

CRACK ABOUT THE KIRK

FOR

KINTRA FOLK.



SAUNDERS. Are ye gaun to lee' the kirk, John?

JOHN. Deed, Saunders, I am no vera keen about it; are ye gaun to lee't yoursel'?

S. No yet, I'm thinkin'; what for should I? I ha'e been an elder in't for twenty years come the winter sawcrament, and it's no a waur kirk but a hantle better ane syn' I cam' till't, and until it gets waur, I'll bide and end my days in't, and *if* it *gets* waur, I can aye lee't whan I like.

J. Ye'll no ha'e heard the deputations I'se warrant?

S. Wha me? Did I no! if we are no wise it's no for want o' tellin'. It puts my auld head in confusion a' this steer!

J. They're surely desperat' keen o' the fechtan thae ministers wi' a' their crack about britherly love and peace!

S. Ye may say sae John, but ye ken, as the auld sayin' haes't, "the best men are but men at the best."

J. Na', that's a truth! But pity me, could they no maun to reform the kirk withoot sic a bizz? sic a fechtin' in sessions, presbyteries, synods, and assemblies. Na, that'll no do, thae maun ha'e a convention like the Chartists.

S. A convocation, John.

J. Weel, weel, it's no the richt parliament, that's a'. And that's no enuech, for they maun haud meetin's every ither day in their ain parishes, and ower and aboon, they maun tak' their neebours' parishes in hand. Na, they're no dune yet, for they maun ha'e committees o' a' the impudent, speaking, fashious, conceited chiels, that are aye first and foremost in every steer; and tae keep them hett, they're aye bleezing at them wi' circulars, newspapers, and addresses, and gif ony o' them change their mind, be he minister or man, or daur to think for himsel', he is cry'd doon for a' that's bad and wicked! Na, it's desperate wark, Saunders!

S. Deed, John, the speerit that's abroad 's gien me unco concern for the weelfare o' the kirk o' Scotland, but mair especially for the church o' Christ in the land. It's richt that men should ha'e their ain opinions, and if they think them gude, to haud them up and spread them in a richt and Christian way; but this way the ministers ha'e enoo o' gaun to work, I canna persuade mysel' is in accordance wi' the speerit o' the apostles, wha gied themselves wholly tae prayer and the preaching o' the word, and were aye thankfu' whan they had liberty to do baith, and wha said that "the servant and the lord must not strive, but be gentle towards all men,"

and that "tho' we should gi'e our bodies to be burned, we were nothing, unless we had that love that thinketh no evil, that beareth all things, that hopeth all things."

J. They put me in mind o' bees bummin' and fleeing aboot and doin' little wark, and makin' nae kame in their ain skaip just afore castin', or like thae writer bodies at an election gaun gallopin' aboot the kintra, keepin' the steam up wi' speeches, and newspapers, till the poll be bye.

S. I canna weel understaun't, for there are gude gude men amang them. They are surely sair mislaid? for nae doot they think they're richt. I think that pledging way is a sad snare tae the conscience; it baith keeps a man frae seein' that he's wrang, or whan he sees himsel' wrang, frae puttin' himsel' richt.

J. It wad be Faither Matthews, may be, that pit that plan in their head?

S. Oo, the men are perfect sincere, and gaun aboot, doubtless, to pit folk in mind o' what they think their duty, and o' their richts and preeveleges.

J. Sincere! It's nae comfort tae me tae tell me whan a man's gaun tae cut my throat that he's sincere; and as tae stirrin' up the folk to min' their ain richts, they needna think that necessar', for if the folk are wranged, they'l fin't oot wi'oot the ministers tellin' them. If a man has a sair leg or a sick body ye needna keep prokin' at him and roarin' in his lug a' day that he's no weel; or if he's in jail, or turned oot o' his hoose tae the streets, ye needna be threepin' doon his throat that he canna be comfortable, he kens that better than you; but if ye get haud o' a nervish flood waik body, a doctor can persuade him that he's deean, and mak' him ruin himsel' wi' pooders and bottles; and if he's hott tempered and proud, a Chartist can, maybe, persuade him that he's a slave, and bound wi' airs. Noo, a' this mischief comes frae gabby speakers wha mak' the evil, and then lea' decent folk tae reform it.

S. Ye're ower hett on't yersel, John, I can see gude on baith sides, and difficulties on a', and muckle tae reform, tho' no eneuch tae destroy; but here comes the Dominie and Will Jamieson, the tailor, along the road, and ye'es get it noo, lad, for ye're in the hands o' the Philistines!

J. I am but a plain weaver, Saunders, and no fit tae argue wi' the Dominie, tho' I carena about stickin' up tae Will, for him and me has mony a fecht at meal hours aboot this Non-Intrusion; but ye're an elder o' the kirk, and should staun' up for't. Let us sit doon on the brigg here, it's a grand place for a crack.

DOMINIE. Good day, Alexander,—good day, John.

S. & J. Gude day tae ye baith.

WILL. Ye'll be at yer auld wark, nae doot, haudin' up the kirk?

J. An' ye'll be at yer auld wark, pullin't doon?

S. Indeed, John and me war' jist crackin' aboot our auld kirk, and he thinks ye're gaun tae ding it doon a' thegither.

J. Na, I ken naething about it, Maister. Am unco concerned for its walfare, and me and Saunders are muckle o' ae mind that there's something far wrang whae'er haes the blame.

D. You may say so, John; they are surely far wrong when ministers of the gospel can be forced upon reclaiming congregations against the will of the people; when the civil power can interfere with the Church in the discharge of her spiritual duties; when the state, not Christ, assumes to be head of the Church. When all power of exercising Church discipline is taken from her, surely, then, Ichabod, "the glory is departed," may be written upon her walls!

WILL. An' the ministers maun gang noo tae the Court o' Session tae get a text for their sermons, an' tae see wha's tae be let into the communion

table, for nae minister nor elder can cheep noo unless wi' their bidding, and—

J. That's a whien blethers, Will! an' it's aye your way to run aff wi' the harrows.

S. Stap noo lads, dinna begin the fechtin' like twa dogs ower a bane. But I wad like, Mr. Brown, tae hear your opinion anent this question. Ye ha'e mentioned mony a bad thing (as ye say) that's come tae the kirk, and its' no easy tae pick a' the threads out o' sic a ravelled hank, but gif the tae half was true o' what ye say I wadna stay in the kirk anither sabbath, unless we could get things mended! But either o' us are far mis-ta'en. But first o' a', what think ye o' the Non-Intrusion question?

D. I think that no man should be minister in any parish contrary to the will of the people. I thought this question was settled in the mind of every good man.

S. Do ye mean that nae man should be a minister o' a parish if the folk jist say they'll no ha'e him, wi'oot gien rhyme or reason, wi'oot sayin' why or wherefore, wi'oot sayin' black's yer e'e or ought against him!

