

CHRIST'S KINGSHIP OVER THE NATIONS



**“The Prince of the Kings
of the Earth”**

Rev. 1.5

**CHRIST'S KINGSHIP OVER THE NATIONS
MAINTAINED AND DEFENDED
IN
THE ESTABLISHMENT PRINCIPLE
OR
THE PRINCIPLE OF THE
NATIONAL RECOGNITION OF RELIGION**

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The Establishment Principle

The Establishment Principle, or the Principle of the National Recognition of Religion maintains the scriptural view of the universal supremacy of Christ as King of Nations as well as King of saints, with the consequent duty of nations as such, and civil rulers in their official capacity, to honour and serve Him by recognising His Truth and promoting His cause. Voluntaryism or the voluntary principle on the other hand denies the moral nature and obligation of civil rulers and governments to uphold, defend and advance the Cause of Christ in the world. In the words of Dr. Begg, "it confounds 'the state' with 'the world,' forgetting that the civil government is a divine ordinance, and that the magistrate is a 'minister of God' unto the people for good." "It is questionable," continues Dr. Begg, "whether Popery itself more directly robs Christ of His glory — the glory of having 'all power in heaven and on earth.' It sets aside the true theory of free and scriptural government. Upon pretence of great spirituality it will have nothing to do with the state." "Voluntaryism," to quote Principal Cunningham, "amounts in substance to this — that the only relation that ought to subsist between the state and the church — between civil government and religion — is that of entire separation."

The duty of the civil magistrate towards the Church of Christ is set forth in Chapter XXIII of the "Westminster Confession of Faith" — "The Civil Magistrate." The term "magistrate" or "civil magistrate," is used to designate the authority possessed by the supreme civil power, and entitled to frame laws and to regulate the whole proceedings of the nation.

Dr. McCrie's "Statement"

The ablest exposition in the English language of the Establishment Principle is Dr. Thomas McCrie's "Statement," first published in April 1807. In 1871 a new edition appeared with a preface by the late Dr. Smeaton of the New College Edinburgh. Dr. Smeaton describes the "Statement" as a masterly defence of the principles of establishments as a Scripture truth: and *the most complete vindication ever given to the world of the position occupied by the Reformed Church of Scotland, on the whole subject of national religion and the magistrates' legitimate power in promoting it.* "The same thoroughness," wrote the late Rev. D. Beaton, "which gave such abiding value to his great biography of Knox, is shown in this, his less known work." (The Great Classic on the Establishment Principle — Dr. McCrie's "Statement" by the Rev. D. Beaton, Free Presbyterian Magazine, Vol. XI, p. 192).

The Unanimous Testimony of the Reformers

Dr. McCrie in his "Statement," shows that all the Confessions of the Protestant and Presbyterian Churches of the Reformation, both in Britain and on the Continent of Europe, held and maintained the Establishment Principle. "These harmoniously agree in declaring as with one mouth," he writes, "that civil authority is not limited to the secular affairs of men, and that the public care and advancement of religion is a principle part of the official duty of magistrates." He goes on to give extracts from "The Confession of Helvetia"; "The Confession of Bohemia," called also "The Confession of the Waldenses"; "The Confession of Saxony"; "The French Confession"; "The Belgic or Dutch Confession"; "The Confession of the English Congregation in Geneva"; "The Scots Confession" and "The Westminster Confession of Faith." "Such is the harmony of doctrine in the Protestant churches on this head," he remarks, "expressed in their confessions and public formularies drawn from the Word of God; a harmony which deserves great attention, and from which none should rashly depart." In a foot note he quotes

the following extract from "Wilson's Defence of National Churches" — "That harmony is beautiful which we may observe amongst the several Confessions of the Reformed Churches, and an evidence that there was a special presence of God with them, and also a plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit upon them; it is likewise a hopeful presage, that when the Lord turns again the captivity of Zion, and when His holy arm shall give the blow to the throne of the beast, the several churches and their watchmen shall see eye to eye, and with one voice together shall they sing."

The Authority of the Civil Magistrate

Section III of Chap. XXIII of the Westminster Confession of Faith on "The Civil Magistrate" states: "The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; yet he hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting whereof, he hath power to call synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God."

Two noted instances of synods being called by the "Civil Magistrate" is that of the illustrious Synod of Dort on the authority of the States-general in 1618, and of the Westminster Assembly convened by an Ordinance of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament in London on 12th June, 1643. In the Ordinance, Parliament declares that "the present church government of archbishops, their chancellors, deans and chapters, archdeacons, etc., is evil, and justly offensive and burdensome to the kingdom etc." and that Presbyterianism be established instead. The Ordinance is printed in full in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

"The last part of the section asserting the magistrate's right to call synods etc. is limited," wrote the late Rev. D. Beaton, "by the Act of Assembly of 1647 to kirks not constituted and settled. The word "settled" here means "fixed by legal sanction," according to the phraseology of formal state and church documents of the Westminster period. The whole section has been charged as pure Erastianism*, and was

* Erastianism, so named after Erastus, a celebrated physician and professor at Heidelberg about 1580, maintains that the State is supreme and that the Church is subject to the State.

appealed to in connection with the state's interference in the Disruption struggle. That charge has abundantly and satisfactorily been answered by Principal William Cunningham in his "Remarks on the Twenty-Third Chapter of the Confession of Faith as Bearing on Existing Controversies," and reprinted in his "Discussions on Church Principles," chapter eight. How anyone reading the statement of the Confession on the Civil Magistrate in chapters twenty-five, thirty and thirty-one, could assert that chapter twenty-three taught Erastianism is unexplicable unless he boldly and ignorantly asserts that the divines glaringly contradicted their own teaching."

In a recently published study manual on "The Confession of Faith" the author asserts that these chapters contain a "direct contradiction," and "irreconcilable principles." The learned Westminster divines saw no "direct contradiction," neither did the learned Dr. McCrie, Principal Cunningham, Dr. Begg, Professor Smeaton and the worthy fathers who valiantly upheld the Confession's scriptural teaching on the duty of the civil magistrate toward the Cause of Christ.

"This section of the Confession," continues the Rev. D. Beaton, "was also attacked by the Voluntaries, who maintained that it gave the Civil Magistrate power to exercise authority or jurisdiction in religious matters and over the concerns of the Church. Dr. Cunningham points out, however, the definition of the Establishment Principle held that there was a plain distinction between the object of the magistrate's care, and the sphere or subject of his jurisdiction; for while he was bound to aim at the well-being of the Church, he had no jurisdiction or right of authoritative interference in religious matters. Both Dr. Cunningham and also Dr. Bannerman in his "Church of Christ" explain the technical meaning of "take order." It was a common phrase, it seems, in the controversial theology of the times of the Westminster Assembly." (Extracts from "The National Recognition of Religion" and "The Headship of Christ" by the late Rev. D. Beaton.)

