

cision against them,—that of 1796,—remained still unreversed. It had had, besides, its forced settlements in our immediate neighborhood ; and Moderatism, wise and politic in its generation, had perpetrated them by the hands of some of the better ministers of the district, who had learned to do what they themselves believed to be very wicked things when their Church bade them,—a sort of professional license which my uncles could not in the least understand. In short, the Secession better pleased them, in the main, than the Establishment, though to the Establishment they continued to adhere, and failed to see on what Seceder principle their old friends were becoming Voluntaries. On the breaking out of the controversy, I remembered all this ; and, when told by good men of the Established Church that well nigh all the vital religion of the country was on our side, and that it had left the Voluntary Seceders, though the good men themselves honestly believed what they said, I could not. Further, the heads of a conversation which I had overheard in my cousin the Seceder minister's house, when I was a very young boy,—and to which it could have been little suspected that I was listening, for I was playing at the time on the floor,—had taken a strong hold of my memory, and often returned upon me at this period. My cousin and some of his elders were mourning—very sincerely, I cannot doubt—over the decay of religion among them : they were falling far short, they said, of the attainments of their fathers ; there were no Donald Roys among them now ; and yet they felt it to be a satisfaction, though a sad one, that the little religion which there was in the district seemed to be all among themselves. And now, here was there exactly the same sort of conviction, equally strong, on the other side. But with all that liberally-expressed charity which forms one of the distinctive features of the present time, and is in reality one of its best things, there is still a vast amount of appreciation of this partial kind. Friends are seen in the Christian aspect ; opponents in the polemic one : and it is too often forgotten that the friends have a polemic aspect to their opponents, and the opponents a Christian aspect to their friends.