D. Just so, if the Christian people say no—no it must be. For who dare say yes?

S. That was aye the opinion o' the Dissenters, but I ne'er kent that it was the law o' the kirk, so that it couldna be a kirk at a' wi'oot it.

D. It is the law; read from First and Second Books of Discipline.

S. I ha'e read them, an' I couldna see that law in them; at least, if it was in them I ne'er kent the state had agreed till't.

W. Tak' oot yer Books o' Discipline, Maister, and read the bits tae Saunders, he an' the like o' him are keepit in darkness.

J. He canna be in darkness wi' sic a new light as you, Wull; tho' I am feared ye'll pruve but a penny dip after a'!

D. Here are the Books of Discipline. Let us look at them; there is the first book, chap. iv.,—"It appertaineth to the people and every several congregation to elect their minister."

S. There was nae pawtronage then at a', it seems.

D. No, there was not in the Protestant church, and the people had a right to elect their minister; but, if within forty days they did not exercise this right the superintendent and his counsel—

J. He was a kind o' bishop, I tak' it.

D. Never mind—but he presented, after examination, a minister to the vacant congregation. Now, observe these words,—“altogether this is to be avoided, that any man be violently intruded or thrust in upon any congregation;” there, ye see, is the Non-Intrusion in the *First Book of Discipline*.

S. Let me see't, sir. But what say ye, Mr. Brown, to the rest o' the passage? It's no fair the way you Non-Intrusionists aye stop at that part o' the sentence, for it gangs on to say,—“But violent intrusion we call not when the counsel of the Church, in the fear of God, and for the salvation of the people, offereth unto them a sufficient man to instruct them, whom they shall not be forced to admit before just examination.” An' quite richt that, but see, they daurna reject this man wi'oot “just and sufficient reason,” for it says, “that they shall be *compelled*, by the censure of the counsel and church, to receive the person appointed and approved by the judgment of the godly and learned.”

J. That's no your kind o' Non-Intrusion, Will; there can be nae *reasons* in your liberty-line?

S. But they tell me this First Buke o' Discipline was ne'er agreed tae by the State; that it was just made by the kirk when she was in the voluntary way, and whan she might mak' what laws she liked wi'oot losing her Establishment, for she wasna established at a'.

W. Tak' him, Mr. Brown, then, tae the Second Book o' Discipline, if this ane 'ill no please him.

D. Yes, there can be little doubt what the mind of the church was in reference to Non-Intrusion when that book was composed. In chap. xii. it is declared "the liberty of the election of persons called to the ecclesiastical functions, and observed without interruption, so long as the kirk was not corrupted by antichrist we desire to be restored and retained within this realm. So that *none be intruded upon any congregation* either by the prince or any inferior persons without lawful election, and the assent of the people over whom the person is placed, as the practice of the apostolical and primitive kirk, and good order, craves. And, because this order which God's word craves *cannot stand* with patronage and presentation to benefices used in the Pope's kirk, &c., &c., and for so much as that manner of proceeding *has no ground in the word of God*, but *is contrary* to the same, and to the said liberty of election, they ought not now to have place in this light of reformation." So, you see, that patronage is "against the word of God," "flows from the Pope's church," and "cannot stand with the liberty of election and of *consent* which the people should have."

WILL. That'll dae ye surely, Saunders?

S. I see the *teetle* o' that chapter is "Certain special Heads o' Reformation which we *crave*." But I ha'e been telt, and ne'er heard it contradicted, that the State ne'er gied them this they craved.

D. The second Book of Discipline was agreed to by the State.

S. But no *this* bit o't, for surely wi' a' they say against pawtronage they tuik it?

J. I'se warrant they wadna tak' a kirk wi' sic an unholy thing,—did they, Maister?

D. Why—why, I believe they did.

J. Did they fac! an yet they say that what ye ca' Non-Intrusion couldna staun' wi't!

WILL. But do ye no see that if they hadna ta'en the kirk wi' patronage then, they couldna ha'e got a kirk established at a'?

J. I see that as weel as you. I see they couldna keep Non-Intrusion in ae hand and an Establishment in the ither; that these couldna staun' thegither; but were they no gleg tae haud a grip o' a' gude establishment wi' manses, glebes, and stipends, wi'oot Non-Intrusion, than to ha'e a voluntary kirk wi'oot patronage,—that's what they should dae yet.

D. They *cannot* do it; for even though Non-Intrusion, (as it is in the Books of Discipline,) might not have been agreed to by the State,—tho' I say it was—it is yet in the word of God, and that is enough for me,—for the Church rests her claims, not on her Books of Discipline only, but also on the immovable foundation of the Word of God.

S. I am vera dootfu' aboot this way o' fatherin' ilka thing that comes into ane's head on the Word; I ne'er could see ae way o' kirk government in the word o' God.

D. What! you an elder who have in the most solemn manner declared that you believe the Presbyterian form of Church government to be agreeable to the word of God! you to speak thus?

S. Aye! agreeable tae the *spirit* o' the word, but maybe no found in the *letter* o' the word.

D. But can you think that the great Head would leave no directions to his church as to its government?

S. Directions! there's nae doubt he has left directions; he has telt us that the field o' our wark is the world, that the seed is to be sawn, and he has appointed ministers and office-bearers for the sawing o' the seed, and all is to be dune that *much* fruit may be brought forth to the glory o' God; but I quation if he has gien verra preceese directions aboot the way the

workmen in the vineyard are to be appointed, or about a' the various kinds o' instruments the ploughs, the harrows, that are to be used for cultivating the field, or for workin' t' sae that it may bring forth a gude crop.

WILL. That's queer doctrine ! Did he no tell Moses that a' things were to be made accordin' to the pattern gien him on the mount ?

J. Wha's speakin' about Moses, Ise warrant *he* was obleeged to mak' a' things accordin' to the pattern because he got ane ! aye, a pattern o' the verra candlesticks, and o' their nobbs ! And doe ye no think that God could hae gien as preceese a pattern o' the Christian kirk if it had been his wull, that there should be ae form for the whole world ? or as Sanders would say, If every field and every soil was just to be ploughed, harrowed, and sawn doon in the same way ?

WILL. I would think, John, the truth wad be truth in every part ; that if a thing was true in Scotland, it wad be true in every ither part o' the world.

J. I would think sae tae Will, but we are no speakin' about the truth, but *about the way o' getten't*, and it doesna hinder a man to get the truth as weel as you, tho' he doesna clap on your specks *tae sect* !

D. But, Alexander, I think it is hardly possible for any unprejudiced man to read the New Testament, and not to see clear intimations of the will of the great Head of the church, in reference to the right inherent in its members to elect their pastors ; or at all events, to exercise such an influence in their selection, as to prevent any one being placed over them without his first being tried by the people.

