie and Boston with two elders.—Smith of Dunfermline, in his "Histori-

cal Sketches of the Relief Church," published in 1773, (p. 11), says, "After the presbytery was constituted by Messrs. Gillespie and Boston, with two elders who had been ordained in the Church of Scotland, the principles and constitution of the Relief Church were judicially declared; to which Mr. Collier, when admitted to be a co-presbyter, judicially adhered. The Presbytery required of him a solemn and public profession of his faith in God, his belief of the scriptures, his approbation of Presbytery, according to reformation principles, and his adherence to the constitution of the Church of Scotland, as exhibited in her creeds, her canons, confessions, and forms of worship. This profession he solemnly made unto the presbytery, before his people, and promised to abide by these, in subjection to his brethren. Thus the founders of the Relief Church, in a judicative capacity, solemnly and publicly declared their adherence to reformation principles, and the constitution of the new-testament church, as delineated by our worthy ancestors; a solemn profession of which principles, was then stated by the presbytery, and hath ever since been observed as the terms of admission."

This statement, and the fact that till a comparatively recent period the Relief body had no separate institution for training their theological students, but were satisfied that they should prosecute their studies in the Halls of the Establishment, would seem to warrant the belief that, at first, they maintained fully the principles of the Church of Scotland; and that they separated from her simply for the purpose which they themselves expressed, and which was understood to be indicated in the designation which they assumed, namely, that of giving relief from the grievance of Patronage. About twenty years ago, however, they agreed upon a set of regulations, in which, in at least a straight forward manner that contrasts favourably with the mode adopted by the New Light Seceders, they opened a door for those holding anti-establishment principles.—According to these regulations, it is provided that "previous to admission, said minister or preacher shall subscribe the Westminster Confession of Faith as a declaration of his faith, *except in so far as said confession recognises the power of the civil magistrate to interfere in religious concerns*" After considering the evidence which has been produced in pre-