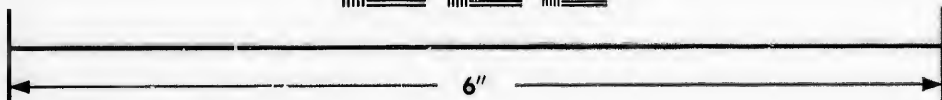
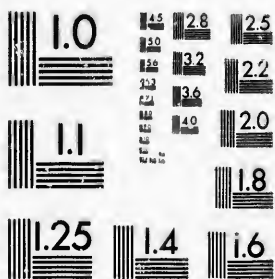
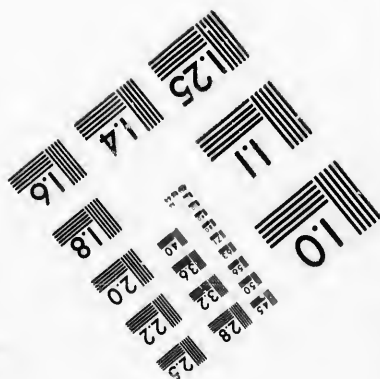
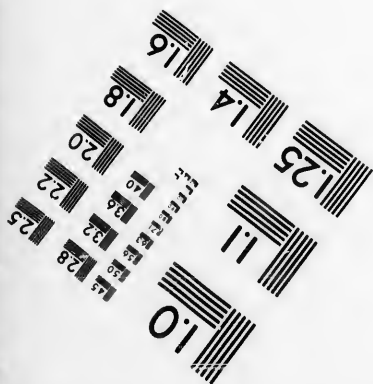


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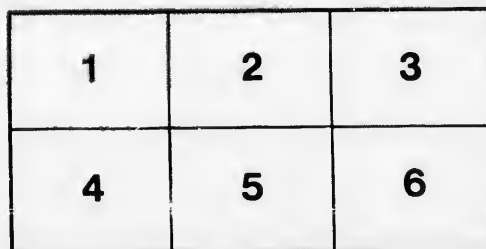
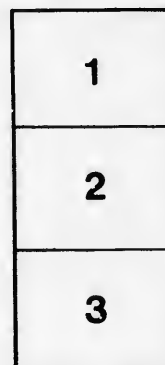
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TO

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PLAIN AND POPULAR EXPOSITION

OF THE

PRINCIPLES

OF

**VOLUNTARYISM,**

IN OPPOSITION TO THE MISAPPREHENSIONS OF THOSE  
WHO HAVE IMPUTED TO THEM AN  
INFIDEL TENDENCY;

BEING

AN HUMBLE ESSAY,

TO MEDIATE BETWEEN THE ADVOCATES AND ANTAGONISTS OF  
THE ESTABLISHMENT PRINCIPLE, AND TO PROMOTE  
GENERALLY THE CATHOLIC UNITY OF  
EVANGELICAL CHURCHES.

BY HENRY ESSON,

PROFESSOR OF MENTAL AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN KNOX'S COLLEGE, TORONTO.

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## EXPOSITION.

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The great importance of a final and happy settlement of the controversy between the advocates of the Establishment principle, as it has been termed, and those who are denominated Voluntaries, in order to promote peace, good will, and at least co-operative Union amongst the Evangelical Churches of the present day, will be readily confessed by all parties. At a crisis when the whole world has been thrown open to the enterprise of the Christian Missionary; and when Evangelical Churches are summoned to come, with all their combined strength and resources, to the help of the Lord against the mighty, what consummation can be more desirable than the extinction of those elements of contention and division which, while they are breaking the bond of charity at home, are at the same time inflicting a fatal paralysis upon those energies, which should all be concentrated and directed to the great work of carrying abroad, throughout the heathen world, the precious leaven of the glorious gospel. With an humble desire, and—as he trusts—with an unpresumptuous hope of promoting the holy cause of peace and union among Evangelical Churches, the author of this Essay humbly begs leave to submit to the christian public at large, some remarks and strictures tending to demonstrate that the differences between the two parties are rather apparent than real; and that when the principles announced on both sides are compared, duly estimated, and followed out to their legitimate and necessary consequences, these differences, however formidable in seeming, will be found to vanish—at least to shrink into insignificance, and the parties to be in fact substantially at one. In the fulfilment of the blessed office of peace-maker, which he is not conscious of having assumed, in any spirit of arrogance or self-sufficiency, he will first of all do his endeavour to obviate and remove certain misapprehensions, (for he will not permit himself to believe that there is, or can be, on either part, in this controversy, a spirit of wilful misrepresentation or uncharitable and illiberal misconstruction,) which appear to him to have been the occasion of doing great and grievous wrong to our voluntary brethren, and laid them open, most unjustly, as he deems, to the charge of holding doctrines that tend to social infidelity, and go, it is alleged, to set loose governments and nations, in their collective or corporate capacity, from all religious obligations.

The following exposition of the spirit and principles of the advocates of voluntaryism, as he apprehends them, he would fondly indulge the hope, may happily have some tendency, by God's blessing, to disabuse the minds of that portion of the christian community who, imposing upon themselves, or misguided by others,

have been betrayed into a false estimate of the doctrines of these brethren, the necessary consequence of which has been to produce a judgment of their character and principles extremely injurious and offensive. It were doing a grievous wrong to brethren who have unintentionally erred, to entertain a moment's doubt, that they will heartily rejoice to discover their error, (if such it be) and will hasten, with true christian candour and generosity, to confess the wrong which they have unwittingly done, and to the utmost of their power to repair it. Without farther preamble, therefore, we proceed to submit to their candid and favourable consideration, what we believe to be a faithful exposition of voluntary principles; and, to give greater clearness to this exposition, we shall take special care to define and elucidate some terms and phrases employed in the controversy, whose ambiguity may be regarded as the main source of all the entanglement and perplexity of this vexed question.

The grand pervading principle, then, of voluntarism, may be briefly summed up, in the statement, that *the cause of God and of divine truth, needs no foreign aid—repudiates, nay, disdains all connection and alliance with the powers and principalities and kingdoms of this world, and is mighty through God, in the power of his spirit, and through the energy of that word which is the sword of the spirit to subdue all things to himself*—"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabab thou shalt become a plain, and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying grace, grace unto it." This principle cannot be said to have even the appearance of contradicting the spirit or tenor of the Holy Scriptures, nor to involve in itself any element that is not worthy of the character, and honourable to the cause of that God whose ministers, organs, and instrumentalities, it might have been presumed, even prior to revelation and experience, would possess an inherent and absolute sufficiency for their destined ends. But, this principle—which we should hold him to be a rash man, who would venture to impugn or question, while it manifestly implies that no other powers or agencies, save those of God's word and spirit, can be regarded as necessary and essential, however he may condescend, in his all-wise providence, to employ them occasionally, as means and instruments—must, evidently, be understood to carry in it an utter condemnation of any connection or alliance that is unholy, corrupt and in its nature and character abhorrent, from that immaculate purity and inviolable sanctity, which are characteristic of all the ministers and organs and institutions of that God whose name—whose nature is holy.

The voluntary holds it to be utterly inconsistent with the nature of that truth, which is one of God's essential perfections, to put it under the patronage or protection of the powers and principalities

of a world that lieth in wickedness. It will not, assuredly, be contended, that God needs such allies and fellow-helpers; and it seems incompatible with his holiness, as well as with his omnipotence and all sufficiency, to presume that he could sanction any connection, fellowship, or confederation with that world whose friendship is declared in scripture to be enmity with God; nay, more—such communion seems to be stigmatised as adulterous. “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”—James, iv. 4. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and will walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people; therefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”—2 Cor. vi. 1—18. If we hold fast, consistently, to the grand fundamental doctrine of the Bible, that all men, since the fall, are dead in trespasses and sins, aliens from God, and enemies, by wicked works, it follows of necessity, that, before they can be capable of rendering any service acceptable to God, or beneficial to His Church, they must be raised up from the death of sin, must be born again, must be created anew, by the omnipotence of grace. Is it an unreasonable inference, an unscriptural doctrine, that it is dishonourable to God, and to his cause and work, to invoke or to accept, in any instance or degree the help or co-operation of such an ally? Is it not the doctrine of scripture, as well as of the Voluntaries, that the world and its kingdoms, and its princes are, by nature, until they are transformed by Almighty grace, in a state of enmity with God, and stand in an attitude of positive antagonism to His will and cause, and, therefore to his Church? “I have given them thy word,” is the language of our Lord, speaking of His disciples and of His Church on earth, “and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world even as I am not of the world; I pray not that thou shouldst take them out the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from evil.”—John xvii. 14, 15. “If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you; if you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”—John xv. 18, 19.

