

But, again, it is sometimes argued, that it is difficult to define the distinction between what is civil and what is ecclesiastical in an establishment ; and that, to avoid endless collisions, the claim of an established Church to spiritual independence must be at least defined by the civil courts, and the powers implied in it, exercised within the limits which they assign. This, too, is Erastianism, and would virtually involve the loss of the Church's independence. The power possessed by one court of determining the limits of another's jurisdiction, is plainly incompatible with the real independence of the latter. There is no difficulty beside, where men do not purposely make it, in defining the distinction between what is civil and what is spiritual or ecclesiastical in an establishment. What the State gave is civil, and may be dealt with as such ; what Christ gave is spiritual, and must be respected and held sacred as such. The State confers upon an establishment certain civil advantages and immunities ; with these it may deal, and these, if it sees fit, it may take away. Christ gave all that properly constitutes the Church,—what she would have possessed independent of her establishment,—and with these the State has nothing whatever to do. Each,—the Church and the State,—within its own province is supreme, and let each keep within that province, only reviewing what is done by the other for objects within that province, and there need be no collision or interference whatever. In the admirable speech of Lord Jeffrey, in the Auchterarder case, this view will be found strikingly illustrated by a reference to the co-ordinate jurisdiction of the courts of session and justiciary in Scotland, and applied convincingly, at the same time, to prove the independence secured by statute to the Church of Scotland.

But, still farther it has been said, that the act imposing Patronage on the Church of Scotland, *so far* took away her independence, and that it was too late when the Veto Law was passed to begin the assertion of that independence. It is, unfortunately, not to be denied, that this act did, to a certain extent, interfere with the independence of the Church, by conferring on a party, not necessarily within the Church, the power of acting in a matter properly ecclesiastical, and by depriving the members of the Church of a right which we believe Christ conferred on them. The tame submission of the Church to this encroachment on her rights, was a grievous sin ; and she has now reaped the natural fruits. But, it is to be observed—the encroachment thus made, was only in *one particular*, beset from various causes with