S. I canna say, Mr. Brown, that I ever saw that verra clearly set doon in the word o' God ; whar do ye find't ?

D. In the history we have of the election of an apostle, and of a deacon, and in the commands which are given to the Christian people, to beware of false prophets, to try the spirits ; examples which if followed, and commands which if obeyed, are utterly inconsistent with any view of church government but the one recognised by the popular party in the church of Scotland.

J. That's a' verra full text that ye hae, maister.

WILL. Break it doon for them, and gie them't in parts then ; begin wi' the elections o' the apostles and deacons.

D. That's easily done, and I candidly think ought to convince. We have an account of the election of an apostle in the first chapter of the Acts. It is there said, " And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots : and the lot fell upon Matthias ; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." Is not that popular election ?

S. I candidly tell *you* that I'am verra doubtful about it ; for ye'l notice, in the first place, when it's said "*they* appointed two," and "*they* prayed," and "*they* gave forth their lots," it doesna say *wha* did this, the people or the apostles. Then see again it wasna them that selected but Christ, " shew whether of these two *thou* hast chosen," for he had chosen all the others ; and lastly, the mind of Christ was found out by lot ! My opinion is, that this was a *supernatural* way o' choosin out an office-bearer,—ane that's no in the Christian church at a' noo, viz. *an apostle*.

WILL. It proves to my mind that folk should hae a say in the election o' a minister.

J. It proves jist as weel vote by ballot !

D. I am merely stating you my opinion, and you have a perfect right

to state yours. I think of course that the election of Matthias is intended to guide the Christian Church in all ages. This opinion is confirmed by what took place in the electing of a deacon.

J. We hae nae deacons at a' noo; the only ane I ever kent was auld Jock Morton, the deacon o' the tailors.

S. Whist, John, wi' your nonsense; mony o' our Kirks hae deacons, and we would hae them here if the office o' the deacon wasna performed by the elders, and I think the two offices should be distinct in every Christian congregation.

WILL. And elected by the people.

D. *That* I think is intimated very clearly, and beyond all doubt, in the history given us in the sixth chapter of the Acts. There can be no doubt that they were elected by the people, for we read that the twelve *called the multitude* and said, "wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you men whom we will appoint over this business, but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word," and it is added that the saying pleased the people, and that they elected the deacons accordingly; what can be plainer?

S. But a deacon's no a minister, he doesna teach—but looks after the poor; and it was but richt and fair that the folk that subscribed the money should elect frae amongst them, them that were to pay it awa; and when the people pay their ministers it will be time eneuch to quastion whether they should elect them.

J. It's my mind, frae readin' that history, that had it no been for the grumbling o' the Grecians against the Hebrews, for their widows no gettin' their ain share o' the puir's money, there wad hae been nae deacons at a'! There's twa things, hooever, gien us plain there, namely, that the kirk had deacons *then*, and that the minister gied themselves wholly to prayer and preaching o' the word *then*, but I canna see thae twa things in the kirk *noo*, and surely thae things are plainer than Non-Intrusion.

D. If the people then were enabled to judge of men having such high qualifications as these "Men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," I think they can hardly ever be called upon to judge of higher. Would that they had a body from whom they could make such noble selections!

S. Ye may say sae, maister! and would that we had sic a body o' communicants as electors, and that we had sic a presbytery as the apostles to chack their election! that's what I say, *that things that might work weel eneuch then will no dae noo.*

WILL. I'll ne'er agree tae that! There's naething surely should be in the Christian Church noo that wasna in the Christian Church then if there is, it canna be accordin to the word o' God.

J. Naething in the Christian Church noo but what was in't then! Where will ye get parishes, and parish kirks, and stipends, and glebes, and heritors' meetings in the early Christian kirk? I wonder, Will, hoo ye ever cam intae the kirk o' Scotland wi' that wheen nonsense? If ye hadna some scent o' sense in ye, I wadna wonder tae hear ye propose that a' the communicants noo should kiss ane anither, as they did then.

WILL. The matter's ower serious for that jokin'; ye're frightened for the argument aboot tryin' the speerits; that's aye hair in yer neck.

S. I wish ye would baith tak' an example frae Mr. Brown, wha states his argument calmly and decently, and then lets folk judge it. What's your mind on that passage aboot tryin' the speerits?

D. The passage is this, "Beloved, believe not every spirit but try the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone into the world." These are the words of the beloved disciple, who probably had in his eye the equally clear commandment of his master, "Beware of false

prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves."

S. And what do these passages, do you think, prove.

D. They prove that "the spirits," "the prophets," or "ministers" are to be tried by the *disciples*; that this is not a privilege conferred upon them by the church, which they may or may not exercise, which the church can give or take away; but that it is a solemn duty which the Christian people must perform, as they shall answer to their great Head; now our kirk believing that the Christian people had, during the sway of moderatism, been deprived of this right, and desiring to legislate according to the word of God, did in 1834 pass the much abused veto-law.

J. A lang text again, Mr. Brown! but I dootna Saunders would gie a gude comment o'nt.

S. It seems tae me verra doobtful what is meant by the command "try the spirits." Some commentators think that it was an extraordinary gift o' the Speerit which the early Christian church had—this power o' discernin' the speerits o' ither men—tae ken whether they should be admitted as church members, or tae ken whether the prophets were tellin' the truth or tellin' lies when they were foretelling things to come. But even grantin' that the meanin' o' the passage is such as ye mak' it oot, what's tae hinder the disciple frae trying speerits noo as then, and frae being beware o' false prophets? Every disciple in the parish church should try the speerit o' the parish minister, and if he doesna think that he is guided by the Spirit of God, that he's no preaching the gospel, he should try the speerit o' anither minister.

WILL. But what if ye hae nae ither minister tae gang till; I maun tak' the parish minister though ye dinna like him, or else want.

S. A sair sair business, black business, if a presbytery o' ministers meeting in the name o' Christ, pit in a man that doesna preach the glad tidings o' the gospel fully and freely! Sic things may be, but we are a' sinfu' men, an' there's nae system perfect; and even if there war popular election, we read o' a time when they wull not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap tae themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away these ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables; and I'm auld enouch tae ken that there's as muckle pawtronage o' as tyrannical a kind, as e'er was in the kirk, among the mony dissenters—that their no a bit better pleased, nor sae weel pleased mony o' them, wi' their ministers, than we are wi' ours, and they hae nae cause tae be sae.

WILL. But ist no an unnatural thing pawtronage?

S. It maybe unnatural tae see a German lad and an English lassie owre the great British empire, but like pawtronage, it works maybe better than if the king was tae be elected.