The Voluntary contends that, as a dead man cannot, until he is quickened into life, discharge any of the living functions, so, for the Church of the living God, to expect or seek any succour or service from the world, is "to seek the living among the dead." The doctrine of the Voluntary, in fine, is, make your dead men live, and then call upon them to perform the functions of life.—First, cure the dead palsy, the universal paralysis of sin, and, then call upon the subject *to walk* and *to work*. Give life to the dead stock of the tree, and then come and seek fruit on its branches. Governments and Legislatures are to Nations what the branches of a tree are to its trunk or living root. Make the tree good and its fruit will be good also. To reverse this order, is preposterous. Ponder well the scripture doctrine of the fall—Take more especially the Calvinistic statement of it—and then say, whether there be not a real palpable inconsistency, on the part of those, who expect and require the unregenerate and unconverted to come to the help of the Lord—to minister to the service of the Church, which is the body of Christ. For what communion hath Christ with Belial.

The first step in order, is to convert and evangelize the world,—this, exclusively, belongs to the church, whose grand commission is to "preach the gospel to every creature, turning men, every where, from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and satan unto the living God." The church has no other office or relation to the world than that of an antagonist—a conqueror—very different indeed from that of an ally or coadjutor. She is called to subdue "the enemies of the King," but, in this warfare, her weapons are not carnal, but spiritual. She is not permitted to sanction the intervention of the coarse instrumentalities of legal coercion, or physical force, or political agency of any kind. These would tend to frustrate and defeat the work of God, "whose thoughts are not our thoughts neither His ways our ways." Let the church then do her duty, and she will certainly realise the fulfilment of the promise; that "greater is he that is in and with her than all that can be against her—than all that is in the world." His grace shall be sufficient for her, His strength shall be made perfect in her weakness. Let her go forth into all the world, and call men everywhere in the name of Christ, to believe and live, and then only will the preaching of the various duties and functions of the Christian life, be something better than speaking to the dull cold ear of death. In fine, the mighty heresy, the *magnum mare* of voluntary unbelief, seems to be neither more nor less than the insisting upon the previous necessity of imparting faith or spiritual life to the souls of men of the world—men out of Christ—before we go on to exact from them the performance of any duties or services whatever to

the church, or to its Divine Head. It is palpably absurd to require from an unconverted world—from unregenerate men—any service, in the hope of its being acceptable to God, or propitious to the prosperity of true religion. It is absolutely inverting the order of reason and nature, as well as of the gospel revelation, whose language is “believe and live”—“believe and do”—“believe and profess;” but to reverse this order and say: first profess and then believe—recognize the Headship of Christ over the Church, and over the nations, before ye have known him whom the Father hath sent, or believed in him, and embraced him, as the one Mediator between God and man—is absurd—is a real practical contradiction. Here, let it be observed, lies the whole ground and stress of the heavy charge of social infidelity—of unchristianizing nations and rulers—that has very unwarrantably, and we must add, somewhat rudely and indecently, been thrown upon the voluntaries. Do they oppose the conversion of the world? Do they frown upon the cause of missions? Are they less zealous than their brethren, who hold to the Establishment principle, in seeking to win souls to Christ? Is this the *magnam* *mare* of their infidelity, that they believe that the Gospel of Christ is *the power*, as well as *the wisdom* of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth? That its own spiritual energy and the mighty power of God’s Spirit working *therein, therewith, thereby*, is able exceeding abundantly to overcome the world—to become more than victorious over it and all the enemies of Christ? That its own spiritual armoury is an exhaustless magazine of itself, abundantly sufficient for the achievement of its final and universal triumph? Convert the princes, rulers, and lawgivers of this world, and then, but not till then, expect them to become true and trustworthy protectors and patrons of the Church. The kings and rulers, the states and parliaments, of this world, must first be made kings and priests unto God and His Christ, before they can be accepted or trusted as the nursing fathers of the Church. To invite or accept their patronage in their unconverted state, what is it but to commit the sheep to the tender mercies of the wolves,—to give the lion and the leopard the nursing of the calf, or the dandling of the kid—in fine, to open the fold to the strongest and fiercest of the beasts of prey?

The voluntary confidently appeals to the testimony of history and experience, since the world began, and enforces the argument from scripture, by setting before our eyes, in connection therewith, innumerable examples of the miserable and melancholy degradation, corruption and spiritual ruin of all the churches, from the Apostolic age downwards, which have stood in confederation with the state, or, in any form and degree, have entered into covenant

and communion with the world, and the powers of the world, thereby confounding the eternal and immutable distinction between the *things that are Christ's* and the *things that are Caesar's*. Shall the ministers of God accept the wages of their Heavenly Master's service from the ministers, the minions of mammon, and the very rankest votaries of the God of this world? Does the Voluntary verily unchristianize nations, and give to their rulers and legislators a dispensation from all moral and religious ties, in their public and official capacity, because he denounces such intercourse and traffic between the church and the world, that is between God and mammon, as unhallowed, as unblessed—as what *will not*, and *cannot come to good*—as what *must*, sooner or later, draw down upon all who practice or countenance it, the righteous judgments of God? Among those who are most forward to condemn the voluntary doctrines, and most vehement and unsparing in their vituperation of their authors and abettors, there are not a few who do not hesitate to avow the opinion, that it is lawful and right to receive endowments from any state or government, whatever may be its character or creed, provided it will consent to grant to them these aids and endowments on their own terms. They shrink not from holding out their hands to receive their wages, in the service of God and of His Church, from the children of this world—the veriest votaries of mammon! and why not then from mammon himself? Does such a one presume to arraign a voluntary brother, saying “brother let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye: when lo! a beam is in his own eye?” Can we suffer the avowal of such principles to pass uncensured—uncondemned? Are they to be held as scriptural and orthodox, while the much maligned voluntary is loaded with the most odious charges of social infidelity, and anti-christian principle and practice? The world is far too enlightened in our day to endure such a procedure—to tolerate such inconsistency—not to say iniquity.

Again, the voluntary is most unjustly accused, as it appears to us, of divesting the magistrate or state of all religious responsibility, because he protests against the right of the magistrate, to make *his own conscience the test or standard*, by which the creed and conduct of other men are to be tried, in all that belongs to religion. Upon a close and careful enquiry, it will be found, that, when the advocates of the establishment principle, have settled in their own minds, what is due to the rights of conscience, and what is the measure of the magistrate's competency to direct and guide men in the way of truth in matters—either human or divine, he will find himself, if he ponder well the matter, shut up within the same identical limits, as the voluntary; he will be constrained rigorously to confine the magistrate in the exercise of his official

