

Most men see the absurdity of an appeal to authority in a question of principle; but there is a class with whom this objection finds favour. It may be disposed of in the same way as the former; for if it may be a duty to dissolve connection with a sinning Church, of which we cannot take upon us to decide that Christ himself has utterly renounced her, surely it may be equally a duty to do so, even if we cannot decide that all her great and good men have forsaken her. It proceeds, too, upon the absurd assumption that the duty of renouncing a Church is to be determined not by comparing her conduct with the Word of God, but by looking to the character of some of her members. On this principle, you might justify connection with almost any Church in which a portion of the truth is still retained, and even (at least at certain periods of her history), with the Church of Rome herself. The best of men are but fallible guides; the standard by which we are at length to be judged, is not the example even of the great and good, but the immutable principles of divine truth; and "to the law and to the testimony," is the only rule by which it is safe for us to walk. Besides, we would ask you, is it really so that the *great* and *good* of the Establishment are to be compared in respect of moral and religious worth with those of the Free Church; or that in the question at issue between them, the former really exhibited the characteristics of *great* and *good* men, as by the almost universal consent of Christendom is conceded in respect of the latter? There are two notorious facts of which you should be aware, and which ought not to be without significance to those who are fond of appealing to authority,—the first is, that the members of the Free Church consist of that Evangelical body, to whom the zeal and devotedness and general revival latterly manifested by the Church of Scotland were mainly owing,—the second is, that the bulk of the Establishment is composed of Moderates, and of renegade Free Churchmen. We leave you to say among which of these, the really great and good of Scotland are to be found; at the same time, if the standard by which you judge leads you to decide, that an alliance with the *great* and *good* of the latter body is preferable to an alliance with the great and good of the former, we can scarcely wonder that you should stick by the Establishment.

7. A seventh objection is, that whatever the sin of the Church of Scotland, the Synod, by asserting her independence (in the Declaratory Act introduced by Dr. Cook), freed herself from responsibility for that sin.

Were it necessary, we might prove to you that the Synod has never yet fully asserted her independence;—that the Establishment asserts that the connection of the Synod with her, is constitutional (a fact to which we have already adverted), and threatens to lay hold of her temporalities if it should be dissolved,—that many of the ministers of the Synod are at one with the Establishment in this view, and that the boasted "Declaratory Act" leaves the important question thus raised altogether un-