ferent preſbyteries, united in one general ſynod, which commonly meets at Edinburgh in May and Septem­ber @@(b). They have alſo a ſynod in Ireland compoſed of three or four different preſbyteries. They are legally tolerated in Ireland; and government ſome years ago granted L.500 *per annum*, and oſ late an additional L. 500, which, when divided among them, affords to each miniſter about L. 20 over and above the ſtipend which he receives from his hearers. Theſe have beſides a preſbytery in Nova Scotia; and ſome years ago, it is ſaid, that the Burgher and the Antiburgher miniſters reſiding in the United States formed a coalition and joined in a general ſynod, which they call the *Synod* of *New York* and *Penn*ſ*ylvania.* They all preach the doc­trines contained in the Weſtminſter Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, as they believe theſe to be founded on the ſacred ſcriptures. They catechiſe their hearers publicly, and viſit them from houſe to houſe once every year. They will not give the Lord’s ſupper to thoſe who are ignorant of the principles of the goſpel, nor to ſuch as are ſcandalous and immoral in their lives. They condemn private baptiſm, nor will they admit thoſe who are groſsly ignorant and profane to be ſponſors for their children. Believing that the people have a natural right to chooſe their own paſtors, the ſettlement of their miniſters always proceeds upon a popu­lar election; and the candidate who is elected by the majority is ordained among them. Convinced that the charge of ſouls is a truſt of the greateſt importance, they carefully watch over the morals of their ſtudents, and direct them to ſuch a courſe of reading and ſtudy as they judge moſt proper to qualify them for the pro­fitable diſcharge of the paſtoral duties. At the ordina­tion of their miniſters they uſe a *formula* of the ſame kind with that of the eſtabliſhed church, which their miniſters are bound to ſubſcribe when called to it; and if any of them teach doctrines contrary to the ſcriptures or the Weſtminſter Confeſſion of Faith, they are ſure of being thrown out of their communion. By this means uniformity of ſentiment is preſerved among them; nor has any of their miniſters, excepting one, been proſecuted for error in doctrine ſince the commencement of their ſeceſſion.

They believe that the holy ſcriptures are the ſole criterion of truth, and the only rule to direct mankind to glorify and enjoy God, the chief and eternal good; and that “the Supreme Judge, by which all controverſies of religion are to be determined, and all the decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men and private ſpirits, are to be examined, and in whoſe ſentence we are to reſt, can be no other but the Holy Spirit ſpeaking in the ſcriptures.” They are fully perſuaded, however, that the ſtandards of public authority in the church of Scotland exhibit a juſt and

conſiſtent view of the meaning and deſign of the holy ſcriptures with regard to doctrine, worſhip, government, and dilcipline; and they in ſo far differ from the diſſenters in England, in that they hold theſe ſtandards to be not only articles of peace and a teſt of orthodoxy, but as a bond of union and ſellowſhip. They conſider a ſimple declaration of adherence to the ſcriptures as too equivocal a proof of unity in ſentiment, becauſe Arians, Socinians, and Arminians, make ſuch a confeſſion of their faith, while they retain ſentiments which they (the Seceders) apprehend are ſubverſive of the great doc­trines of the goſpel. They believe that Jeſus Chrift is the only King and Head of the Church, which is his body; that it is his ſole prerogative to enact laws for the government, of his kingdom, which is not of this world; and that the church is not poſſeſſed of a legiſlative, but only of an executive power, to be exerciſed in explaining and applying to their proper objects and ends thoſe laws which Chriſt hath publiſhed in the ſcriptures, Thoſe doctrines which they teach relative to faith and practice are exhibited at great length in an explana­tion of the Weſtminſter Aſſembly’s Shorter Catechiſm, by way of queſtion and anſwer, in two volumes, com­poſed chiefly by Mr James Fiſher late of Glaſgow, and publiſhed by deſire of their ſynod.

For theſe fifty years paſt, the grounds of their ſeceſ­ſion, they allege, have been greatly enlarged by the pu­blic adminiſtrations of the eſtabliſhed church, and par­ticularly by the uniform execution of the law respecting patronage, which, they ſay, has obliged many thouſands of private Chriſtians to withdraw from the pariſh- churches and join their ſociety.

It is certain, however, that their number has rapidly increaſed of late, eſpecially in the large cities of the kingdom. They have three different congregations in Edinburgh, two in Glaſgow, and two in London, be­ſides ſeveral others in the north of England. In moſt of their congregations they celebrate the Lord’s ſupper twice in the year, and they catechiſe their young people concerning their knowledge of the principles of religion previouſly to their admiſſion to that ſacrament. When any of them fall into the ſin of fornication or adultery, the ſcandal is regularly purged according to the form of proceſs in the eſtabliſhed church; and thoſe of the delinquents who do not ſubmit to adequate cenſure are publicly declared to be fugitives from diſcipline, and are expelled the ſociety. They never accept a ſum of money as a commutation for the offence. They con­demn all clandeſtine and irregular marriages, nor will they marry any perſons unleſs they have been pro­claimed in the pariſh church on two different Lord’s days at leaſt.

When they ſeparated from the eſtabliſhed church, they remained firm in their attachment to the ſtate; and

@@@(b) The conſtitution of the Antiburgher church differs very little from that of the Burghers. The ſupreme court among them is deſigned *The General Aſſociate Synod,* having under its juriſdiction three provincial ſynods in Scotland and one in Ireland. In the former country there are eleven preſhyteries; in the latter, four. They have a few congregations in England, and a preſbytery in connection with them in North America. The number of miniſters belonging to the general ſynod is a hundred and thirty-ſeven; and in Scotland there are nineteen vacancies. They, as well as the Burgher Seceders, have a profeſſor of theology, whoſe lectures every candidate for the office of a preacher is obliged to attend, we have been told, for no leſs than five or ſix ſeſſions! Surely the ſeſſion muſt be of ſhort duration,