The Establishment Principle Proved from the Old Testament

Dr. McCrie in his "Statement" gives the following extract from the writings of the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff of Abernethy: "Christian magistrates in their character are to maintain and defend the faith of Christ. We do not mean that they are to propagate the religion of Jesus by sword,

fire and faggot, but the Christian States are to employ their *power* and *authority* for the support of the *worship* and service of God, as well as for regulating our behaviour to our fellow-creatures. Both precepts and examples under the Old Testament are strong and clear to this purpose; and these were not *temporary* laws, but founded upon *perpetual* and *moral grounds*, such as the peace of societies, the good of men's souls; the duty of all dependent beings to pay homage to their Creator, in the manner Himself has prescribed; and the duty of all magistrates, the ministers and delegates of the great God, to vindicate and maintain His honour among men. No doubt magistrates have mistaken error for truth, and made a bad use of their power upon many occasions; but if the *abuse* of a power take away the *lawful* use of it, mankind will be in a strange and unheard of situation." (Moncrieff's Practical Works, Vol 1, pp. 27-28). The same learned and pious author, in another part of his works, gives a very perspicuous and succinct statement of the difference between civil and ecclesiastical authority, and of the power which Presbyterians allow to magistrates respecting synods and matters ecclesiastical, in opposition to Erastian and Sectarian extremes. With this doctrine his son Rev. William Moncrieff of Alloa agrees: "It has been proved (says he) by such divines as have written against Erastians — that though the Christian magistrate has power *circa sacra* (about holy things); yet he has no power *in sacris* (in holy things); that it belongs to the Church in her judicatures to judge of religious matters; and the magistrate is to strengthen the Church's hands by giving the civil sanction (so far as proper) to their determinations."

"The Rev. William Wilson of Perth in his "Defence of National Churches" pronounces the legal or civil establishment enjoyed by the Church of Scotland, 'good in itself' although it was at the time abused by the Jurisdiction. We will readily agree (says he) that the countenance of civil authority is not necessary to the being of the Church, though it is *very profitable* and *useful* to her outward peaceable being; as also that the countenance and protection of the civil magistrate, given unto the judicatories of the Church, in the faithful discharge of their duty, is an outward blessing, promised unto her in New Testament times, Isaiah XLIX 23 and LX 5, 10. Having mentioned a number of the peculiar and distinguishing "principles" of the Anabaptists and Brownists among which the following, 'they affirmed, that the Christian magistrate had no right to meddle at all with any matters of religion; and they plead for a universal

toleration under the specious pretence of liberty of conscience.' Mr. Wilson adds, 'Against the above extravagant principles our reformed divines employed their pens, and discovered the contrariety of them to the Holy Scriptures, and their affinity to several of the gross principles of the ancient Donatists and Novatians. The greatest deceits (continues he) have been brought into the world under the name or notion of new lights. It is to be regretted that such new lights have appeared on our horizon, who plead against the establishment of confessions of faith etc. by the laws of the land.'

The Kingship of Christ Over the Nations in Psalm II

"In Psalm II," continues Dr. McCrie, "we have the Father's solemn introduction of Christ, as His King whom He had set "upon His holy hill of Zion," unto the kings and rulers of the earth, with injunctions to them to serve Him in this character. "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way." (v. 10-12). This is an exhortation and command to the rulers, to lay aside that enmity and opposition which they had managed against Christ and His kingdom, and to do homage and service to Him. If the question be asked, in what *character* are they to serve Christ? It may be answered by proposing another. In what character did they *oppose* Him? Was it not in their *public* character, as rulers? 'The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.' v. 2, 3. 'Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings,' etc. Shall we suppose, when they are reprehended in their public character for opposing Christ, that the exhortation to "serve" Him respects merely their private character as individuals? Shall not the honour and homage to be paid to God's own King, be as conspicuous and decided as the ignominy which was poured upon Him was?"

"It is the unanimous opinion of divines (says Walaeus, in a treatise against Erastian tenets) that the declaration of the royal prophet in Psalm II is applicable to kings under the New Testament."

"Judges and rulers, AS SUCH, must kiss the Son (says Dr. Owen, in his sermon preached before the parliament of England), and own His sceptre, and advance His ways.

Some think, if you were well settled, you ought not, *as rulers of the nation*, to put forth your *power* for the interest of Christ. The good Lord keep your hearts from that apprehension ! ” (Dr. Owen).

“ The wicked import and effect of this new scheme (Voluntaryism) means an abolishing of all Scripture-precepts, promises and prophecies about the state of the gospel church with regard to civil powers. For according to this scheme, kings are not to be wise now, nor are the judges of the earth to be instructed, that they should serve the Lord, the King upon the holy hill of Zion ! No kings, in their kingly state, should fall down before Him; no nations in their national state, should serve Him ! It is to be of no consequence to the church, that the Lord hath said, “ Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers ”; nor is it to be admitted of, according to any intelligible use of words, that the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ ! ”

The Kingship of Christ Over the Nations in Isaiah

“ And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.” (Isa. XLIX 23). “ For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.” “ Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings; and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob ” (Isa. LX 12 & 16). “ The Hebrew word,” says Wallaeus, “ which is rendered *nurse*, is from the root *aman*, and properly signifies to *strengthen* and to *establish*. Therefore the breasts of kings and queens, which the church sucks, are nothing else than the *authority and power of magistrates*, by which the church of God is strengthened; as the child is by the milk of the nurse. “ These promises (says Dr. Owen) assert, that magistrates shall put forth their *power* for the welfare of the church. Kingdoms are said to serve the church: and how can a kingdom as a kingdom serve the church, but as putting forth *its power* and strength on *her* behalf ? What God hath promised, kings, magistrates, rulers, nations shall do, that is their duty to do. Surely these promises will scarcely be accomplished in bringing commonwealths to be of Gallio’s frame, to take care for none of these things.” (Dr. Owen).