powers, whether as maker or as administrator of the law,—within such limits, as are compatible with the rights of conscience, or even with the rights, as they have been absurdly and insultingly styled, of *toleration*; as if, forsooth, the most sacred and inviolable right and prerogative of man, that of choosing his own religious creed and worship, and judging and determining for himself, in all matters pertaining to God and conscience, were things that could be left to the tender mercies of rulers spiritual or political—as if what God hath given to all men, as his best and most perfect gift, might be taken from him at the simple nod of any petty minion or tool of the powers and principalities of this world. The magistrate indeed is bound for himself—by his own conscience—which to him, though to no other man, is a law divine—a supreme authority—to conform in all things to the will and the word of God. Most true it is that the magistrate is bound to receive and believe the Bible, as the word of God, and to live in conformity with its lessons; but this gives him not any warrant whatever, for making *his own conscience a canon or standard* to others. The confusion of thought in regard to this essential distinction, observable throughout the whole of this controversy, is quite sufficient to account for all the apparent differences, which have arisen on this point, between the contending parties. Religion has its seat and sphere in the heart and in the soul. It cannot therefore come within the cognizance or jurisdiction of any human tribunal. God alone is the Lord of conscience. To God alone are we responsible in all matters of conscience. To say that no law-giver, no magistrate, no man has a right or an obligation to give law to conscience, or exercise authority over it, is no more than to assert the simple fact or truth, that he is quite incompetent to be a judge here. This is the sole but incommunicable prerogative of God, who says to man, “judge not at all,” “there is one lawgiver that is able to save or destroy; who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth.” Even the Church is incompetent to take cognizance of *sins*. The only proper object of her jurisdiction is *scandals*, and all christians, who are not chargeable with the heresy of Erastianism, will absolutely interdict and jealously exclude the civil power from taking cognizance of even the latter; while both church and state are equally destitute of any competency to judge the heart, or in other words, to take cognizance of sins. Civil wrongs, lying within the province of the magistrate, and scandals or heresies, lying within the province of the church, are overt acts—are, in fact, *essentially*, outward signs and manifestations, and therefore, as things external and palpable, fall within the sphere of human jurisdiction, because they are within the sphere of human competency to observe

them and to judge concerning them. The only duty of the magistrate in regard to religion is, just to protect the rights of *conscience* in the same way as he does the rights of person, property, family, reputation ; and, as the rights of conscience are the most sacred and invaluable of all human rights, he is bound to watch over them, more especially, with a jealous and unremitting vigilance. Now, were he empowered or authorised to control or to coerce conscience, he would, in fact, be armed with a power and warrant to subvert and destroy the very right, which it is his most sacred and bounden duty to guard and to preserve inviolate.

The rights and interests of true religion require, first of all, that the magistrate shall not use or suffer to be used, against that conscience, which God hath made free of all responsibility, save to himself, the law and power of the State : on the other hand, all the authority of the civil power ought to be enlisted in defence and vindication of freedom of conscience, or religious liberty. The magistrate and lawgiver, then, have this authority and no more, to let conscience and what pertains to conscience *alone*, that is, *free from any dictation or prescription of their own*, and most vigorously to repel and punish any attempt, on the part of others, that would dare to offer violence to this holiest temple, and most inviolable sanctuary beneath the skies. If the rulers of States have any call, or feel any obligation, to influence and sway the consciences of their subjects, then must they descend from their high places to address them, not in their capacity as Rulers, not in the language of authority or power, as Legislators or Governors, but, with all lowliness and meekness, as fellow-men and fellow-sinners, whom in the spirit of love and humility, they would save and bless, by the *only* use of those weapons, which are not carnal but spiritual, not of earthly but of heavenly temper—mighty, therefore through God to cast down the strongholds of sin and Satan. But in this case it is clear, that the magistrate acts, and must act—not in his public but in his private capacity—not as a magistrate, but as a man—descending from his official elevation to the level of the humblest brother of the race, whose edification and salvation it is his object to further. The magistrate's duty, in fine, begins and ends in preserving the most absolute freedom of conscience to the humblest of his subjects, this being, as it were, the very element in which alone true religion lives and has her being and well-being. The service of God is a reasonable service, it is perfect freedom, and any coercion of law, or intervention of human power and force, is excluded entirely, universally and irreversibly from its province.

The law and the government of men, have nothing to do with religion and conscience, but to ensure and perpetuate to all *equal*

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liberty to think, believe, speak, act and worship as they may be disposed by their own judgement and conscience—to admit no other influence to be employed in these matters, than persuasion and conviction. This is just, in other words saying, that the magistrate has no competency, no commission to legislate for conscience, to direct it and prescribe to it. What in reality is the difference between this statement and that of the voluntaries, who, expressing the same proposition in other, but equivalent terms, maintain that religion, properly so called, does not come within the province of the ruler and lawgiver? Surely it must be granted, that what lies beyond his power, his competency, his commission, it is not his duty to meddle with. Possibility and liberty are the measures so far of obligation. Nay more, give the magistrate in any degree, power to tamper with conscience, to regulate faith and worship, and there is no bound to the usurpation and tyranny which must ensue. He is under such temptation to abuse this power, which is altogether unfit to be deposited in the hands of a creature so frail and corrupt as man, that politico-spiritual tyranny, the last and worst form of oppression, will be the inevitable result.

Nothing could be devised more effectual to desecrate the ordinances of God, than to allow of the intervention of the civil power in the regulation of them. Witness the *Test Act*, a statute of the British Parliament only recently abolished, which compelled all men who were promoted to any high offices of trust or power, to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, according to the forms of the Church of England, as a pledge of their attachment to the Protestant religion and constitution of their country. When the ordinances of God are made human ordinances, they cannot fail to become worse than "salt without the savour," *but that perversion of the best things which, according to the common proverb, becomes the worst.* If all the laws and ordinances of the Bible were thus to be enrolled and incorporated with the civil laws of the land, it would amount to a corruption of religion so gross and abominable, as to be almost worse than its entire subversion, or its utter extinction. Something like this, we believe, has been produced in Sweden, by the confounding of the distinct provinces of the word and law of God and that of man. No wonder that the word and ordinances of God, under such monstrous perversion, become to their abusers—not "the spirit" that quickeneth, but the "letter that killeth"—not the savour of life unto life, but of death unto death. If it be a heinous offence to put asunder what God hath joined together, it is not less so to join together what God hath put asunder. But it may be said, if the magistrate is not to take order for the protection and furtherance

of religion, if he is not to make provision for the religious education of youth, if he is not to enforce the sacred observance of the Sabbath, if he is not to suppress errors, heresies, sins, and *all other impieties*, as well as *blasphemy*, what shall become of the truth of God, and the cause of Christianity itself? We answer—all this is, or ought to be, the care and business of the Church, and especially of its pastors and office-bearers. They have powers from God, suitable and sufficient for this great work—the word of God, the *promised guidance of His Holy Spirit—its divine and infallible interpreter, the ministers and office-bearers of the church, and all the provision of outward means and ordinances*. Let the christian parent do his duty as head, ordained by the law of God and nature, *of the Church, in the house*, “to train up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,” diligently teaching them to know, and to love His holy word, to hallow His Sabbath, to revere His sanctuary. Let his children from their childhood, like Timothy of old, be made familiar with the Holy Scriptures, “*which are able to make them wise unto salvation*,” and the faithfulness of God is pledged that his labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Next, let the Pastor, Elders, Deacons, Office-bearers of the Church do their duty, within the larger sphere of the congregation, or flock, as fathers and guardians of the household of faith, or family of Christ. *By the preaching of the word—by the stated dispensation of ordinances—by the exercise of discipline—by the frequent visitation of families and households—by the careful instruction of the young and the ignorant—*effectual provision will be made for maintaining and promoting pure and undefiled religion, in the hearts and in the homes of the people. There yet remains another powerful agency that may be called into operation, viz: Voluntary Associations of the people of God, uniting and co-operating in furtherance of this cause, bringing all their collective wisdom, influence, energies and resources to bear upon the mighty work of the world's evangelization, and upon every work of faith and labor of love. This new agency is beginning to manifest, even in its early and incipient stage, results which give large promise of greater things yet to be accomplished through its instrumentality. These Associations which have been in our day so rapidly multiplied, and in all departments of human enterprise have achieved great things, are most legitimate and suitable organs to be set at work in the Christian world. They are such, as God, it may confidently be expected, will own, approve, and bless—His own work, undertaken and conducted by His own servants, in the spirit of faith, in conformity with His will, and under the directing light of His word, cannot fail to receive abundant

blessing, and to be eminently prosperous. Some of them, such as Bible and Tract Societies, and Home and Foreign Missions, have already wrought out great and even magnificent results, and with the progress of time and experience, are daily developing new powers and earning new triumphs.