J. But do ye think, maister, that a kirk canna be a kirk o' Christ unless the folk hae the power ye speak o'?

D. No church can be a church of Christ unless it obeys Christ's commands.

J. Dootless; but then ye see a' the dispute is aboot what the commands o' Christ are, an' if they be what ye mak' them oot tae be, if the people mann a' try the speerits o' their pastors, what becam o' the Kirk o' Scotland up tae 1834? Wha tried the speerits o' thae ministers that are crying oot sae muckle aboot the richt o' the people tae do sae noo? Wha tried the speerit o' that lang legged chiel, what d'ye cae him, wi' the spats and umbrella, that cam here wi' the deputation? I am telt there wusna twenty signed his call.

WILL. The pastoral relation canna be formed withoot full consent, for he that cometh in, ye ken, by a wrang door, is a thief and a robber.

J. Sae be it; but if he comes in by the wrang door, and stays in, he is a thief and a robber, till he gangs out and comes in by the richt way; but will ony o' ye tell me what way the kirk o' Scotland was before the passing o' this veto?

D. For 112 years she was under moderate rule, and the rights of the Christian people were trampled upon.

WILL. The Christian people couldna cheep, they had nae power at a', and the kirk wasna gaun according to the mind o' God, but clean against.

J. We hae surely been in a desperate state.

WILL. We couldna weel be waur.

J. I'se warrent the kirk o' Scotland couldna be a kirk o' Christ then.

WILL. Deed she was far fae't.

J. I canna thole this nonsense! If she wasna a kirk o' Christ, hoo did a' they ministers that are bleezing against her come into her at a'? hoo did ye become a communicant in her? hoo did God bless her, and mak her a blessing? And if she *was* a kirk o' Christ without your vetoes, would she no continue a kirk o' Christ tho' a your vetoes were done awa wi, and a' this stramash put an end to, and she to gang back to what she was before 1834.

S. Tae gang back, but in truth tae gang forward! for *I'se desperate keen for gude reform*, and wad like the folk had mair power; but I wad like to get it in a legal way; I would like to *improve the machine*, put in new screws, and mend what was awanting, and gie't plenty o' oil; but I'm *no for breaking down the machine a' thegither* that has down sae muckle gude, because its no fashioned to the pattern o' this man or that. It was that veto law played a' the mischief!

J. Wi'oot even being agreeable to the word of God! according as Mr. Brown lays't down.

WILL. It was agreeable to the word o' God.

J. Was't? ye tell us that a' the disciples should try the speerits—that a' the disciples should hae a say in the election o' a minister; noo ane wad think that the kirk would gie us popular election after that. Na, says the kirk, nane o' the female disciples—and the female disciples were among the greatest ornaments of the early kirk—nane o' them are to hae a say—nane o' the young men are to hae a say—nane o' the servant-lads are to hae a say—nane but the male heads are tae cheep—as if a' the sense o' the congregation was in their heads; and little sense after a' maun be in them! for its no expected o' them that they can hae sense enugh tae gie reasons; but just tae say, No! That's a droll way o' trying the speerits, and being ready to gie a reason for the faith that's in them tae every man. Noo the veto was nather agreeable to the word o' God as it's laid down by you, nor was it agreeable to the law o' the land as laid down by all the judges. And, if she has got into this scrape it wasna for want o' tellan and warning. Mony a time it was said in the assembly that a' this mischief wad come. Even the gude Dr. M'Crie, I'm telt by Mr. Struthers, said before the House o' Commons afore it was passed, that the kirk had nae powers tae pass this law, and that it wad bring us into confusion.

S. I am clear about its unlawfulness, and that when the kirk passed that law she took the first word o' flyting, and that her determination to keep that law, tho' it has been declared illegal, has been the grand cause o' her late troubles.

WILL. There ye gang with your Erastianism, putting the law o' the land higher than the law of God—putting the ceevil courts aboon the church of Christ—making the king the head o' the kirk.

J. Hae ye got into this line, Will, o' calling your neighbour nick-names; and cramming doon folks' throats opinions they abominate, and putting sentiments in their tongues they never uttered? It's no fair.

D. Neither is it fair for you to assert that the church disobeys the law and is a rebel?

S. Does she no disobey the law?

D. No! for she denies that it *is* the law.

S. But haena the ceevil courts declared that the kirk broke the law, and broke her bargain wi' the state, when she passed the veto; that she interfered wi' the ceevil richts o' pautrons, and that as lang as she keeps the veto she's breaking the law?

D. Yes, the civil courts have declared so, but the church courts have declared otherwise. Now the church courts are as much courts of the country as the civil courts are, and have an *equal* right with them to interpret law as affecting the church; you surely do not think that the civil courts should have the power of laying down the law to the church; as to what her duty is in spiritual matters; that would be subjecting the church to the state with a vengeance!

S. Na! naeboddy that I ken thinks sae, and Mr. Simpson tells me that the ceevil courts intend nae sic thing, but only lay doon the bargain the kirk made wi' the state tae keep her till't. Let me speir at you, Sir, are there ony laws o' the state aboot the puttin' in o' ministers at a'? or has the state left the established kirk to mak ony law she likes—tae hae patronage or nae patronage—election by the male heads—an election by the communicants, just as she pleases—tae try what man she likes for a parish or no tae try; or are there ony acts o' parliament or ony laws o' the land aboot thae things?

D. There have certainly been many acts of parliament about these matters.

WILL. That's whaur the voluntaries say we are wrang, tae hae thae things in acts o' parliament at a'!

J. An ye would like tae hae acts, and no tae be bund by them! But what I say is this, there's nae harm to be bund tae a thing we hae agreed tae, nor to be bund doon tae dae what's richt, and tae walk in ae road when it's for the gude o' the hail community, it's better this than tae hae a voluntary liberty o' loupin ower hedges and dykes.

S. You twa are desperate keen for a colleyshangy, ye're aye interrupting me and Mr. Brown. Ye were sayin', Sir, there were different acts aboot the puttin' in o' ministers; noo wha passed thae acts? and for what kirk?

D. They were passed of course by the British parliament, for the protection of the church of Scotland.

S. The British parliament! is that a ceevil body?

D. Undoubtedly it is! you cannot suppose it an ecclesiastical body?

S. Weel, surely the acts o' a ceevil body are ceevil acts, and whatna court but a ceevil court should explain them?

D. But you will observe that these acts refer to spiritual and religious matters.

J. Sae do the acts aboot the Sabbath-day; for wasna Tam Speirs, that ne'er-do-weel, afore the Shirra, Friday was aught-days, and tried by him for breaking thae acts.

D. You observe, Sanders, what I before said was, that while the civil courts should interpret these acts, the church courts should interpret them as well.

WILL. And that's but fair play. If twa folk war disputin' aboot a march dyke, its surely richt that the ae man should hae as muckle say aboot it as the tither; and sae whan the kirk and state differ aboot *their* march, it's but fair the kirk should hae a say aboot it as weel as the state.

