

omy. But I can scarcely think that he will get many of his brethren to commit themselves to that opinion. Now, *logically*, if a man shrink from Nos. I. and III., is there any refuge for him but No. II.?

The man who would wish to take a part of Nos. I. and II. would be so evidently illogical and without a principle that it is not necessary to spend time upon him. If he say he would punish *some things as sins simply* and not as crimes against the community, then he allows men to make a distinction where God has made none. It then comes to be a mere matter of opinion and caprice, if one sin as sin be punished while another in the same category goes free.

Let any man avow that he believes that in certain cases sin simply as sin altogether apart from its bearing upon human society is to be punished by civil pains and penalties, and he will be inevitably drawn to adopt the opinion of No. I. with all its consequences. There is no middle point, which I can see, between *all* and *none*.

There remains then No. II., and with that I believe ninety-nine hundredths of both Synods would agree, *as a general principle*. At the same time the adoption of that principle would not put an end to controversy in the question of practical legislation. Might there not, for instance, be a very keen discussion as to what constitutes a crime? and whether or not this evil or that evil is to be reckoned merely a sin, or something more? with many others of the same nature; and that *necessarily*, though a general principle be adopted that all political action should be in accordance with the Word of God, and that every Christian man is bound to oppose in every legitimate way every law of the community of which he is a member which goes contrary to the letter and spirit of the law of his God.

Now a plain question and I have done.

Would the Free Church dissentients, if constituted the Legislature, adopt opinion No. I. or II.?

If No. I. Are they prepared to take even the decalogue and enact every one of its prohibitions and requirements under civil pains and penalties? Would they put idolaters without the pale of toleration? Would they do the same with Romanists as image worshippers? and so on.

If they adopt No. II. Will they not find almost endless diversity of sentiment *among themselves* as to where the line should be drawn? A diversity such as should render them cautious about enquiry as to the opinion of United Presbyterians, not on the principle, but on one or two isolated cases of application, not more important than fifty others which could easily be mentioned, and not more defined by those who assume the office of Catechist.

Will Voluntaries on the other, tell me what they do more in receiving the 4th Article of the Basis than simply adopting No. II.? The more I consider the whole matter the more I am convinced that this is all the two Synods have done. It has been declared that all political action ought to be in accordance with the will of God as revealed