Such are the only legitimate, the only suitable and effective means, organs, and agencies, to be employed in all that pertains to the service of God, to the edifying of the body of Christ, and the conversion of the world. These agencies and instruments are appropriate to the work of God and the service of His Church. They are not of the will of man, but of God—not of the wisdom of the flesh, but of the spirit—not in the spirit of the carnal policy of the states and kingdoms of this world, but of that wisdom of God, which to the world is foolishness. God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, &c.—1 Cor. chap. i. 27—29. All this manifold and mighty agency, the much-misrepresented or misunderstood Voluntary has in his contemplation, when he contends that states, and magistrates, and legislators, are not meet to be employed, in that work of God, which is immediately and directly committed to the Church, and in which none may take part but the true Israel—the spiritual Levites—the Priests, the sons of Aaron, having the call and the unction of the Holy One. It is for them to carry the ark of the Lord, and to bear the vessels of the sanctuary. Let no Uzzah, with profane hand, touch the ark of God. No Ahabs be associated in league, council and covenant, with the Jehoshaphats, whom God calls and commissions to be the nursing fathers of His Church. "Let the dead bury their dead, come thou and follow me," is the language of the call which the Lord himself addresses to a would-be disciple, emphatically indicating the essential and immutable distinction between the Church and the world, analogous to that between the dead and the living. "What shall I do," says the advocate of the State Church Establishment, "What shall I do for the hundred talents of silver?" To this the Voluntary replies, in the language of the man of God, "The Lord is able to give thee much more than this." Let the magistrate in his own place, at a distance, without any intrusion into the proper province and business of the Church, shield and protect her from all external violence, give her full scope for the developement and exercise of her own spiritual powers, and she will flourish and prevail, just in proportion as she is thus left unincumbered with the world's help—just as she ceases from her own wisdom and the wisdom of man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and withholding from the world and the flesh all hope and confidence, rests and relies solely and supremely on the riches of promised grace, on the all-sufficiency of her Divine Head, and the

infinite freeness and fulness of the Gospel salvation. All that the Church has to ask of the State is, not to hinder in any way her own free and proper action. She scarcely needs to invoke the aid or patronage of the powers of the world, whose communion and influence are sure, as all experience and history testify, to corrupt her purity, to weaken her power, and to mar her working; in fine, to prove to her at best, what Saul's armour was to David, a *cum-brou constraint*. The Voluntary contends that States and Governments are not ordained for the same ends as the Church. The two ordinances, though both of God, are diverse in their nature, ends, powers, functions, &c. They are not made to move in the same orbit—neither may they interchange organs or functions. To mix or confound, is to destroy them. They move parallel to each other. Keep them distinct and at a distance, and, like two planets, moving in their several orbits round a common sun and centre, they are mutually propitious in their action and influence. Attempt to change their sphere, or to conjoin them, and nothing can be more fatal or portentous than the collision which must ensue. Again, to vary the comparison—as the functions, organs, and whole constitution of the body, are different in nature from those of the soul—though they both work harmoniously to a common end, and each moving in its own sphere, discharging its own functions, and obeying its own laws, contributes to the common good of both—so, those of the State are diverse in their nature from those of the Church, but are made, through the wise appointment of that God whose ordinances they both are, to conspire for the advancement of their common well-being and of the common end. This illustration may help us to understand how the good of both the Church and the State is best served and secured by keeping each distinct and independent—by not suffering them to exchange their spheres or functions, or to confound or commix their proper operations or influences. They are, by their very nature, incapable of being made one, or of even moving together in the same sphere.

The Voluntary Magistrate may, on his own principles, undertake to do all that the consistent and enlightened advocates of the Establishment principle can require, if, on their side, they hold fast to their own principles respecting liberty of conscience, and especially their anti-erastian views in relation to the spiritual independence of the Church. The Christian magistrate, first of all, is under a supreme obligation to take the word of God as his only guide, in all that pertains to the regulation of his own heart and life. Viewing religion subjectively, that is, so far as it pertains to his own character and conduct, it claims and commands the absolute obedience and subjection of the whole man to its author.

rity. But viewed *objectively*, as it regards the consciences of the subjects of his authority, the case is widely different. Here his duty is neither to allow himself to interfere with the rights of conscience, nor to suffer any infraction of them on the part of others. His great duty in the sight of God and man, is to extend that protection *to conscience*, which he affords to *person, property, reputation, &c.* To require of the magistrate, to make the word of God the supreme rule and standard of his own principles and actions, is *altogether reasonable and right*. Here there is no more room for any limitation or compromise. But to require of him to incorporate its holy precepts and ordinances, with the laws and statutes of human enactment, or to enforce, by his official authority, the reception of the Bible, as the word of God, or the sanctification of the Sabbath, or the religious observance of any Divine ordinances, were infinitely unreasonable and absurd. To such a requisition, the answer of an enlightened magistrate would just be that of Gallio to the Jews,—“I will be no judge of such matters,” or that of our Lord in a different sense,—“man, who made me a ruler or a judge”—(of conscience)—over you—I have neither right, nor warrant, nor sufficiency for such a task. It is *the province, it is the prerogative of God, and not of man*. It were just to lead the magistrate out of his own province, into that which is proper to the Church and its ministers. It were just the converse of the error of Churches and their courts and ministers, when they encroach on the civil power or usurp its prerogative. The duty of the magistrate to provide for the religious education of the young, as contended for by the opponents of Voluntaryism, may be allowed, *on their own condition*, that is, so far as may be consistent with their own principle of maintaining the sacred rights of the individual conscience, of the personal responsibility of every soul to God, in all that pertains to religion and morals, and with the no less sacred right, *as they also hold*, which the God of nature has given to parents, committing to them, as His earthly vicegerents, the *chief*, if not the *exclusive* responsibility of watching for the souls of their offspring, as those who must give an account unto God. Let them say what it is competent for the magistrate to do in the matter of religious education, without coming into collision with the ordinance of God, that the child shall be trained up in that way, which the parent and not the magistrate shall prescribe; and we may consent to surrender into the hands of Cæsar and his ministers, what residue there may be of power unappropriated—unpreoccupied by the natural guardians of the child. This might possibly be admissible in the case of a deserted or utterly friendless child,—the state comes naturally into the place of the parent or guardian. The inevitable conclusion is here again forced upon us, that

the power of the magistrate, in the matter of religious education, is confined to the simple duty of guarding the right of parents, to bring up their children in their own faith and principles, leading us back at once to the general inference, that religion, properly so called, lies altogether out of the sphere of the civil magistrate. This is the sum and substance of all that the magistrate has to do—because it is all that he is able or sufficient to do—because it is all that we dare trust him to do, without incurring the certainty of forfeiting our dearest rights, as men, and of subjecting ourselves to the worst form, and most extreme degree of oppression and tyranny.

The Voluntary holds that *we begin entirely at the wrong end*, when we require the Legislature and Government of a State to protect and patronize the cause of God and His truth, by civil statutes, royal ordinances, public acts of national covenanting, or in any other way mixing up with the laws and commandments of men, the holy precepts and Divine ordinances of God. This unnatural and profane confusion of things, as far asunder as heaven and earth, would have shocked the sense of Pagan antiquity.