“ We might have urged here, that the whole tenor of the declarations, promises and predictions of the Old Testament, lead to the conclusion that Christianity shall be owned,

countenanced, and supported in a *national* way. God addresses the nations in a collective capacity, reproves them for their idolatry, and calls them to His worship, Isa. XXXIV 1, XLI 1, 21-29. He proposes Christ, as His anointed servant, to them, ch XLII 1; declares that He has given Him the nations for His inheritance, and that He shall inherit them all. Ps. II 8, LXXXII 8, Isa. LII 15, LV 5. Christ addresses Himself not only to individuals, but to whole islands, Isa. XLIX 1; nations join themselves to Him, own and worship Him, Isa. II 2, Mic. IV 1, 2, Zech II 11, VIII 20-22, bless themselves, and glory in Him, Jer. IV 2; all nations and dominions serve Him, Dan. VII 14, 27, they consecrate all things in them, and employ them in His service, Is. LX 6-12, Zech. XIV 20, 21; He owns these nations as His, and blesses them, while He breaks in pieces and wastes others, Ps. XXXIII 12, CXL 15, Isa. XIX 25, Ps. II 9, 12, Isa. LX 12.

The force of the argument arising from these and similar promises and predictions is such that Mr. Edward Williams, although an Independent, acknowledges that they imply a national profession and establishment of Christianity. In answer to the objection, 'If the above prophecies refer to *national conversions*, does not that lead to *national churches*?' He replies, 'that a national establishment, if WELL ORDERED, appears more agreeable to the prophetic passages we have been considering, than the Anti-paedobaptist plan; nay, more agreeable to the general tenor of revelation' (Williams' *Anti-paedobaptism Examined* Vol. I, p. 273).

The Establishment Principle Proved from the New Testament

"It is commonly pleaded," writes Dr. McCrie, "that there is nothing in the New Testament which countenances a national religion, or proves that magistrates as such, have any concern with the interests of religion and the church of Christ; and those who maintain this are often triumphantly asked to produce proof of it from the New Testament. This plea is neither relevant nor well founded. It is irrelevant. For if the Old Testament is a rule of faith and manners to us, as well as the New, it is sufficient that what we plead for is warranted by the former, although it should not be expressly mentioned in the latter. We have showed that the power in question is warranted by the Old Testament, and that it records approved examples of its exercise which proceeded upon moral grounds. Those who affirm that it is abrogated, or has ceased, under the New Testament, must

produce proof of this. We deny that it is, our adversaries in this matter must affirm that it is, otherwise, they do not so much as enter into the question of the controversy. And it is incumbent on those who take the affirmative side of a question to prove their assertion, (*Affirmanti incumbit probatio*). It is contrary to the rules of just reasoning to tell us, that we cannot instruct the warrantableness of the magistrate's power about religion, unless we produce a positive institution of it in the New Testament, if the whole word of God be the rule of our faith and practice. The apostle declares, that "rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." Both by the law of nature and the law revealed in the Old Testament, magistrates had power to restrain and punish evil works, against the first as well as the second table of the law. Let those who affirm, that the magistrate's power is, under the gospel, restricted to the second, prove their assertion. The same apostle asserts, that the magistrate is "the minister of God — for good." We have seen, that by the law of nature and the Old Testament, he is bound as such, to maintain the honour of God and to countenance religious institutions for the good of his subjects. Let it be proved that this has been abrogated or is inconsistent with the gospel dispensation. Besides we have already shown that there are manifold passages to this purpose in the Old Testament, evidently respecting New Testament times. If any will not believe the Old Testament to be obligatory upon us, even wherein it has a declared respect to the New Testament times, they may with equal reason deny both.

But neither is the plea well founded. It is true that the New Testament does not give express commands or direction to Magistrates as such, either as to civil or religious matters; the apostles, in their epistles, inculcating chiefly the duties incumbent upon Christians in those stations in which they were at that time placed. Any thing this way is to be found connected with the duties incumbent upon Christians to rulers. The apostle in 2 Tim. II 1 exhorts, that prayers be made by Christians "for kings, and for all in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." What Christians are here to pray for, that, magistrates must be bound to promote as their end; and this is not simply "a quiet and peaceable life," but "in all godliness and honesty." Rulers are not in their official capacity, to be indifferent to *godliness* any more than to *honesty*; both are to be countenanced and promoted by them, Ezra VI 8-10.

The New Testament also contains, as well as the Old, predictions and promises which confirm what we maintain. When the seventh angel sounded, "there were voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and His Christ." Rev. XI 15. 'On the accomplishment of the promises' formerly mentioned (says Dr. Owen), kingdoms 'are said to become the kingdoms of the Lord Christ,' because *as* kingdoms, they serve Him with their power and authority. There is not the least colour left for turning off and rejecting all these promises,' as if they were merely metaphorical, shadowing forth spiritual glories, neither their beginning nor ending will bear any such corrupting interpretation.' They had formerly been the kingdoms of the Antichrist, not merely by having his ordinances set up in them, by the greater part of the people submitting to these, but by a public and national acknowledgment of his authority, and subjection to him. But they should now acknowledge and submit to the Lord. Their kings had formerly given their power to the beast; but now they should withdraw it, and employ it on the side of the Lamb. "It imports" (says Willison in his "Defence of National Churches p. 53), "their becoming Christ's, as formerly they had been Antichrist's. As the Nations, under Antichrist, did acknowledge and submit to Antichrist in a National way, so shall they as solemnly reject Antichrist, and take Christ in his room, and become His people in a National capacity."

Again in describing the glory of the church in the latter days, it is said, "the kings of the earth did bring their glory and honour into it, and they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it," Rev. XXI 24, 26. The following is the explication of that passage by Vitranga in his "Apocalypsin" p. 1215-16:— "Then also Princes, Kings, Emperors, shall serve Christ and His church, shall bring their glory, majesty and power into it; that is, shall convert them to their use and advantage: they shall publicly celebrate the true religion, honour its ministers, and by their authority and power maintain and defend the same; which the church hath already experienced in part from the time of Constantine, and lately from the period of the Reformation; and partly as yet to look for. There is a reference here to Isa. LX 10, 11 and XLIX 22, 25. It appears very clearly from this place that this vision refers to the state of the church *on earth*. Pious princes and kings in the state of perfection shall not *bring* their glory to her, but shall *receive* it. The titles and external prerogatives, which distinguish men in civil and sacred societies shall be then abolished.' And on verse 26

he says, 'The meaning is, that whatever is eminent, beautiful, splendid, or praise-worthy among the nations, shall be consecrated to the use of the church of Christ. The command of wealth and of earthly prerogatives, the gifts of erudition, prudence, eloquence; the dignity of nobles, the majesty of kings and princes shall promote the interests of the church.'