J. Aye, Will—and baith should gang tae a third pairty—the ceevil courts, that explain a' bargains, and refer the matter tae them. But ye

J. Sae be it; but if he comes in by the wrang door, and stays in, he is a thief and a robber, till he gangs out and comes in by the richt way; but will ony o' ye tell me what way the kirk o' Scotland was before the passing o' this veto?

D. For 112 years she was under moderate rule, and the rights of the Christian people were trampled upon.

WILL. The Christian people couldna cheep, they had nae power at a', and the kirk wasna gaun according to the mind o' God, but clean against.

J. We hae surely been in a desperate state.

WILL. We couldna weel be waur.

J. I'se warrent the kirk o' Scotland couldna be a kirk o' Christ then.

WILL. Deed she was far fae't.

J. I canna thole this nonsense! If she wasna a kirk o' Christ, hoo did a' they ministers that are bleezing against her come into her at a'? hoo did ye become a communicant in her? hoo did God bless her, and mak her a blessing? And if she *was* a kirk o' Christ without your vetoes, would she no continue a kirk o' Christ tho' a your vetoes were done awa wi, and a' this stramash put an end to, and she to gang back to what she was before 1834.

S. Tae gang back, but in truth tae gang forward! for *I'se desperate keen for gude reform*, and wad like the folk had mair power; but I wad like to get it in a legal way; I would like to *improve the machine*, put in new screws, and mend what was awanting, and gie't plenty o' oil; but I'm *no for breaking down the machine a' thegither* that has down sae muckle gude, because its no fashioned to the pattern o' this man or that. It was that veto law played a' the mischief!

J. Wi'oot even being agreeable to the word of God! according as Mr. Brown lays't doun.

WILL. It was agreeable to the word o' God.

J. Was't? ye telt us that a' the disciples should try the speerits—that a' the disciples should hae a say in the election o' a minister; noo ane wad think that the kirk would gie us popular election after that. Na, says the kirk, nane o' the female disciples—and the female disciples were among the greatest ornaments of the early kirk—nane o' them are to hae a say—nane o' the young men are to hae a say—nane o' the servant-lads are to hae a say—nane but the male heads are tae cheep—as if a' the sense o' the congregation was in their heads; and little sense after a' maun be in them! for its no expected o' them that they can hae sense enough tae gie reasons; but just tae say, No! That's a droll way o' trying the speerits, and being ready to gie a reason for the faith that's in them tae every man. Noo the veto was nather agreeable to the word o' God as it's laid down by you, nor was it agreeable to the law o' the land as laid down by all the judges. And, if she has got into this scrape it wasna for want o' tellan and warning. Mony a time it was said in the assembly that a' this mischief wad come. Even the gude Dr. M'Crie, I'm telt by Mr. Struthers, said before the House o' Commons afore it was passed, that the kirk had nae powers tae pass this law, and that it wad bring us into confusion.

S. I am clear about its unlawfulness, and that when the kirk passed that law she took the first word o' flyting, and that her determination to keep that law, tho' it has been declared illegal, has been the grand cause o' her late troubles.

WILL. There ye gang with your Erastianism, putting the law o' the land higher than the law of God—putting the ceevil courts aboon the church of Christ—making the king the head o' the kirk.

J. Hae ye got into this line, Will, o' calling your neighbour nick-names; and cramming doon folks' throats opinions they abominate, and putting sentiments in their tongues they never uttered? It's no fair.

D. Neither is it fair for you to assert that the church disobeys the law and is a rebel?

S. Does she no disobey the law?

D. No! for she denies that it *is* the law.

S. But haena the ceevil courts declared that the kirk broke the law, and broke her bargain wi' the state, when she passed the veto; that she interfered wi' the ceevil richts o' pautrons, and that as lang as she keeps the veto she's breaking the law?

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wad like the kirk tae draw her ain march wi' the state, and naebody tae challenge't, wi'oot his being caad an enemy tae the headship!

S. Weel! I hae nae objections as an elder, that the ceevil courts should hae the *sole* power o' sayan—no what a *Kirk o' Christ* should teach or do, *that nae power on yirth* can say—but o' declaring what preeveleges the state has promised tae gie the kirk o' Scotland as an *establishment*, and what she has pledged hersel tae dae *while established*. I ken mysel that I haena the education nor the knowledge tae ken law—far less tae gie a vote against the judges and the lord chancellor aboot the law o' the land. Nor do I think I'm gaun against the headship in this; for I ne'er kent that tae explain acts o' parliament was ane o' the preeveleges conferred on me as a Christian man. And let me ax—if the twa courts hae the richt tae explain the verra same act—what's to be dune if they gie twa meanings tie't? they maun baith be law? hoo can a man serve twa maisters?

J. Na, that's a truth. If the ceevil courts say the act means sae and sae, that *the craw is black*; and if the kirk courts say it means sae and sae, that *the craw's white*; and if I maun obey the law, and if my gude name, and my comfort, and the comfort o' a' my family; na, maybe the peace and welfare o' the community and kirk depends on my sayan whether the craw's white or black, what i' the world can I do, when I want tae dae what's richt?

D. Let the church courts follow out their interpretation with spiritual effects, and let the civil courts follow out their interpretation with civil effects, and this prevents all clashing.

S. Its a guy confused business! and I wunder hoo folk are sae mad at ane anither when they differ on't, and hoo some o' the lassocks and lads are sae gleg sure aboot it; and abune a' hoo they would ding doon a kirk aboot sic difficult questions. But yet I canna see hoo your way can keep the twa courts sundry; for what if each o' them bid a man do the same thing? And I'm tell't that this is just what they did. The ceevil courts in explaining the law, said tae the presbyteries o' Strathbogie and Auchterarder, "Gude or bad, *the law is* that ye are tae try the presentee and no the folks, and if ye think him fit for the place *the bargain is*, ye are to put him in; *the craw's black!*" Then the kirk courts said: "The law is that the *folks* are tae try him, and if *they* are no pleased, ye are tae hae naething tae do with him; *that's the law; the craw's white!*" "Black it is!" says the presbytery o' Strathbogie. "Gif ye say sae," says the kirk courts. "doon wi' your lishences, and awa oot o' your parishes." "We say sae," says the presbytery o' Strathbogie, "for we think the ceevil courts hae alane the richt tae tell us what's the meaning o' an act o' parliament." "Richt," says the ceevil courts! "and weel protect ye in your parishes, and no let ye be put to beggary for obeying the law." "*The craw's white!*" says the presbytery o' Auchterarder, "and we'll no try the presentee." "Wrang," says the ceevil courts "we'll fine ye for no doing your duty, and for keeping a man unlawfully frae the parish." "Richt," says the church courts, "and ne'er gie in that the craw's black, for if ye dae ye'll be enemy tae your kirk." Say what ye like its a bothersome business!