—“Fuit hæc sapientia quondam  
Publica privatis secernere ; *sacra profanis.*”

It seems to be overlooked by the advocates of state connection, in some of their reasonings, that there can be no transacting between God and the soul of man, in the concerns of religion, that is not *strictly personal, exclusively individual*. There can be no admission of proxies, in our intercourse with that dread Being with whom we have to do—no vicarious substitution of one man for another,—“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.”—1 Timothy ii. 5. Nothing can be done in the court of conscience by representation—every one must appear here in person and answer for himself. Every soul must covenant with God—none can covenant for his brother—“as none can, by any means, redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.” A Nation, according to the Voluntary, hath not *one* soul, or *one* conscience, except in a figurative sense, any more than it hath *one* body. The conscience of the nation can only mean, therefore, the collective sum of the consciences of its constituent members—the individual, independent souls of its population. The responsibility of the nation, means just the responsibility of all its members, rulers, and subjects, each for himself. Where there is no conscience, there neither *is*, nor, in the nature of things, *can* possibly be *any* responsibility. A nation covenants with God, when every soul, by and for itself, transacts with God solely and entirely in its own behalf. A nation in like manner becomes Christian, when all, individually, have received Christ, as

He is freely offered in the Gospel. But this blessed consummation is not and cannot be effected, or even aided or promoted in the smallest degree, by parliamentary statutes and ordinances. Vows and covenants between God and man must, in the very nature of the thing, be *personal and individual transactions*. No man can enter into covenant with God by putting forth his hands, along with a promiscuous multitude, to subscribe to the mere form, or dead letter, of a written covenant or compact. Such a procedure is unwarrantable, unscriptural; nay more, is a snare and a trap, tempting men to incur the guilt of hypocrisy, formality, perjury, blasphemy,—“but unto the wicked, God saith, what hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant into thy mouth.” National covenanting is only scriptural and acceptable to God, when it is a transaction between the individual souls, of which that nation is constituted, and God,—any thing else is utterly anti-scriptural and abominable. Any statutes, therefore, of Parliament, Canons of Churches, or Ecclesiastical Councils, that would enjoin a promiscuous covenanting of all the people of the nation, would involve the necessary evil of tempting men to incur the guilt of a formal, hypocritical, perfidious mockery of God—scandalizing the world, by the exhibition of infidels and profligates becoming parties to a religious covenant.

The duty of the recognition of Christ's headship, by men in their national capacity, or as members of a commonwealth, placed under God's ordinance of civil government, implies a recognition of Christ as mediator and as God; in other words, implies *a belief in Christianity*, or, which is more, if it be of any worth, the true faith of a Christian; and where such belief or faith exists, it *will and must* be followed by the due recognition of Christ's headship in this twofold relation, as its proper fruit. But to say that it is a duty to recognise what is not believed, and still more, what is not known nor apprehended, is palpably absurd—is a contradiction in terms. There can be no rational recognition of Christ's headship over the Nation or over the Church, that does not presuppose that the majority of the people have, individually and personally, received and embraced Christ as their Saviour; and if this be so—if even the majority are in this blessed state, it is impossible that the nation shall not make the recognition in question, in the only way in which it can be acceptable to God, or indeed not absolutely abhorrent to his nature and revealed will: nay, more, all its acts and laws and administrations, if the spirit of the nation be *truly and thoroughly Christian*, will and must be so too, for, “make the tree good and its fruit will be good also.” To invert this order is to seek good fruit from a corrupt tree. Now, how is this consummation to be effected? Is there any other scriptural, or even

rational course and order, in which it can possibly be wrought out, than just that of establishing Christianity, or rather implanting the power of *faith and godliness* in the hearts of all the subjects and citizens, by the gracious co-operation of the spirit of God, with the faithful preaching of the Gospel, and other agencies and means proper to the kingdom of Christ. The Voluntary does not believe that Acts of Parliament or Royal Decrees, will avail to do even the smallest part of the work of God; they will be found as *impotent to convert a single soul* as to evangelize a nation; and just because they are unequal to the former, is it utterly hopeless to expect that they will accomplish the latter. If they cannot do that which is least, how can they do that which is greatest? He confidently believes that the only way in which a Nation can be christianised, is that which God hath appointed—namely, the outward means and ordinances, accompanied by the operation of the Spirit of God, and that word which is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword; and he believes that this glorious transformation, thus effected, will pervade with Christian influences, all the public acts and administrations of that Nation; yea, what is more, will christianize its whole spirit and nature. He does not hold that a formal act of national covenanting, or an incorporating with the public law of the ordinances and offices of religion, will be anything better than a dead letter, or rather, the letter that killeth and deadeneth. But if the people, personally and individually, are in deed and in truth brought into covenant with God in Christ, then, but not till then, he is persuaded will they collectively, in their civil and political capacity, manifest in all their doings, as a nation, that they are Christ's, and have learned of Him. The duty of the civil magistrate is ascertained and defined by the constitution and law of the land, and by that alone. He is a trustee *expressly*, or at least *virtually*, according to the true spirit and intent of his office, for the people of that nation whom he represents—whose minister he is or ought to be. He has no other option or alternative than that of accepting or declining the trust which they commit to him. If he accept that trust, he is bound by every law of God and man faithfully to discharge it; and if occasions arise, in which his conscience is offended or violated, his only course is, to abdicate the office. As a lawgiver, he must legislate according to the religion and constitution—as an administrator or executor of the law, he is bound to abide by its fair and impartial interpretation.

Let us now ask, which of these views and principles, as set forth in apposition with each other, would be most likely to serve the cause of religion, to promote the glory of God, and to ensure the speedy and universal triumph of the Gospel. Suppose, at this day,

that all the States and Governments of the world were "to take order, that the truth of God, (as understood and held by them severally,) be kept pure and entire,\* is it doubtful what would be the consequence?—Brahmanism, Buddhism, Mahommedanism, Popery, Erastianism, Puseyism, would certainly be mighty gainers; but let the advocates of state connection themselves say, what true religion would reap, as the fruits of this principle, reduced to immediate and universal practice. Suppose, on the other hand, that the principle of the non-interference of the magistrate with religion, were universally acted upon, so that he should have nothing to do with the consciences of his subjects, except to secure to them perfect freedom, and to give full scope to truth and right, to run and have free course to be glorified, then would China, Japan, India, and all Pagan, Mahommedan, and Popish nations, be opened to the beneficent influences of knowledge, science and civilization, and above all, to the light of the glorious Gospel. Then "many would run to and fro, and knowledge would increase"—the heralds of the cross would find everywhere a wide and effectual door opened to them—a free and abundant entrance would be secured for truth, human and divine,—"*magna est veritas et prevalebit.*" If *practice* and *experience* be the best test of truth, is it questionable to which of those principles, now under review, the preference is to be given? Enough we deem, perhaps our readers will deem more than enough, has been already advanced, to enable the candid, unbiassed, intelligent Christian to judge for himself, how far the views of our Voluntary brethren have been *justly appreciated or fairly represented.*

It does appear somewhat unaccountable, if there be any truth in the exposition which we now venture to submit to the Christian public, that on the side of those who have come forward to impugn the doctrines of Voluntaryism, and even some of those who had been nominated by our Church to represent her in the joint committee of the Presbyterian and United Presbyterian Churches, for negotiating a Union, there have been manifested a tone and air of magisterial authority, and a strain of vehement invective, and severe crimination, unbecoming the humility, meekness and courtesy of Christian brethren, and certainly very unpropitious to the cause which had been entrusted to their Christian wisdom and prudence. On this painful and perilous subject we forbear to dwell at any length, but content ourselves with some general observations tending to conciliate better feeling. There are few men, we presume to think, that will not admit that there is reasonable ground, both from scripture and experience, to conceive some doubt of the lawfulness and expediency, not only of an incorporaf-

\* See Confession of Faith, 23rd chapter.

