

sion of the Synod, described the preamble as a "cover to duplicity in the matter of a vow."

In point of fact, under the shelter of this preamble, as if it had altered the profession of the Synod to all the extent that Mr. Fraser's petition had prayed for, men avowedly holding voluntary principles were freely admitted to the pulpits, and pretended to be the legitimate descendants, of those men who had desired it to be carefully noted that they called themselves Seceders because, although separating from the Moderate majorities of their day, they firmly held by the principles of the Established Church of Scotland, and looked forward to the time when they might again be constituent members of her courts. Yet, with all this reality of change, the men whose principles prompted them to labour for the subversion of that national Church for the stability of which the most earnest prayers of the first Seceders had been offered up, could, at times, profess to be holding by the principles which the Secession had always held. When they had to deal with some of their own people, for instance, who were alarmed at the thought of a change of profession, or with the court of Session, who might adjudicate the property according as evidence might be presented of adherence to the original principles of the Secession, then the assertion was that the *preamble had effected no change*. Thus, in the "Statement of the Evidence that the Associate Synod, in their late transactions respecting the Formula, have not abandoned the original principles of the Secession," they say, "If it was an original principle of the Secession that compulsory measures ought to be used in religion, or, in other words, that force ought to be employed to compel men to adopt those opinions which we deem orthodox, then it must be acknowledged that the Synod have, by enacting the Preamble, changed their principles. But if this doctrine never was held by the Secession, then the declaration in the preamble is only an explicit assertion of a former tenet."

The attentive reader can have no difficulty in seeing that if, as is here asserted, the preamble did not effect any change in the profession of the body, but was only an explicit assertion of a former tenet, their anti-establishment principles continued as inconsistent with the Formula as they were when Mr. Fraser presented his petition—that Voluntaries have been using the preamble as a "cover to duplicity in the solemn matter of a vow," and have been acting in open deli-

ance of their obligation to follow out the design of the Secession. On the other hand, if the preamble brought the profession of the body into a consistency with Voluntarism, he must feel himself shut up to the conclusion that the New Light Burgher Synod deceived the Judge when they pretended to show evidence that no change of principle had taken place, and that they could have no right in equity to the property which was adjudicated to them on the alleged evidence that they still held by the original principles of the Secession. In either case, it is evident that Voluntaries should not have ventured, or venturing, should not have been permitted, to assume the guise and enter upon the possessions of Seceders.

The change was accomplished among the Anti-burghers by a different process. Among them, too, indeed, the favourers of the New Light disavowed all intention of departing from the original principles of the Seceders. In 1804, however, they agreed to a Narrative and Testimony in which, while they have the hardihood to say, (page 15) "They continue, as heretofore, to bear Testimony for the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government, of the Reformed Church of Scotland, and for the perpetual obligation of the Covenants, National and Solemn League," the Westminster Standards are received with very important qualifications upon the mode in which they were received both by the Church of Scotland and the original Seceders. Instances of this, which cannot now be quoted here at length, may be seen in pages 10, 12, 14, 198, of that Narrative and Testimony. They altered the questions also of their Formula; the result of which was that the Westminster Standards and the Covenants were professed to be received by them, not simply as they had been received by the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, or as they had been received by the original Seceders, but upon the principles explained in this new Narrative and Testimony. This led to the separation from that body of Professor Bruce of Whitburn, Dr. Mc-Crie, and some others, who, in 1806, in order to maintain the original principles of the Secession, formed themselves into a Presbytery called the Constitutional Associate Presbytery. Some of their brethren afterwards joined them, when, in 1820, the United Secession was formed by the union of the New Light Burghers and Anti-burghers—a union formed in such circumstances as held out no prospect of an early return to original Secession principles.

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FREE CHURCH COLLEGE, HALIFAX

Another Session of the College has been brought to a close. In the progress of it, 22 students were in regular attendance. Two of the students were in attendance in the Divinity Hall for the third, and seven for the first Session. The remaining thirteen, with