Objections Answered

"It is readily granted," continues Dr. McCrie, "that many specious objections may be started against this, as well as every other truth and duty. And when great industry is used to misrepresent it, and these objections are urged by multitudes from different quarters, and by those to whom persons look upon as teachers, they may gain an easy and general belief. But, if we are to be staggered in our belief of every thing, against which difficulties may be raised, upon which persons can declaim with great ease, assurance, and plausibility, we may reject the most important articles of religion and revelation.

I

It is objected that the power in question is very liable to be abused, and has been abused in all ages; and that, if we give power to magistrates about religion, they will employ it for the support of a false religion as well as the true. This is an objection which has the greatest influence upon the ignorant, and is accordingly most frequently urged, and represented with all possible aggravations. It will not however bear examination. *Ab abusu ad usum non valet consequentia*. It is not just reasoning to argue from the ABUSE of any thing, against its USE. What power is there among fallible and corrupt men which is not liable to be abused, greatly abused, which has not been abused in every age, which is not daily abused by many. Some kinds of power may be more liable to be abused than others, or when abused, may be productive of worse consequences. *Corruptio optimi, pessima*, is a common maxim: *the corruption of the best things is worst*. Shall we therefore abolish and reject these altogether, on account of their abuse? It is well known that the power committed to Christ to the office-bearers of His church has been very grossly abused. Great and highly culpable as the encroachments of civil rulers upon the prerogatives of Christ and the consciences of men have been and are, let us not forget that the greatest enemy on earth that ever the church of Christ saw, or will see, was a power not civil, but spiritual or ecclesiastical.

“sitting in the temple of God,” which, principally by claims of a spiritual kind, rose to such a surprising ascendancy, as to exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is “worshipped,” and during so many ages usurped the supremacy of Jesus Christ, the prerogatives of princes, and the rights of mankind. It is not uncommon with many, from this abuse, to disclaim against and decry all church-power, and Presbyterian courts in particular, as proceeding upon the same principles, and liable to similar abuses. This is unreasonable. And it is equally unreasonable to confound the power allotted by Presbyterians to magistrates with that which has been claimed or exercised by persecuting, tyrannical, Popish or Erastian governments; or to discard the exercise of civil authority about religion, when duly limited, from a dread of the wildest excesses which have been committed by the rage of tyranny, bigotry, or fanaticism. There is no more affinity between these, than there is between the legitimate principles of government or of necessary defence, and the unjust wars, massacres, rapine, and oppression, which have been practised in all ages by nations and their rulers. The misapplication of civil power to the support of a false religion, is common to it with all other power among men. The true religion must still continue to have the only just claim to support, although its rivals may often supplant it; nor are we to go over to the camp of *scepticism*, by representing it as impossible to distinguish between truth and falsehood in the matter. The objection drawn from abuse was as strong against the power of the Jewish kings. “We do not deny (says Dr. Rivet) that by the abuse of this power, the church may be disturbed, and the true worship of God overturned; which also happens from the abuse of the ecclesiastical power. In the kingdom of Judah, within a very short space, king Ahaz burned incense in the high places; what his son Hezekiah abolished, Manasseh restored that which Josiah his grandson again restored. But these changes did not derogate from the Regal power in matters of religion; nor do we ever hear that the prophets contended against this power, although they, in the name of God, severely reprov'd the abuses of it.” (Oper. Tom. 1, p. 1375).

II

But it is objected, that the principle itself involves, or necessarily leads to persecution. For if magistrates have a power about religion, they must also have a right to punish those who do not comply with what they enact, command, or prohibit, in these matters. When they make laws ratifying

a particular profession of faith, form of worship, etc., does it not follow that they have a right to secure obedience to these by civil penalties, in the way of making their subjects to profess and worship accordingly? To this we answer, that there are many things here confounded which are essentially distinct, both as to religion and the operation of laws. There are various actions of men about religion, respecting which magistral authority may be justly employed in the way of restraint and punishment. Such as blasphemy, the open contempt of religion, or even of Christianity and the Bible, in Christian states the profanation of the name of God, of divine ordinances, and of the Sabbath. These and similar practices, we are of opinion, magistrates in virtue of their office, may restrain or punish, according as the nature of the offence and the good of society may require, without being chargeable with any persecution.

But it will not follow from this, or from any regulations and restrictions which may be necessary in the reformation or settlement of religion in a nation, that magistrates are warranted forcibly to impose a profession of faith upon their subjects, or to oblige them to worship God in a certain mode, under civil penalties to be inflicted upon all who dissent or refuse compliance. Nor is any thing of this kind necessarily implied in laws which recognise, establish, and support, a particular profession of Christianity and church-state. It is of no avail to plead here, that the magistrate's power is compulsory, and that, if it be interposed at all about religion, it must ultimately force it, as a compulsory power must always be supposed at hand to secure respect to the law. We readily grant that the magistrate's power is compulsory, and that a compulsory power is employed about religion. But the question is, *How* is this power employed, and upon *whom* does the penalty fall? Is it employed in compelling men to believe, profess, worship, etc., and in punishing those who may think, profess or act in any way different from the national establishment? This is what we deny, and what ought to be proved as a necessary consequent. It is so, indeed, with those laws which are intended to gain the end, directly and immediately, by their own influences. But it is quite otherwise with those laws which are intended to accomplish the ends by the intervention of institutions, and means adapted unto them. In this case, the law is directly employed in sanctioning, securing, providing for the public support and maintenance of these institutions; and the penalty falls upon those who shall attempt,

in a factious, disorderly, or turbulent manner, to prevent their being carried into execution, or to interrupt, hinder, disturb, or overturn them. This is the case with many of those laws which are calculated to promote religion, morality, education, arts and sciences, with other things connected with the public good of a nation. Those must be strangers to the operation of Government, who do not know how many laws are enacted, and carried into execution from time to time, for promoting public improvements and institutions, where neither the private judgment nor public conduct of men are controlled, with respect to any thing necessarily connected with true liberty. When laws are enacted for promoting certain arts and sciences, a compulsory power is employed about them. But are men forced to become artizans and philosophers or are these things promoted by fines and imprisonments? When laws are enacted for promoting education, and for erecting schools and colleges, as seminaries of national instruction, sanctioning their internal regulations, endowing them, and granting them certain immunities and privileges, a compulsory power is in like manner employed. It is the same as to an establishment of religion. A compulsory power is exercised in various ways about the established church of Scotland; but is it by compelling all to become members of that church, or of inflicting penalties upon those who dissent? When a particular profession, or confession of faith, form of worship and ecclesiastical government obtain the formal sanction of civil authority, they are recognised by the legislature, as declaratory of that religion which obtains the national countenance and support, and according unto which the legal privileges and emoluments appropriated for this purpose are to be conferred and enjoyed. But this by no means implies that all shall be obliged under civil pains, to conform unto this establishment, or be punished for dissenting from it. There is a wide and essential distinction between *the exercise of a compulsive power about religion, and compulsion in religion*. Yet there are *masters in Israel* who can magisterially decide this controversy, without having learned its *first principles*, or attending to the most necessary distinctions on the subject."