ing union, but of any formal connection whatever between the Church and the State; the latter being a part, and certainly not the best part, of that unregenerate world, of which it is declared in Scripture that it lieth in wickedness, and must therefore continue incapable of any union with the Church, or communion with the people of God, until the advent of the Millennial age, when "all old things shall have passed away, and all things shall become new." In the meantime, however, all our reasonings must be based on the state and character of the world and of the Church, as they now are, and not as they ought to be, or as they are destined, in the purpose of God, to become in the latter day. There is nothing, therefore, in the nature of the question, *a priori*, to warrant any severity of censure. Nay, we do affirm that those ministers and members of the Free Church, whether in Scotland or Canada, who plead the cause of Establishments, are open, to say the least, to the *suspicion* of not sufficiently recognising the scripture distinction between the Church and the world, so emphatically and importunately pressed on our attention in the inspired record. By the very fact of their recently having broken the bond, which, during so long a period, had connected them with the State, they are naturally exposed to this suspicion; nay more, we hesitate not to add, that they have good reason to be jealous over themselves, lest, through the deceitfulness of the human heart, and through the force of that habit which, when long continued, becomes a second nature, they may still be in some measure under the influence of lingering and long cherished prejudices, which are said to adhere to the mind of which they have once got fast hold with obstinate tenacity (*pigris rascidibus*.) Which of the parties, we would ask, appealing to all candid and competent judges, most needs, in the present instance, the exercise of Christian forbearance, of candid and even indulgent consideration? The party who had protested a hundred years ago against patronage and intrusion, and whose secession antedates our disruption a full century; or those who, compared with them, are but as men of yesterday? for it is but yesterday, as it were, since the Free Churches, both in Scotland and in Canada, earned that significant and honourable name, of which we pray that their future character and course may never prove them unworthy, and won their triumphant emancipation, from a bondage, which themselves have characterized and described, in terms of severest condemnation; but, nevertheless, it cannot be denied, that it is only within a very recent date, that they made the discovery of all the evils of patronage, intrusion; and that yoke of crastianism, under which, it is now acknowledged, the Church of Scotland had laboured for nearly a century and a half, without making any vigorous effort to achieve her

freedom; and is it to be wondered then, that those who have come out only at the eleventh hour, should not all at once obtain credit for the possession of a perfect enlightenment, in their views, or a perfect purification of their principles? It is a rare felicity indeed, for frail human nature to be translated from a state of protracted darkness, into the full possession and *clairvoyance* of evangelical truth and liberty.

Granting that our Voluntary brethren may, in some instances, have been carried a little too far in the opposite direction, it may be fairly asked, which of these extremes is most dangerous? and to which is frail and fallen man by the pravity of his nature most prone? When some of our most eminent ministers are heard to avow their readiness to accept of State endowment, so soon as they can obtain it on their own terms, and others in defiance of the Church's decided prohibition, have sought, and obtained, pecuniary aid from the State, and though censured and condemned, still persist to retain the boon,—is it to be wondered that our Voluntary brethren are tempted to doubt the soundness, or at least the strength of our principles, and to mistrust our new-born zeal? Is it uncharitable to conclude that our late detachment from State connection, has been literally a *Disruption* not unlike to that of the fragment torn from a mass of rock, and precipitated in an Alpine avalanche, and that now when we are in the wilderness, and the first triumph of our exodus out of Egypt has spent all its excitement, we begin to long for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and would fain find a fair occasion to make a graceful retreat? We cannot suppress our feelings,—we will not dissemble our conviction, that if our brethren on the voluntary side are good natured enough to exercise forbearance towards us in regard to the points of difference, we can well afford to reciprocate their generous confidence, and accord to them some portion of that indulgence which we need to crave largely for ourselves.

“Hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.”

For our own part, we have always regarded the event of our disruption from all connection with a State-endowed Church, as a glorious prelude to a new era, to a new instalment of Christian liberty and evangelical catholicism. We should set a very slight value, indeed, upon the testimony and protest of either the Mother Church in Scotland, or of the daughter in Canada, were we to perceive either the one or the other beginning to falter and equivocate and halt between two opinions—in regard to a system, which has uniformly, and without one solitary exception, proved as fatally corrupting to the Church as it is burdensome and embarrassing to the State—a system, it seems to us, fraught with endless boundless mischief to civil society, engendering and embittering

political discord, popular discontent and disaffection, and while it operates with a deadly and malign influence to blight, to secularize, and in a manner to unchristianize the Churches on whom the heavy curse of State patronage may have fallen, it necessarily creates, and so long as it is suffered to exist, will inevitably foment and propagate and perpetuate, throughout the whole community, the most rancorous and disorganizing passions—those, namely, that are bred out of the double fermentation of political and sectarian animosity. We hailed with grateful delight and confident hope this separation of our Church from all connection with a system, which threw us far asunder from our best and most natural friends and allies, and more especially the brethren of the United Secession Church, who are identified with ourselves in all that relates to doctrine, discipline and worship, and with whom, if there be any truth in the views now set forth, we have no differences, that are not merely nominal and evanescent. We frankly own that we have no sympathy, no community of feeling, with those who are filled with doubts and scrupulosities as to the issue of the Union, which is now being negotiated between the sister churches. We cannot conceive what solid grounds any man can have to warrant his opposition, or even his indifference, to a cause, the successful issue of which could not fail to be eminently conducive to the prosperity, temporal and spiritual, of the two religious communities, while we have not the least perception of danger attending it. We believe it is a fact which none will dispute, that the congregations of each of these Churches are made up of the same mixed elements—that it would be impossible to point out any feature of essential difference either in the composition of their congregations, or the quality of the members. We do not believe that any one will presume to arrogate for the Clergy of the one Church, as a body, any superiority either in literature, piety, or general soundness of faith, over the other. No possible deterioration, therefore, is to be apprehended as the result of the contemplated Union. There is nothing that can be urged of any weight against it—every thing, in a word, pleads for it. True it is, that one obnoxious chapter of the Confession of Faith has been exploded altogether by the Secession brethren. What then? It has been so explained away on our side, that it may truly be said to be absolutely nullified. It is declared in the terms of the Act of Assembly, prefixed to the Confession, to be applicable to seasons of revolution—the reign of that necessity which has no law—and it is the judgment of common sense, that “the exception only confirms the general rule.” Should either of the Churches, in these circumstances, act in such a way as to prevent, or even to defer, the happy consummation of this Union, it will incur, in our

judgment, deep reproach and deeper guilt. But we hope better things. We fondly believe, as we fervently pray that this too long pending negociation may speedily be brought to a happy issue, and that the union of these Sister Churches may pave the way for a more intimate and confidential intercourse, and a more cordial and active co-operation among all the Evangelical Churches in this land. Great and manifold blessings would flow, we are persuaded, from the very example of such a Union. We venture to predict, that it would have no small tendency to promote the same happy consummation in the Parent Land. The success which, we believe, by the blessing of God, would crown our Union, could not fail to encourage the Parent Churches to follow our example. To our brethren of the Secession we would say, that the Union is no less desirable for them than it is for us. They would reap the larger share of honour; for it would be indeed the last and crowning triumph of those principles—of their old and venerable testimony for the Headship of Christ—the spiritual independence of the Church—which confer upon them a distinguished pre-eminence. To them this were indeed the most happy consummation of all that they have been struggling for during the last hundred years. We would desire for ourselves no greater privilege than to be permitted in the smallest degree to be instrumental, in the hand of God, in the furtherance of this truly holy and blessed work. In this spirit, and with this hope and prayer, do we now bring our peace offering to lay upon the altar of evangelical concord and unity, beseeching the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to hasten the coming of the glorious day, when all shall be “one in Christ Jesus, one body and one spirit in the Lord.” Amen.

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## APPENDIX.

As the sole object of the Author, for the present occasion, is to obviate prejudices and misrepresentations, which stand in the way of a fair and impartial discussion, he has confined his remarks within those limits which were suitable and sufficient for that special end. With a view, however, to illustrate and confirm the statements and reasonings of this Exposition, which has been far too hastily sketched, not to leave many even of the leading points destitute of that complete elucidation and enforcement, which would have been necessary, had the Author intended, at this time, to enter fully into the controversy, he is happy to avail himself, &c. &c. of a clear and able exposition of all the main points in controversy, by presenting to his readers the following extracts from the Pamphlet of the Rev. Dr. Ferrier:—