D. But I have a practical question to put to you, Sanders. Supposing the civil courts were to command you to do anything contrary to the law of God, would you as an elder or a member of the Church obey it?

WILL. Ay, that's the question.

S. Hoo *can* it be a question with a Christian man? Surely even a babe in Christ kens that it is his duty, his first and foremost duty, to obey God rather than men, tho' these men should be members of parliament, or members of assembly, statesmen or churchmen.

J. Weel done, Saunders!

D. And what would you do then, if you were put in this position, the civil courts telling you that, as an office-bearer in the Establishment, you were bound to do something, which you think contrary to your duty to Christ?

S. I would leave the kirk, I wadna try and break the bargain; but I would say tae the state, The bargain's a bad ane, and I'll leave your service and be a voluntary, and then I can mak a law the day, and change it the morrow.

D. Leave the Church! when you are acting agreeably to the mind of God, and obeying his most holy word! Is that not giving up all spiritual independence, the right to act in spiritual matters, uncontrolled by any power in earth.

S. I believe the kirk has perfect liberty and spiritual independence to do the wark she promised to do, to teach the doctrines she agreed tae teach *as an Established kirk*, but that she has nae power tae gang beyond that without becoming a Voluntary kirk.

D. You surely don't mean to assert that a church of Christ on becoming Established, can give up a particle of that liberty which essentially belongs to her as a church of Christ.

S. Certainly not! but it's maybe no easy to say what liberty *essentially* belongs to a kirk o' Christ; but I ken this, that there's mony a thing she might do as a *Voluntary* kirk, that's completely oot o' her power to do as long as she is an *Established* kirk.

WILL. I think ye'll no mak that oot, Saunders.

S. It's no ill tae mak that out. Hae we spiritual independence to change ae doctrine in the Confession of Faith? hae we spiritual independence tae put awa patronage? tae gie the election tae the people? tae put down ony o' the kirk coorts? or tae pit up ony mair? Hae the ministers power tae draw their stipends, and tae preach whaur they please?

WILL. We surely hae.

S. We surely hae na *as an establishment*; nae doubt the kirk o' Scotland might mak a' thae changes the morrow, but she would be nae langer *the kirk establishment*. She maun gie up her connection wi' the state, or be bound wi' the acts that made her an established kirk; gie up her bargain or keep it.

WILL. But if the church cam' to the opinion, that ony act was against the word of God, would she no be bound to disobey that, or would she hae nae leeberty tae change it?

S. No! she would hae liberty *to become a voluntary kirk*, but she could hae nae liberty *as lang as she remained in connection with the state to change the bargain without the state agreeing*. Do ye think, that if the state had agreed to the veto law, that the kirk could hae changed that law the week after and gien the power to the folk to elect the ministers? if the kirk can do this, I kenna what's the gude o' bothering itsel to get acts o' parliament at a'.

J. There's a hantle o' talk about the kirk said this and the kirk said that; but after all, I'm thinking it just means, that some ministers in Edinbro' said this and that, and they seem tae think their mind must be aye the mind o' Christ; as far as I can see what their wanting is, that the state should gie them their manses and glebes and power, and to pass an act tae *let the kirk do whatever she pleases*.

D. I must confess Alexander, that I think you are wrong in regard to spiritual independence, the church of Scotland should be every bit as free as a voluntary church.

S. I canna see hoo it's possible as lang as there's ony acts o' parliament aboot her. I'll tell you in ae word my mind on't. I hired a servant on Friday last, and I made a bargain with him, that in winter he was to

thrash sae many hours in the day ; he agreed to this, and I hae the bargain in my pouch ; noo maybe some day when he's thrashing, some o' thae tramping chiefls will come smoking their pipes aboot the barn yard and say, "Ye're a poor slave, thrashin awa there instead o' walking aboot the kintra and enjoying your freedom like us ;" noo I kenna what the lad might say ; as he is no wanting in gumption, maybe it might be this, "Lads ! I was ance independent like you, but I had nae clothes and nae meat and was aboot tae wander frae place tae place tae mak a fend, but o' *my ain free consent*, I made a bargain wi' the farmer to do a particular work ilka day, and *I am independent nae langer* except to keep my bargain ; for I bound mysel by it, and if this be slavery, I would advise you tramping chiefls tae be slaves as fast as ye can !" This would be speaking like a man of sense, but maybe his acquaintance might put clavers into his head, and he might come to me and say, "I'll no thrash in the barn ony mair." "What for," quo I. "Because," says he, "I'm no independent ! I canna do what I like !" "I ken that," says I, "but it was yoursel agreed to the bargain." "It's a bad ane," says he. "Bad or gude," says I, "a bargain's a bargain, and ye maun keep it or lee my service." What would you think o' him if he would say, "I'll no lee your service, I'll eat your bread, but I'll no do your wark !" And this just explains the sang aboot the spiritual independence o' the kirk ; the feint the hate do the ceevil coorts do, but explain the bargain and mak the kirk *do its wark, or gang oot the house ;* and naething else does the kirk do than say, *I'll neither do the tane or tither.*

D. But granting, Saunders, for the present, that the civil courts have the power of *intrepreting* the bargain, is it not clear that the bargain, as they have intrepreted, is such as no church of Christ can accept of. They tell you that every presentee presented by a patron must be taken on trials, that no objections can be made against him except against his literature, his life, or his doctrines ; that if these objections are not agreed to by the presbytery, they are bound to induct him, although the people should be against him ; they have declared that a minister deposed for drunkenness must still keep his manse and his glebe, and be a minister of the church of Scotland.

WILL. Na ; ye canna keep a man noo out o' the communion table without asking leave o' the ceevil courts.

S. I ken every presentee maun be taen on trials, and that has aye been the case since I mind. I ken that the law is now, as lord Brougham says, that ye can only object on the grounds ye speak o' ; but I also ken that Sir James Graham has said, that the presbytery can try if a man's *suitable*, and cast him on *that*, and ye ken weel enough that Mr. Sinclair or Sir George got a bill agreed to by the government, gien power to the people to mak a' *kinds o' objections* that could come into their head, and gien power to the presbytery tae reject the man *if the objections were gude* ; or even if they werna gude, yet if they *thocht they would stau in the way o' his being useful in the parish* ; and the kirk, rejected it ! And a grand bargain it was ! and they tell me *we could get it yet* if the kirk would tak it.

D. The kirk will never take it.

J. They are surely ill tae please, what's wrang aboot it ?

D. Because though the church has liberty *to reject* at all times when they do not think a presentee suitable, yet when they do think him suitable, it gives the church the power *to admit*, though the people should be against him.