Dr. McCrie goes on to deal with several plausible objections usually advanced against the national establishment of religion, and on the grounds of Scripture and reason shows how unwarrantable and unfounded they are. We shall quote two of them.

III

It is objected, that the kingdom of Christ is wholly of a spiritual and heavenly nature; and cannot be promoted by the secular power. In proof of this we are referred to our Lord's declaration: "My kingdom is not of this world," John XVIII, 36. Those must surely have read or thought superficially upon this subject, who imagine that this declaration determines the present controversy. The kingdom of Christ, though spiritual and heavenly, and different from the kingdoms of this world, in its origin, laws, immediate objects and ends, has still in various respects a connection with the things of this world, as visibly erected in it, and is capable of standing in a friendly relation with earthly kingdoms, and of receiving benefit from them. Has not the church external privileges, which are capable of being secured? Has she not external ordinances, assemblies, courts, etc., which need to be celebrated and held? Are there not various means and encouragements of an external and worldly nature, which she needs, and is capable of receiving, by which religious knowledge may be more extensively diffused, and the dispensation of all divine ordinances maintained? And may she not receive the countenance and aid of civil government in all these, and in similar respects?

IV (a)

There are some texts which are commonly urged, as unfavourable to the employment of civil power in the support of religion. One of these is Zechariah IV 6, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." From these words it is inferred that *civil* power ought not to be employed in promoting religion. Let us enquire if this is a just or a forced inference. These words were spoken to Zerubbabel, the governor of the Jews, and primarily referred to the building of the second temple. The people engaged in the work were few, destitute of might and power, and despised by their numerous and powerful enemies, who scoffingly said, "What do these feeble Jews? Will they sacrifice? Will they make an end in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burnt?" The Jews themselves were greatly discouraged, and had repeatedly desisted from the work saying, "The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built." But amidst these discouragements, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, Not by might, nor

by power, but by My Spirit,' i.e. although ye are destitute of might and power for this work, the success of it does not depend upon these; My Spirit remaineth among you, fear ye not, He will carry on and consummate the work. But was this declaration made to Zerubbabel to cause him to drop the sceptre from his hands, and take no direction in the work, lest there should be an appearance of any human authority about it? Or, was it any contradiction of it when the Spirit of the Lord "turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them to STRENGTHEN THEIR HANDS in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel"? Ezra VI, 22. We do not mean, that the application of this passage is confined to the rebuilding of the temple. We consider it as applicable to the advancement of the work of God under the New Testament. All that we plead is, that the proper import of the words, as ascertained by the circumstances in which they were spoken, be preserved; and that a sense inconsistent with this be not imposed upon them. In this view, the words contain a glorious and comfortable truth, particularly encouraging to the friends of religion, when its interests are low, and they may be destitute of means for supporting or reviving them. The work is the Lord's; the success of it depends upon His Spirit; He has engaged to carry it on, and He will do it, (as He has formerly done) not only without, but in opposition to the power of authority, numbers, wealth, learning, eloquence, etc. But what God *does* is one thing, what men *ought* to do is another; nor, because He may proceed in one way at one time, are we to limit Him to the same mode of operation at all times: "For who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being His counsellor, hath taught Him?"

IV (b)

Another passage of scripture often quoted on this subject, is, II Cor. X, 4, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong-holds." That the weapons which belong to the church, her ministers and members, as such, are not carnal, what Presbyterian does not allow? If we pleaded for the substitution of carnal weapons in the place of these, or for the employment of them by magistrates for the same purposes and ends; if we pleaded for their being used as means adopted to the conversion of sinners, or spiritual edification, and that the gospel ought to be propagated and religion imposed upon men by force; — there would be propriety in urging these texts.

“ These texts (says Mr. Willison), are grossly perverted by some beyond their scope; for seeing our Lord in other plain texts approves of the Magistrate’s using his power for the good of the church, it was not His design to condemn it in these texts in the least. Nor can any just inference be made to this purpose, seeing the Magistrate’s acting in his sphere for the Church’s good, is in no ways inconsistent with the spirituality of Christ’s kingdom. For we do not at all plead for the Magistrate’s power to be employed by methods of force and violence to set up Christ’s spiritual and eternal kingdom in men’s hearts, or to oblige men’s consciences to receive His laws, as the kings of the world do force their conquered subjects to receive and obey theirs. No, this spiritual kingdom of Christ is set up in the souls and consciences of men by means and weapons of a spiritual nature, as the apostle tells us, II Cor. X viz:— by the preaching of the gospel, and the working of the Spirit of God therewith ” (Defence of National Churches, p. 210). But, besides those means which are properly spiritual, and which conduce directly to the promotion of spiritual ends, there are others of an external kind, which tend to promote the more free, convenient, extensive and permanent use of the spiritual means. Money, for example, is not adapted to convert or edify the souls of men, but it is necessary and useful for building churches and supporting religious ordinances. Civil authority belongs to this class of means; to represent it as inconsistent with those of the former kind, is as great an absurdity as to confound it with them. It may be lawfully employed in defending and maintaining, externally, the kingdom of Christ; in securing the rights and privileges of particular churches; in removing external hindrances or molestations, and in providing those things which are necessary to the use of the spiritual means. There is no more reason for saying that the apostle condemns any of these things, than for saying that he forbids the use of civil power for defending the church from violence, because he has said, “ the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.”

The Establishment at the Reformation and at the Second Reformation in Scotland

The late Rev. James Kerr, D.D., Glasgow, in his lectures on Church and State (printed in May 1893) writes: "The Establishment reared by the Scottish Reformers in the best times of the Reformation stands in history as a refutation of the opinion that Church and State cannot be nearly allied without the surrender of freedom. The Reformers without exception, maintained the principle of Establishments and urged upon the nation the duty of acknowledging and rendering support to the Church of Christ. . . . With such clear views about Church and State, Melville and Knox and the Reformers in the Second Reformation, reared their Establishment. The late Dr. Andrew Symington refers thus to the general principle of Establishments, and to the Establishment then happily constituted: "A civil establishment of religion, according to the sound and scriptural theory of such a national institution, implies no barter of the Church's privileges for the countenance and pay of the State, but a civil confirmation of privileges already possessed by the Church by solemn donation from her exalted Head. . . . it is for the mutual advantage of both Church and State, to be united on sound scriptural principles. . . . We conceive that in the Second Reformation, these two provisions were admirably fulfilled. Church and State acknowledged the common obligation of submission to the Redeemer's Headship. . . . To the Christian, the lover of His Saviour and His Church, this period is pregnant with instruction and with promise, the brightest day of Scotland's Church, a day in which millennial glory seemed to dawn. A Church, holding directly her Head in heaven, with doctrines and institutions and polity based immediately on the Holy Scriptures; with standards so excellent; with ministers so pious and faithful; with a people so enlightened and devoted; allied to a Christian reformed State, without any encroachment upon its independence or compromise of her own; with schools for scriptural education and seats of learning consecrated by sound religion, and banded together in holy covenant, and standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made her free, and resolutely prosecuting her proper purposes, presents an object commanding admiration."