“Marvellous indeed, is the influence of prejudice, when those holding the Establishment Principle, though acting on the Voluntary Principle themselves,

are so inveterate against the Voluntaries! Is it lest they should be taken for them as perhaps they too often are? or is it that they still hug their chains whilst they profess to be free? Voluntaryism, according to recent statements, written or spoken, by Ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, of which, with feelings of amazement and sorrow, we have been ourselves a witness, is an attempt to set Nations free from obligation to God,—is to throw loose civil society, and especially civil rulers from all responsibility to their Maker,—is to leave men to do as they will without supposing them to be at all accountable for their principles and actions! Voluntaryism is trusting the Church of Christ to the rough hand of chance, unprotected in any shape, by the civil powers, and loosing Magistrates from all concern with religion! The Magistrate may be a religious man when in Church, but when he enters the Civil Court he is to forget his religion, and act as if there were no God, and no hereafter! He is to recognise no Bible principles, but to judge, and decide and conduct his whole administration irrespective of the solemn consideration that the eye of God sees him, and that he is accountable for every thing his heart devises, his tongue utters, his hand doeth! Such is Voluntaryism according to statements untraced by those who made them, and uncontradicted by the friends of the Establishment Principle, in the Presbyterian Church of Canada, some of them made to their own disgrace in their Supreme Ecclesiastical Court, when constituted in the name of Christ. No wonder they hate Voluntaryism! No wonder they will have no dealings with those who profess it. No wonder that all idea of union with Voluntaries, whose principles these are alleged or supposed to be, should be abandoned! O how true is it that men, through prejudice, are left 'to call evil good, and good evil, to put darkness for light, and light for darkness, to put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!' How true is it that "God gives to some strong delusion that they should believe a lie!" We would say with the Rev. Mr Thornton,—'If this be Voluntaryism, I claim exemption from the category. Such a sickening caricature I have no disposition to expose.' Surely we need not say, and much less wait to prove that this is not Voluntaryism,—that Voluntaries are as much opposed to these sentiments as any Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Canada,—that these are 'railing accusations' brought against them, from whatever source they have originated. Surely we need scarcely attempt to refute or disprove these miserable attempts at crimination! No, the conclusion of the whole matter, did we come to it at once, is, that Voluntaries, Scriptural Voluntaries, are as zealous, as conscientious, as diligent, as any class of Christians, in inculcating it as the whole duty of men,—of men in every possible position and relation,—to fear God and keep his commandments."

*"Voluntaries are said to hold that nations, as such, are not under law to God.*

"We hold as decidedly, and as fully to Scriptural Voluntaryism as any, to whatever denomination they belong. But we are of one mind with the Presbyterian Church of Canada in maintaining that Nations as such, Nations geographically considered, Nations in civil matters, are under law to God; and we shall hold every one who will presume to assert the contrary of us, to be a deliberate and wilful slanderer. Nay, it is the belief of all Voluntaries with whom we have ever been, or wish to be connected, that Nations and their Rulers are under law to God. All the public affairs of Nations should be conducted according to God's Will, and under the direction, so far as applicable, of God's Word. The duties of Nations and Rulers must always coincide with the dictates of Reason, and the principles of Scripture. If they are not pointed out in God's Word in express language, yet still the grand Scriptural principles of Truth and Righteousness, and a regard to the glory of God, and the good of men, should regulate and stimulate every national action. We hold this doctrine. We hold it in the most unequivocal sense. We hold it in the same sense with the friends of the civil Establishment principle."

"Magistrates are under law to God officially, just as ministers are, just as lawyers and physicians are,—bound to obey and serve God in all the duties of their respective callings, and in all that God requires. Men individually, all men individually, men also in their social and public capacities, men in every association and office of society, are bound by the divine law to live to the glory of God. A Magistrate, in particular, whose trust is so important and responsible, is bound, in all that he does, in his public as well as in his private capacity, to conduct himself as in the Divine presence, and as accountable to God for all his actions. Is it necessary to say more on this subject! Will the slander still be repeated?"

*"Voluntaries are said to maintain that the Magistrate has nothing to do with Religion."*

"Voluntaries say that the Magistrate, as such, has no province at all in the Church,—no right or power to dictate, direct, or govern; but, if a professor, is simply a member, like other men, and under the jurisdiction of the Church Courts equally with others around him, and bound in all things to obey God's law both in his private and public capacity, and to adorn in all things, whether personal or official, the doctrine of God our Saviour. But is this a reason for the allegation that he has nothing to do with religion? 'As a man,' we heard one saying, 'the voluntaries allow that the Magistrate has to do with religion, but not as a Magistrate.' When did any Christian Voluntary affirm or admit this? Never:—it is our deliberate opinion that the Magistrate has to do with religion both as a man and a Magistrate:—as a man like all other men,—as a Magistrate, like all other official characters, he should discharge the duties of his public office in the fear of God, in conformity to the precepts of God, as accountable to God, and for the glory of God. It is even the Magistrate's duty, to encourage by his influence the introduction and progress of religion among his subjects, by every judicious and legitimate means. If there be civil obstruction to the entrance of Missionaries, he ought, as far as possible, to remove them, and to afford all possible facility to the servants of God in prosecuting their honourable work. The magistrate has every thing to do with religion. He should be a Christian himself. All his duties, whether sacred or secular, should be performed religiously. In short, he should make the whole weight and influence of his station as a civil functionary, to bear on the purity and progress of Christianity."

*The Voluntaries are said to sanction the open Desecration of the Sabbath.*

"We leave the spiritual sanctification of the Sabbath, as well as the preservation of truth and order, on every Christian matter, in the hands of the Church alone. We honour Christ by doing so; regarding him as an Almighty King, who is 'Lord also of the Sabbath Day,' and who alone can enforce, and bless, and reward its sanctification. As to the co-operation of the Civil Magistrate, in his official capacity here, it is incompetent, it is unnecessary, it is no part of his prerogative. The Sabbath is not thus sanctified, it cannot be thus sanctified, by wicked men. Those, however, who profess to be Christians, should strive by every means to promote its sanctification. This they should do by their prayers, their counsel, their example, and their general influence. The Magistrate, as a Magistrate, can do nothing here; but as a Christian, if such he be, he can do much; and the very fact of his being a Magistrate will vastly increase his influence as a Christian, in promoting with other Christians, by his counsel, prayers, and example, the spiritual sanctification of the Sabbath. He will thus become, in the Scripture sense, 'a nursing father' to the Church. But it is only in preserving external peace, order, and consistency, that his civil authority should be exercised. The Magistrate, indeed, is bound by the moral law, to which the observance of the Sabbath belongs. He is bound by this precept to keep the Sabbath spiritually as a Christian, and in this to be a pattern to others;

and so far as becoming external tranquillity and order are necessary, and their enforcement can be considered as included in his civil duties, he should consider himself bound by this precept to exercise his authority in preventing the Sabbath from being openly desecrated. Further he cannot go as a Magistrate, for all his duties in this capacity are civil duties. Yet, if he is faithful here, his authority and influence will have the most salutary results, and with the blessing of God, a powerful tendency to promote the spiritual sanctification of the Lord's Day. We wish to be particular on this subject, to show that Voluntary principles, so far from giving sanction to the open desecration of the Sabbath, are more calculated to be effectual than the principles of the friends of Civil Establishments of religion, in securing and advancing both the outward and the spiritual sanctification of this holy day. We would even remark, that the religious services incumbent on society on the Sabbath should make it the duty of the Magistrate to exercise his civil authority in regard to this day with some peculiarities, so as to afford the necessary external quiet and decorum which the right discharge of religious duties renders proper and necessary. We believe we carry our views further than some do on this question. There are laws for the Sabbath—laws to prevent taverns from being open, at least during public worship—to prevent traders from carrying goods—to prevent travelling—to prevent the open prosecution of secular employment. To these and such like laws we have no objections, nay, we heartily approve of them, as intended to preserve that civil peace which religious subjects require for the engagements of that day; nor have we any objections, but every reason to wish, that the Magistrate show his zeal for the Divine glory, and for the best interests of society, by their firm, impartial, and conscientious execution.