S. And *mair power than this we never had as a kirk*, mair than this we'll never get, mair than this we should na get ; for mony a man may suit a place though the folk at first dinna like him ; and it will be an awful responsibility for them wha would put down the kirk wi' sic muckle liberty.

D. I think acceptableness absolutely necessary for the forming of the pastoral relation.

S. I think acceptableness a great blessing, ane that presbyteries and pawtrons should luik weel to, for it maks things work grand and smooth when a' are pleased. But I'm no sae sure that it's *essential*, though beneficial. For gif it be sae tae the *making* o' this relation at first, its surely essential tae its keepan up!

D. No. The marriage relation is not formed without acceptableness, but this is not necessary for keepan it up.

S. I differ frae ye. The marriage relation *is* formed when folk are married whether they're pleased wi' ane anither or no. But I again say, that if a minister when he's no kent, when he has only been in the parish ance or twice, preached twa or three sermons, if he canna wi'oot sin be placed ower a parish whaur he is no acceptable, (though maybe they will love him dearly in a wi', whan they ken him), surely he canna wi'oot far greater sin be keeped ower the parish, when after hearing him for years and kennan him weel, they come tae despise or maybe tae hate him! Ye mann just tak the American way o't, a man by the sax months.

WILL. But what say ye aboot lettin drunken ministers into the kirk and no having the power to keep out bad communicants.

S. I say that the ceevil coorts never said that the church couldna put out drunken ministers, but it said that coorts *wi' the chapel ministers* had nae *legal* power to try or depose a minister.

J. Nae mair than Will there has power to try a man for murder.

S. And as to keeping out bad communicants, I solemnly tell ye that I would not stay in the kirk if she had not that power, but I am weel informed that that power has ne'er been interfered wi'.

WILL. And hoo do ye get quit of all thae stramashes about Strath-bogie and Auchterarder?

S. That's beginning anither lang story, but ae thing is clear to my mind, that all the mischief in these parishes, and it's no little, has just come frae the kirk driving its veto law through thick and thin. But *I'm no gaun tae defend a' the ceevil coorts did, or a' the kirk coorts did; in some things, am thinking, their baith wrang.* But I ken a' was quiet till that veto was tried—that every dispute has been aboot it. And I canna think but thae presbyteries in the North might hae made things pleesenter tae if they had liked. Surely some o' thae fauschious chieils warna "suitable;" maybe some o' thae fauschious folk warna verrie easy pleased.

J. I'll tell you my way o't, but I may be wrang. The kirk said to the State, Gie us manses, glebes, and pay, and we'll teach the folk religion. What religion will ye teach? says the state. The Confession of Faith, says the kirk. Done, says the state. But how will ye place ministers? We would like the people to elect them, says the Kirk. It canna be, says the state; gang awa wi' ye. Bide a wee, says the kirk; will ye mak an offer? I wull, says the state; its this, Ye may lishence the men and see them fit for duty, and let the patron choose wha's to be minister, for he has gien a gran glebe, manse, and stipend for the gude o' the parish. And can the people no object? says the kirk. Ou ay, says the state, they may; and if their objections are gude let the presentee be rejected by the presbytery; and if they are no gude let him be put in; and if the people are no pleased, let them bigg a kirk and manse for themselves. Done, says the kirk. We'll tak a note o' the bargain, says the state. And for mony a year and day—130 years since the last bargain—they worked brawly thegither; but in 1834 the kirk rued and thoct the bargain no a gude ane, especially as she had aye been braggin' to the voluntaries that she was as

free as them, and sae she passed the veto law—a kind o' sly way o' jinking the state. Weel, a minister gets his presentation and comes to the presbytery and axes them to try him and see if he was fit for the parish. Na, na, says the presbytery, lad, thae days are a' by; gang awa to the folk and see what they think o' ye; it's no fair, says the lad, but I'll try. So he gangs and preaches to them, and they a' glower at him, for the're desperate keen for anither man; and what care they for the patron? No a dockan. So they cock their heads at him, and tell him tae be aff tae his mithier if he likes. No sae fast, says the lad. So he comes to the presbytery and says, that they maun see if he is fit for the place. What says the folk to ye, quo the presbytery? They say naught, says the lad, but jist ta gang hame; the'l no tell me for what. Weel, says the Presbytery, hame ye maun gang, and tak your presentation in your pouch. It's a pity, says the lad, that the patron payed sae muckle for't, for it seems little worth; but I think ye hae cheated me out o' my place. So he gangs hame and tells the pawtron hoo they steekit the door on him, and wadna speir a question at him. The patron says, quo he, baith o' us are clean cheated; you oot o' your place, and me oot o' my richt o' presentin' you till't, and they are gaun against law; for the law says that them, and no the folk, are tae try ye, and see if ye are fit for the place,—gang doon ta the presbytery wi' my compliments, and tell them that. So he gangs doon, and they flee on him and tell him the law is wi' them. We'l see that, says the pawtron; so he and the lad gang ta the court o' session, and the kirk gangs tae, and spier at the judges what's the law? The judges say that the law is sae and sae, that the pawtron and lad are richt. Auld Gowks! says the kirk, they are wrang. Then says the pawtron, we'll try the lords. So the lords say that the kirk's wrang, and that the chiel's richt. We are no heedin', says the kirk; so they tell the lad ta gang aboot his business, and gif the lords like they may gie him the stipends; but, if he gies mair gab, they'l tak his lishence frae him. But they say, says the lad, they canna gie me the stipends till ye open the door and ordain me. We'll ne'er do that, says the kirk. I ken, says the pawtron, that nae power on yirth can mak ye do that, but certies ye maun gie a compensation for the injury ye hae done me and the lad, and surely ye'll say *that's ceevil effects!*

D. After all I have said, and after all you have heard from the various deputations, I see it would be useless to carry on this discussion longer,—my mind is made up. I grieve to think it, but I fear it will be my imperative duty to leave the church establishment, to go out with those noble men, who are making so many sacrifices for conscience sake, and to give a Free Presbyterian Church for Scotland.

J. As tae what they'l gie tae Scotland, that's no ken't yet; but I see they're trying tae tak a gude Establishment frae her,—and whatna sacrifices are they makin'?

WILL. Sacrifices! Castin' their manses, glebes, stipends, and a' tae the winds.

J. I am tell't they are gayin gleg aboot the siller, and desperat keen tae get it; they say they are tae hae a central fund in Edinbro, and tae gie a' the ministers that gang oot wi' them £100 a year, besides the tae half o' their ain winnings. It'll be a gran lift to some o' they Cod Sakker chieils.

D. Quoad Sacra!

S. A hunder pound a year! they'll ne'er maun tae keep an Establishment for Scotland.

D. I am not afraid of it; the rich will give, the poor will give; for the old spirit is up; the Blue Banner is abroad, and the whole world will see what Scotland can do.