“ For fidelity to these happy attainments — this complete Established uniformity,” continues Dr. Kerr, “ the servants of Christ were driven from their benefices, intercommuned, outlawed, shot down on the moors, drowned in the waters, carried to heaven in chariots of fire. Their sufferings were on behalf of the Establishment in principle and in fact. The late Dr. C. J. Brown, referring to the Act of 1649 said: “ How finely does the existence of this very statute demonstrate the practicability of an alliance between Church and State on terms honourable to both; and further demonstrates how nobly and successfully the Church had struggled during the previous years to maintain her spiritual independence. . . . Voluntary churchmen, out of an Establishment, talk of the independence of the Church: our forefathers within one, bled and died for it.”

VOLUNTARIYISM

“ Voluntaryism,” in the words of Principal Cunningham, “ amounts in substance to this — that the only relation that ought to subsist between State and the Church — between civil government and religion — is that of entire separation, or in other words, its advocates maintain that nations, as such, and civil rulers in their official capacity, not only are not bound, but are not at liberty to interfere in any religious matters, or to seek to promote the welfare of the Church of Christ as such. This theory, if true, supersedes the necessity of all further enquiry into the principles that ought to regulate the relation between Church and State; for it really implies that no connection should subsist, or can lawfully subsist between them. (Historical Theology Vol. I, ch. XIII).

“ Under the general head of the Civil magistrate, or the civil magistracy — that is, in the exposition of what is taught in Scripture concerning the functions and duties of the supreme civil authorities of a nation, whatever be its form of government — the Reformers were *unanimous and decided* in asserting, what has been called in modern times, the principle of national establishments of religion — namely, that it is competent to, and incumbent upon, nations, as such, and civil rulers in their official capacity, or in the exercise of their legitimate control over civil matters, to aim at the promotion of the honour of God, the welfare of true religion, and the prosperity of the Church of Christ. This principle, which comprehends or implies the whole of what

we are concerned to maintain upon the subject of national establishments of religion, we believe to be fully sanctioned by Scripture; and we can appeal, in support of it, to the decided and unanimous testimony of the Reformers — while the Anabaptists of that period seem to have been the first, if we except the Donatists of the fifth century, who stumbled upon something like the opposite doctrine, or what is now-a-days commonly called the Voluntary principle.” (Historical Theology Vol. II, Ch. XXVII).

“ Voluntary Principle ” — A Misnomer

“ The ‘ Voluntary principle ’ is, indeed,” continues Principal Cunningham, “ a most inaccurate and unsuitable designation of the doctrine to which it is now commonly applied, and is fitted to insinuate a radically erroneous view of the *status quaestionis* in the controversy. The Voluntary principle properly means the principle that an obligation lies upon men to labour, in the willing application of their talents, influence and worldly substance, for the advancement of the cause of God and the kingdom of Christ. Of course no defender of the principle of national establishments of religion ever questioned the truth of the Voluntary principle in this its only proper sense. The true ground of difference is just this, — that we who hold the principle of national establishments of religion extend this general obligation to nations and their rulers, while those who are opposed to us limit it to individuals; so that the Voluntary principle, in the only sense in which we reject and oppose it, — and in the only sense, consequently, in which it forms a subject of fair and honorable controversy, — is a mere limitation of the sphere of this obligation to promote the cause of God and the kingdom of Christ — a *mere* negation, that the obligation in this respect which attaches to individuals, extends also to nations and their rulers. We have no intention, however, at present of discussing this question. We have merely to advert to the unanimous and decided testimony of the Reformers in support of the general doctrine, as a portion of scriptural truth, — that the civil magistrate is bound, in the exercise of his legitimate authority, of his rightful jurisdiction over national affairs, to seek to promote, as far as he can, the welfare of true religion, and the prosperity of the church of Christ.”

Voluntaryism Postulates a Secular State

“Voluntaryism,” wrote Professor G. Smeaton, D.D., in “The Scottish Theory of Ecclesiastical Establishment,” “proposes to substitute a non-religious state — that is, a state purely secular without a religion and without a creed. . . . Never till the dawn of the French Revolution did this theory gain much attention or influence. For though we find it among the Anabaptists, the Quakers, and the untaught fanatical sects of the Commonwealth time — men who regarded the State as belonging to the empire of an evil power — it never menaced the institution of the Christian State till the fury and impiety of the French Revolution insinuated themselves into other nations. The heathen philosophers, Plato and Cicero, speak with a deeper view of the religious character of States, than Voluntary divines evince. We are naturally led to enquire, what description of person must be the ideal ruler of the Voluntary theory, if that could ever be reduced to practice in any country? The answer can only be, that in order to be a MODEL RULER he must be a BAD MAN, a man denuded of the fear of God, to whom all religions are alike, and none worthy of encouragement.”

Voluntaryism Essentially Atheistic

“The Voluntary principle,” said the Rev. John Duncan, LL.D., professor of Hebrew and of Oriental Languages in the Free Church College, Edinburgh, (usually known as “Rabbi” Duncan), “is not only anti-Christian, but atheistical.” “Apply the Voluntary principle to the British Constitution and Administration and the Imperial policy,” wrote Dr. James Kerr, “and at one fell blow, all references to Christianity in them must be instantly demolished. The Protestant Succession to the Throne must be abolished, the Bible must be expelled from the National Schools, prayers in Parliament and the Court of Assize must end, and all laws in favour of the Lord’s Day must be repealed. In short, in obedience to the demands of Voluntaryism, the whole laws and policy of the British Empire must be so fashioned and conducted, that they would not show whether the God of the Mahomedan, or the God of the Christian was Governor and King of Nations. Voluntaryism bolts the door of all public institutions against the entrance of the universal Lord. It is thus more Erastian than the Erastianism against which it is continually protesting. Thus imperiously Voluntaryism will thrust God out of the rulership of part of His own dominions and require the nation as such to conduct its affairs without any recognition of Him.”