"On the other department of Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom, we were not aware till lately, some friends of the Civil Establishment principle seem to have adopted what we think erroneous views, to which they attach 'essential' importance. They call this His Headship over the nations. The opponents of Civil Establishments, without objecting to this designation, prefer calling it, or rather calling the important doctrine which it misrepresents, Christ's Headship over the world, or the subsidiary department of His Mediatorial Kingdom—comprehending all who are not believers, to distinguish it from His Kingdom proper, or His Church. The difference between the parties here is, that the advocates of Establishments apply the designation—King of Nations—in a manner which blends and confounds the two great classes of mankind—believers and unbelievers—in relation to Christ; whereas the opponents of Establishments in speaking of Christ as King of the nations, or of the world, refer the designation to none who are members of the Church; but apply it only to those who have no gracious relationship to Christ. It is on that doctrine, in our view altogether gratuitous, which is called Christ's Headship over the nations geographically considered, or in civil matters, that the theory of a Civil Establishment seems by many to be founded. Christ is King of nations, we have heard it said, and therefore the civil rulers of nations should endow the Church. But we object to the premises here, as well as to the conclusion; and we should say in the words of the Rev. B. Noel on another point,—'The cause must be desperate if able men can find no better Scriptural evidence to support it.' We are at a loss to know where the doctrine of Christ's Headship over the nations, in this view, is to be found, except in the minds of those who have conceived it. It is no where presented in the Word of God. What is meant by it? Are we really to understand that Christ, as Mediator, is King of Great Britain, King of France, King of Spain, and King of every other country on earth; and that he presides, or ought to preside, in all their political movements; and that the whole secular administration of every kingdom should be conducted as under His mediatorial government? Would not this be derogatory to Christ? Would not this stain or destroy the spirituality of His kingdom? Would not this be likening Him to

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the Pope of Rome, not now, but when in the plenitude of his power, by making Him at once a temporal and a spiritual Ruler? We put it to the judgement of every cool and reflecting individual, if such a view of Christ's Headship over the nations does not tend to deteriorate rather than advance His glory. We shall yield to none in honest and ardent zeal to ascribe all power and dominion and glory to the Saviour's Name: but we positively deny that the Scriptures give the smallest countenance to this conception; and we maintain that this is an interference with the outward concerns of nations which Christ, as Mediator, not only never sought, but uniformly disclaimed. Thus, when beset by enemies who wished to entangle Him in his talk, and to have something whereof to accuse Him, He showed himself to be no pretender to earthly royalty, for, said He,—‘Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's.’ It may be noticed that the very handle which the Jews made, when they insisted on the crucifixion of Christ, was from the pretensions which they alleged He had made to be King of the Jews, and thus a rival to Caesar, who then swayed the sceptre of the Roman Empire, of which Judea was at that time a Province. Hence said the Jews to Pilate, in reference to Christ,—‘If thou let this man go thou art not Caesar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.’ We may add, that when arraigned before Pilate, and interrogated if He were the King of the Jews, He denied not that He was a King; but to prevent all supposed interference between His kingly prerogatives and those of Caesar or other earthly monarchs He declared that His kingdom was entirely of a different description from theirs:—‘My kingdom,’ said He, ‘is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews, but now is my kingdom not from hence.’ Such were the lessons, on this subject, which the Saviour himself taught.

“Those who hold that Christ is King of the nations of the world, as such, we suspect do not exactly mean what their words import. Some of them have told us they mean only that He is ‘King of kings and Lord of lords,’ and of course if they keep by the language of Scripture, which they should do when they cannot express Bible doctrine otherwise, we entirely agree with them. But how often do we hear it said that Christ, as Mediator, is King of nations, meaning nations as to their geographical boundaries, and how often is it maintained that all the affairs of nations, civil as well as sacred, should be managed under Him as Mediator. Now it is this doctrine which we absolutely refuse. Viewing Christ as God, it is true, that in common with the other persons of the Godhead, He is the king of Nations, and men in their national capacity are under His moral government, and bound to act under Him in civil and political matters, and to regulate every national interest as under law to Him. But as Mediator, although Christ's power is unlimited, and thus equally extensive with His power as God, yet it is only exercised in reference to His Church. It extends over the Church to guard, to guide, to supply, to bless, and it extends over all things beyond the range of the Church, to restrain and regulate, as He sees necessary, for preventing injury and securing benefit to His people.

“Let us not be misunderstood; we are not denying the supremacy of Christ over the whole world; we are not denying that the affairs of nations, whether sacred or secular, are under His control and direction, and that he overrules and manages them for the interests of His Church; nor are we wishing to set nations free from the obligations which all men in them are under to acknowledge and embrace Christ for salvation, and to conduct their duties of whatever kind in subserviency to His glory. But we are objecting to the phraseology that nations and civil rulers, as such (that is irrespective of being christians) are under law to Christ, so as to be capable of, or called to active service for Him as Mediator. There have been views presented on this subject against which we would do well to guard, because they are not only contrary to scripture, but repugnant to reason itself. We are never to imagine with some people that all outward things in the kingdom of nature and providence, as an eminent divine of last century expresses it,—‘considered in their material being, as obvious to common sense, and considered in their natural ordering to their natural ends, were transferred to the Mediatorial Kingdom of Christ,’ because it would follow from this that all outward blessing enjoyed ‘by unbelievers, through the world, as well as by believers, were properly from Christ as Mediator, and through the channel of his blood.’

"It is necessary to distinguish between the kingdoms of nature and of grace, and about the administration of Christ being conducted in a suitableness to the nature of the one and of the other. 'If it be said,' says the same author, 'that all outward things of this world in themselves considered, and in all respects, do belong to the Kingdom of Christ as Mediator, which is all a kingdom of grace, we absolutely reject this doctrine, as not only without foundation in scripture, but as contrary both to scripture and reason, and what greatly derogates from the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, as He is God over all blessed for ever, and likewise as bringing a cloud upon His glory as Mediator.'"

"Our opinion is that all that is essential in respect to Christ's Headship over the Church and over the world, is brought down to the capacity of children, and is summarily and orthodoxly presented in the answer to the question,—How doth Christ execute the office of a King—in our Shorter Catechism. There we have Christ's Proper Kingdom, the Church, the members of which being subdued to Himself, He rules and defends; and his Subsidiary Kingdom,—the world, still hostile to Him, still incapable of willingly serving Him, which He restrains and conquers. He does not require duties of allegiance from the latter. They are in no capacity to render them. They are called to no duty for Christ. They are only called to one great duty for themselves—it is to believe on Christ to salvation. If they do this, the restraining and conquering influence is over, so far as they are concerned, and they are subdued to Christ, and thenceforward ruled and defended by Him. The yoke of power over them as enemies is removed; the yoke of peace and love,—Christ's yoke which is easy, and his burden which is light, is now taken up by them; and from being subjected to Christ as king of nations, that is, of the world lying in wickedness, for the good of the Church, they become the willing and joyful subjects of His Spiritual and everlasting kingdom.

"Those who are, or become believers spontaneously and joyfully, obey Christ. They surrender themselves to Him with cheerfulness and delight, and consecrate themselves without reserve to his service. But unbelievers, not capable of, and not called to active service, are only made subject, and made subservient, and that in opposition to their own inclinations, by the authoritative influence of His restraining and conquering power as Mediator. This we think is the only true and Scriptural view of Christ's supremacy over the Church and over the world; and it at once overthrows the whole theory of the advocates of civil Establishments of religion, and dooms it to merited oblivion. God requires no service to Christ from unconverted men. They are not in circumstances to render any. He calls them to believe. He invites them to flee from the wrath to come, and to accept of Christ for salvation. This is the first, and the only duty which they are invited to reduce to practice; and whenever they believe to the saving of the soul, whether rulers or subjects, they come out from the world, they rank no longer among the nations; they enter Christ's Church, are brought under the influence of His spiritual sceptre, and are made joyful subjects of His proper and peculiar kingdom. In the meantime Christ's prerogative as King of nations, that is, of the unconverted, is for special purposes,—purposes, however, very different from those of countenancing, protecting and endowing the Church. It is given Him that He may check or allow hostility to the interests of religion as He sees meet,—to illustrate His sovereignty or His power. This prerogative is conferred on Him as Mediator. Hence the declaration of God by the Psalmist, in respect to Christ,—'Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.' And hence the description in the Revelation,—'Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.' These unconverted nations are no instruments of active and willing service to the Church; but unless restrained by Christ, would be causes of injury and danger.

"Christ shall rule over this department of His mediatorial kingdom only until His Church be completed. He shall then deliver up the kingdom, not His kingdom proper, but only His subsidiary kingdom, to God even the Father, when he shall put down all rule and all authority and power. But over His peculiar kingdom, the Church, he shall reign eternally. 'Of the increase of his government and dominion here there shall be no end.'"

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