J. I would rather see't than hear tell o't.

WILL. See auld Mr. Smith in this verra parish, what he has gien.

J. Aye; for the body's desparat keen in the business; but think ye will his son Jock gie when he's dead an gane? Na! I mind ance Dr. Chaumers comin' here, and a gay thick way he has in his talk, tho' folk that understan' him say he's gran;—it was at the church extension time, and he and them that were wi' him proved hoo the Establishment, wi' a' that it had, and wi' the thoosands that it was liftin' every year (and I'm thinkin' they got £300,000), and wi' the help the dissenters was gieing them, they couldna maun tae supply gospel ordinances tae the kintra; and think ye will they maun't noo without an establishment, wi' a' their bawbee collections? If they do, I can only say there hae been a hantle o' braw speeches cast awa; and if they dinna, it's no them but puir workin' men like me, that will be the sufferers; for what care I tae hae the election o' a minister, when I'm ower puir to hae ane at a'.

D. Stay in then, and bring back the reign of moderatism and of darkness, and see our great schemes, the glory of the Church, destroyed, and behold our national Zion become a desolation, a hissing, and a proverb. When she has deserted her great Head, it is time for me to leave her.

WILL. An' for me tae!

S. And gif a' ye say was true, or had ae particle o' truth in't, it would be time for us a' tae gang; but as the apostle says, "to him that thinketh it is unclean, to him it is unclean; but let such man be fully persuaded in his own mind: let us not judge one another, for we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Let me speak freely tae ye, Mr Brown, before we part,—ye hae said mony things that grieves my heart. As tae the reign o' moderatism, nae doubt Scotland was ance what she's no noo. I mind mysel a time when there was nae sic faithfu' preachin' in the parish kirks as noo; but God in his mercy,—for tae him, and no tae this set o' men or that, be the praise—breathed by his Spirit on this valley of dry bones; and I noo ken mony men whom ye ca' moderates, because they're no convocationists, that are God-fearing, zealous men, kent and loved in their ain parishes, tho' they're may be no in the mouth o' the public; and I ken mony that are foremost eneuch in this steer, that in my opinion, hae verra little o' the meekness and gentleness o' Christ. Ye speak o' our schemes, and ye may weel ca' them the glory o' the kirk; but do these no prove jist what I say. Wha got up the scheme for the Hindoos? Dr. Inglis, the head o' the moderates. Wha got up the Education scheme for the Hielands? Principal Baird, a moderate. Wha was ower the Colonial Church scheme in Glasgow? Principal M'Farlan, a moderate. Dr. Chaumers, a gude man, and a man I lo'e, tho' I think he's wrang, was ower the ither ane.

J. He's the only ane o' them a' that rued, for he's for puttin down the kirk noo a' thegither.

S. Whist John. As tae the kirk deserting its great Head, God forbid that that should be true! I deny it, and am ashamed that men that should ken better should put such disturbing thoughts into the minds o' weak Christians. I hae heard the sang afore noo,—the M'Millans hae keepit it up for 100 years,—and it was aye their sough at the redding o' the marches atween them and the Establishment on the Monday o' their sacrament; the Auld Lights took up the same sang when they left the kirk; it's no new tae my lugs, so it'll no mak me leave the kirk. I'll bide in her! Her verra dust to me is dear! I was born again within her walls; sae were some o' my bonny bairns that are sleeping outside o' them. I hae been strengthened and comforted during my pilgrimage wi' her ordinances, and I'll no break up her communion table as lang as I hae power—and it has ne'er been taen fae me yet—tae keep awa the ungodly and the profane; and as lang as Christ is preach'd within her walls, I'll stay tae help tae reform

her, tae help tae purify her, and tae pray as lang as breath is in my body, for her peace and prosperity.

J. I'll stay tae, for I canna get a better kirk nor our ain; the dissenters are gude folk, but I'm no a voluntary.

WILL. Gang tae the M'Millans if there's nae free kirk in the parish; they are the best representatives o' our covenanting ancestors.

J. The M'Millans! It's no will I gang into their kirk, but will they let me in? Wi' reverence be it spoken, it's easier tae get into the kingdom o' grace than tae get in tae their kirk; wi' a haud o' the covenant o' grace by faith, I can enter that kingdom; but this is nae pass at their door. I maun hae the Solemn League and Covenant, and twa or three mair, or be keepit oot as a heathen and a publican! Its black popery, putting the traditions o' our faithers on a footin' wi' the word o' God. As tae your wooden kirks, nane o' them for me! they'll be desparat cauld in winter, and hett in simmer,—I'll stick by the auld stane and lime, and I'm mistaen if it'll no stan' a hantle deal langer than a' your timber biggins!

S. Let us no pairt wi' "bitterness, wrath, clamour, and evil speaking." Let us rather "*Strive* to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace." Though we differ as tae the *means*, we a' agree I hope as tae *ends*—we a' seek, if Christian men, the gude o' the church o' Christ in Scotland, and desire the glory of its great Head. *As tae the best way o' bringing this about* I may be wrang, and sae may ye—for neither o' us are infallible, but we may a' be upright—we may a' sincerely desire tae please God; and if he has promised tae bless such, and tae gie them licht, and tae "accept their willing mind," let us not be accusing and judging ane anither, casting the blame on a bad conscience rather than on a waik understanding or want o' opportunity o' kennan the truth. *We should tak' care that in strivin' tae keep others frae casten' aff Christ as their Head, we dinna cast him aff ourselv by disobeying his commands.* It's a great comfort tae think that the Lord reigns, and that wi' us, or in spite o' us, he wull advance his ain cause. Let the earth be glad! It was a gude sayan o' auld Mr. Guthrie, "*in things essential, unity; in things dootfu', liberty; and in a' things charity.*" Let us thus walk, and O! speed the time when we shall meet thegither in the general assembly above; when "Judah shall no more vex Ephraim, nor Ephraim Judah." Friends and neighbours shake hands!

D. With all my heart,—I respond to your sentiments, and I know you to be good and honest. I pray that we may all "be sincere, and without offence at his coming."

WILL. There's my haun tae ye. We hae been auld neebours and fellow-communicants, and it's right we shouldna forget "who we are, and whom we serve." But yet I wad like a pure kirk.

J. Mony a splore you and me hae had; but we can shake hands yet. Lang may it be sae! As tae a pure kirk, ye'll mind, maybe, what the great and gude Mr. Newton remarked till a leddy that ance said what ye say noo. "We'll ne'er, my friend," said he, "get a pure kirk, till we enter the ane above; and ae thing is certain, that if there *was* ane on yirth, it wad be pure nae langer, if you and me entered it!"—Gude day wi' ye a! (They shake hands and part, and sae ended the "Crack aboot the kirk.")

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