Voluntaryism "the Offspring of Unbelief"

In a speech which the late eminent Dr. Kennedy, Dingwall, made in 1881 before leaving for Mentone for his health, he said, "The decay which generated the fungus of disestablishment (Voluntaryism) accounts for the growth of sensationalism in worship. The taste indulged in the drawing-room and in the concert room, craves for gratification in the house of God. This is the reason why hymns and organs are demanded. Of course some plausible excuse must be devised for urging such a change, but it is weariness of Scriptural worship that causes the fashionable desire for innovations. The coincidence of the development with that of disestablishment is sufficient to indicate the character of both. And the current change has passed on to unfaithfulness as to the custody of God's Word. A revolt against the regulations of Scripture can only result from defective views of its Divine perfection and authority. To one, who traced to growing unfaithfulness, the two former changes of feeling, there can be nothing unaccountable in the extent to which the Word of God is degraded within our pale. In a Church such as ours, Voluntaryism, Arminianism, and Sensationalism, must be the pioneers of Rationalism for they are all the offspring of unbelief."

Alterations in the Confession of Faith in Deference to Voluntaryism

The present Church of Scotland is the result of the union of the Established Church and the United Free Church in 1929. As far back as 1889 the General Assembly of the Established Church passed an Act entitled: "Act on Subscription of Office-bearers of the Church," which loosened the Church's relation to the Confession of Faith. In 1921 it passed the notorious Declaratory Articles which were approved by an Act of Parliament. The passing of the Declaratory Articles was in prospect of the union with the United Free Church, a Church strongly Voluntary, Arminian and riddled with Higher Criticism. The fact of such a union taking place was proof of how far the Established Church had drifted on the sea of apostacy from her historic moorings. In connection with the 1929 union it was agreed that the Establishment Principle could no longer be recognised as an article of religious belief and obligation in the Church of Scotland.

The Presbyterian Church of America in 1788, changed the chapters and sections of the Confession of Faith dealing with the Civil Magistrate. In "The Contender" for April 1957, edited by the Rev. Malcolm R. Mackay, Nova Scotia, Mr. Mackay states that they did so "in order to make them conform to the new (and false) doctrines of separation of Church and State, and the equality of all religions before the law, which the Anabaptists (wrongly called "Baptists") and Jeffersonians (followers of Thomas Jefferson, the deistic rationalist) had succeeded in putting across in the new land, and were about to write into the First Amendment in the United States Constitution. We showed from the history of the period, as given in the Encyclopedia Britannica, that the Presbyterians in America were in perfect agreement with the Anabaptists and Jeffersonians in this matter and had co-operated with them in their efforts to write these new doctrines into the Government's Constitution."

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church of America has not only revised the sections dealing with the Civil Magistrate, but has also left Section VI of chapter XXV of the Westminster Confession of Faith an open question as far as the church's terms of subscription are concerned. "Despite the professed loyalty of the Westminster Theological Seminary, The Orthodox Presbyterian Church and "The Presbyterian Guardian," to the Westminster Confession of Faith," writes the late Rev. D. Beaton, "we are sure it will amaze our readers, to learn that in the doctrinal Constitution of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, clause or paragraph VI of chapter XXV of the Westminster Confession of Faith is left an open question, as far as that church's terms of subscription are concerned. We refer to that part of the Confession which declares concerning the Pope that he is "that anti-Christ, that man of sin, and son of perdition that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God." A Church making such a grave omission scarcely merits the name Protestant, according to the original connotation of that term. Personally, the present writer believes sincerely that the attitude of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to this part of the Westminster Confession of Faith is the fruit of lack of spiritual discernment, due to spiritual or intellectual pride, in imagining themselves superior in their power of Biblical interpretation relative to this particular point, to the pious, profoundly spiritual and scholarly theologians who framed the Westminster Confession of Faith, and that the Most High has consequently punished the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and its evangelical periodical,

by giving them over, in this respect to spiritual blindness. If this view is correct, as we firmly believe it is, then the Church and that periodical will not be honoured, failing conviction of their error and repentance in witnessing against the most formidable obstacle to the spread of the Gospel in the world — Romanism, “the masterpiece of Satan.” As it is generally acknowledged that, with the possible exception of the Reformers at the Reformation period, and the body of godly and scholarly men who produced that unrivalled translation, the 1611 Authorised Version of the Scripture, there has not been known since the time of Pentecost, a body of theologians more endowed with spiritual power, depth and discernment, from on high, than the pious, spiritual, and scholarly framers of the Westminster Confession of Faith, does it not appear like gross presumption on the part of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church thus, by implication, to correct the, to them, debatable convictions of these divinely highly-favoured theologians? The most deeply spiritual Christians of the present day might, with propriety, be called light-hearted compared with these theologians.

To excuse oneself by saying that the confessional view on this particular point is merely an interpretation, is inconsistent, as it is an integral part of the Westminster Confession of Faith, binding upon all who subscribe to it as the confession of the individual subscriber. To subscribe only those parts of the Westminster Confession of Faith which suit our own notions of propriety, while still claiming unqualified, unequivocal heirship of, and admiration for, confessional doctrines, savours far too much of the unscrupulously-unseemly tactics of the Modernists relative to the Bible — they must needs pose as Christians, while discarding those parts of the inspired, infallible Word of God, which they, in their lamentable spiritual blindness, think should not be there. The seeming subterfuge that the Westminster Confession of Faith, being, after all, a humanly framed document, though based on the Bible, one could not be expected to endorse every detail of it, as one knows of no book composed by man to which one could not yield such endorsement, may seem not only plausible but an incontrovertible argument to some, but in this particular case it does not carry conviction. If the Papal System, culminating in the blasphemous doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope, when he speaks *ex-cathedra* on matters of faith and morals — an attribute and prerogative peculiar to the Godhead — is not, after all, the Scriptural Anti-Christ, we fail absolutely to conceive how any other system that can ever arise and develop, will coincide so

exactly in minute detail, with the inspired Biblical description. We can only conclude that "blindness in part is happened" to those who believe otherwise." (The Free Presbyterian Magazine, March 1941).

The above criticism holds good in connection with "The Reformed Church of New Zealand," which also accepts the Voluntary alterations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the sections of the Confession of Faith dealing with the "Civil Magistrate."

The Christian Reformed Church in America has changed Article XXXVI of the Belgic Confession on "The Civil Magistrate" or "The Magistracy" as it is called..

This church's earliest membership was composed of immigrants from the Netherlands. It has, according to the 1962 statistics, "more than 550 congregations and a quarter million members located in 27 states, plus the District of Columbia and in six provinces of Canada." The theological seminaries of the Christian Reformed Church are Calvin College and Calvin Seminary. The doctrinal standards of the Church consist of "The Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort."

The original text of the Belgic Confession on the Magistracy reads as follows: "Their office is not only to have regard unto and watch for the welfare of the civil state, but also that they protect the sacred ministry, and thus may remove and prevent all idolatry and false worship, that the kingdom of the Anti-Christ may be thus destroyed and the kingdom of Christ promoted." The following footnote in connection with Article XXXVI appears on page 19 of "Doctrinal Standards of the Christian Reformed Church," published in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1962, states: "The Synod of 1910, recognising the unbiblical teaching, contained in this sentence concerning freedom of religion and concerning the duty of the state to suppress false religion, saw fit to add an explanatory footnote. The Synod of 1938, agreeing with the Synod of 1910 as to the unbiblical character of the teaching referred to, but recognising a conflict between the objectionable clauses in the Article and its footnote decided to eliminate the footnote and to make the change in text of the Article, corresponding to the change adopted in 1905 by the Synod of the "Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland." We cannot accept that the teaching of the Reformers on "The Magistracy" is "unbiblical."

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America has not changed the original text of the Confession, but has made a special declaration on the subject. The Reformed Presbyterian Declaration and Testimony says: "No ecclesiastical authority is lodged in the hands of private Christians or civil Magistrates; Church judicatories are subordinate only to Christ Jesus etc." This declaration is inconsistent with the plain teaching of the Confession and of the Word of God.

Voluntaryism Essentially Sectarian

"At an early period of the Reformation on the continent," writes Dr. McCrie, "certain sects of separatists from the body of Protestants appeared, who began to propagate peculiar opinions about the nature and exercise of the office of civil magistrates among Christians, the nature of the kingdom of Christ, and Christian liberty, especially in reference to religion, as to which every person and sect were to be left to their own humour or liking, without respect to public authority. Among these, the Anabaptists, Socinians, and those denominated Libertines were distinguished; by whom commotions were excited in various places, both in civil and ecclesiastical society. . . . In England, during the sitting of the Westminster Assembly, after some progress had been made for settling religion by authority*, according to the Solemn League, a number of sectaries appeared, who, in order to hinder a new national establishment, vented these tenets in their discourses and writings, and insisted for a general toleration and liberty; and rested not, until those who favoured their scheme wrested the sword out of the hands of the Presbyterians, and seized on every part of the government, which they employed for their own purposes, involving all the three kingdoms again in troubles and bloody wars, and restricting considerably the due freedom of the ministry and ecclesiastical courts; though under the republic and usurpation of Cromwell, for *political reasons*, the laws that had been made for settling religion were never repealed, but only restricted and new-modelled. . . ,

"Sectarian principles are opposed to unity and uniformity in religion, and to the proper means for promoting these, whether by civil or ecclesiastical society. In the present controversy they are considered chiefly with reference to civil authority, and are so called, not only because they have been

* It must be observed that the religious body once known by the name of Puritans, became Presbyterian both in principle and practice, partly before and thoroughly during the time of the Westminster Assembly - - And of the whole two thousand who were ejected by the Act of Uniformity above nine-tenths were Presbyterians. (History of the Westminster Assembly by W. H. Hetherington, D.D. L.L.D., p. 325.)

commonly held by sects that had separated from the great body in Protestant churches, but also on account of their tendency to produce and foster endless sects, by patronising, instead of checking all sorts of religious opinions and different forms of worship. Though they are sometimes denominated a new scheme, or new principles; and sometimes new light, because they are recommended in our times, as the effect of further light and improvements than our fathers were blessed with, yet it will be evident to any acquainted with modern church-history and literature, that, from whatever source they may have been immediately drawn, whether from the religious sectaries above mentioned, the sentiments of latitudinarian and socinianising divines, or the schools of more modern philosophers, they are far from being new. Every proposition and favourite phrase, the very modes of expression used in argument, explication, or declamation, are but a repetition of what may be found almost *verbatim*, in a variety of productions left by their worthy predecessors."

Dr. McCrie shows that Voluntaryism is essentially sectarian and that churches and bodies which have renounced the Establishment Principle have fallen from the Reformed and Scriptural position taken by the Churches at the Reformation. That sacred unity with which they upheld the Supremacy of Christ as King of Nations, with the consequent duty of nations as such and civil rulers in their official capacity to honour and serve Him by recognising His Truth and promoting His Cause, Voluntaryism has shamefully violated. It has cast to the ground that royal diadem of glory and beauty, and under the banner of a spurious sanctity it has confounded "the state" with "the world," and has allured its devotees into the jungle of sectarianism. However divergent the sects may be in doctrine and practice, from the ultra-orthodox to the false and the fantastic, they all with one accord pay homage to the great Diana of Voluntaryism. "It is questionable," to quote again Dr. Begg's condemnation of Voluntaryism, "whether Popery itself more directly robs Christ of His glory — the glory of having all power in heaven and on earth." "Voluntaryism is not only anti-christian," said 'Rabbi' Duncan, "but atheistical." It is sad, indeed, to see churches and organisations professing to uphold the Calvinistic doctrines of the Reformation succumbing to the deadly spell of Voluntaryism. To all such the exhortation applies, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." This Achan in the

camp, this accursed thing in the eyes of the Most High must be destroyed. Let us turn a deaf ear to the siren voices of Voluntaries however Calvinistic they may claim to be, and not be drawn by them into the wilderness of the sects. Let us keep to the King's highway trod by martyrs and Reformers, and in the name of our God display our banners that Christ is the Prince of the kings of the earth, and that the nation and the kingdom that will not serve Him and His Cause shall perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. "The Establishment Principle," said the eminent Dr. Kennedy of Dingwall, "is not only worth living for, but a Principle worth dying for." "Voluntary churchmen, out of an Establishment, talk of the independence of the church: OUR FOREFATHERS WITHIN ONE, BLED AND DIED FOR IT." (Dr. C. J. Brown).

His testimony and his law
in Isr'el he did place,
And charg'd our fathers it to show
to their succeeding race;
That so the race which was to come
might well them learn and know;
And sons unborn who should arise,
might to their sons them show:
That they might set their hope in God,
and suffer not to fall
His mighty works out of their mind,
but keep his precepts all.

— Psalm 78 (5 - 7)

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