

Ruler over his Church, which he hath purchased with his own blood. It brought out clearly the glorious truth, that the Lord Jesus is the Head and King over his own house; and that no civil or secular power has a right to control the Church in the exercise of her spiritual functions. I now pass to the second set of resolutions, which may be described as the counterpart to the first, in that, while in the first set testimony is borne to Christ's crown, as King and Head of his Church; in the second, testimony is borne to Christ's crown, as entitled to be King of nations, and to be recognized by princes and rulers as their King, and as the Prince of the kings of the earth. Now, I say that the one testimony is the counterpart to the other. The first series of resolutions brings out the right of the Lord Jesus to require from His Church implicit, unreserved, absolute submission to His authority,—to His law,—irrespective of anything the civil magistrate or the temporal powers may say or do. And on the other hand, while this first principle brings out the right of Christ, to the submission, absolute and unreserved, of all his servants in the Church, whether officers, bearers or members, to Him and to Him alone, without regard to the declarations of the kings and princes of the earth; the second series of resolutions brings out the right of our Lord Jesus Christ to be acknowledged by the civil magistrate as the Prince of the kings of the earth. His right to call upon the civil magistrate as such, and in his official capacity to acknowledge him, and to devote the national resources to the advancement of His glory and the good of His Church. This is the second principle conveyed in our testimony, that the Lord Jesus is not only supreme over His Church, so that the Church is bound to obey Him alone, and to take His law alone for their rule and guidance, irrespective of human statutes altogether; but it is that the Lord Jesus is King, not only over His Church, but that He is King over all things to His Church,—that He is King of kings and Lord of lords; and that He is entitled to receive the submission of the princes of this world, who are bound to acknowledge Him in all they do, and are bound to employ their resources according to His will, and to the advancement of His glory. Now, as from the principle that Christ is the Head of the Church, so that the Church is bound to obey Him, and Him alone, it follows, that the Church ought to be free from subjugation in every other quarter, and especially ought to be free from the control of the State, so, from the principle that Christ is to be acknowledged by the civil magistrate, as such, it follows that he, in thus acknowledging Christ and seeking to promote His glory, must be free from all other control, and must take this rule, not from the Church, but from Christ's own word alone; both Church and State being bound to acknowledge Christ, and Him alone. Hence, as the Church is bound to take her authority from Christ alone,—from His Word and not from the State,—so the State in all it has to do for the advancement of Christ's glory, and in acknowledging Christ as King, is bound to take its directions from Christ alone,—from His Word, and not from the Church at all. These are sacred principles; the one being co-relative to the other; and both together complete the glorious testimony which this Church is now called to bear for the crown of Christ,—for His mediatorial crown, as King of His Church, and King of nations. And the application of these views to the present position of the Church is not difficult, it is short and simple; it follows from the doctrine which I have endeavoured to explain, with respect to Christ's right of control over the civil magistrate, and the civil magistrate's duty to acknowledge Christ, and to use his resources for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and to do this on his own responsibility,—it follows clearly from this, that as the civil magistrate would do wrong were he to dictate to the Church in the discharge of her duty to her great King and Head, so equally the Church would do wrong if she were to dictate to the civil magistrate in the discharge of his duty, and the disposal of his resources for the cause of Christ.—Each has his own sphere,—the Church has her sphere,—the civil magistrate has his; each is to serve Christ. For it is not a liberty of independence for which we contend, but a liberty to serve Christ, and the liberty which the Church claims for herself she concedes freely and unreservedly to

the civil magistrate. Here is the extreme importance of the position of the Church, and of the controversy now pending. I treat the friends of the Church—those who venerate the memory of the martyrs, whose bones bleached for many a long year on our plains, many of whose bones lie mouldering in our sepulchres,—to consider the position which the Church now called upon to occupy—not in the spirit of vanity, glory, God forbid, but rather in the spirit of humility, for unquestionably the more noble the doctrine to which the Church is called on to contend, the more important the principle the more glorious the truth, so ought our humiliation to be the deeper, that to us such treasure is committed. But observe this. It is sometimes that we are in danger of going into the error of holding Voluntary opinions; that we are about to become Voluntaries; that when we secede and separate from the State, we will take up the position of a Voluntary Church; and that with the opposition of a Voluntary Church, with which I have no quarrel, we are about to take up the principles of a Voluntary Church.—Never at any time have the intelligent ministers, and elders, and friends of the Church been in less danger of becoming Voluntaries, than they are at this moment. What are the grounds on which our fathers and brethren make their solemn appeal to the Legislature, asking them what are to be the terms and conditions of the Establishment—what are these grounds, but the acknowledged jurisdiction of the civil magistrate in the use of his resources in regard to the Church,—his duty to establish the Church, and his right to prescribe the terms of the Establishment—his duty and his right to do all this on his own responsibility, in respect of what he owes, in his official capacity, to Christ, and without the control of the Church at all? On the other hand, we have been charged with assuming Popish supremacy,—with attempting to revive the claims of the Pope, and to assume the right of lordship over the State. The proceedings of this Convocation is the best answer to the charge. So long as the Church kept up her wirsome and interminable contest with the civil courts, it was difficult to make even her friends understand that she did not claim supremacy over the civil magistrate.—I was diligent to make them comprehend the constitutional ground on which we thought we could stand. The cry of rebellion and of resistance to the law, and of the assumption of a Popish supremacy over the State, we could indeed logically answer, and repel, but we could appeal to the constitution, and we could show by the constitution of the country, that we were as free to exercise our functions without the control of the civil courts, as they were free to exercise their functions without control from us. Still it was difficult to convince others of this, and our enemies had a plausible pretence for saying that we were resisting the powers that be,—that we were setting ourselves in opposition to the courts of law, and even to the supreme courts of the land. Now, God in his providence has given us an opportunity of practically showing where we propose to stop short in our apparent resistance. As long as the contest lay with the civil courts,—with the subordinate civil courts—we did not feel called upon to surrender the position which the constitution gave us,—we were not entitled to do so; we held that the duty we owed to the State compelled us to stand in the position of resistance. But though on constitutional grounds and arguments we held ourselves warranted, and even called upon to resist the civil courts in what seemed to us to be an intrusion into our province, we now declare, that let who will vindicate the constitution, it is not the province of the Church ultimately to do so. We now declare,—let Scotland, if she will, vindicate the constitution, which we think is violated by the recent proceedings of the civil courts,—but for ourselves, as a Church, we declare, that in this decision is to stand as the law of the land,—if it is to be sanctioned and allowed by the supreme power of the State,—if the Legislature refuse to relieve us,—if, after our solemn remonstrance, the Legislature will not interfere to protect us,—we will say that the constitution has been violated,—that the Treaty of Union has not been preserved,—that the Act of Security has been broken; but we also say, after exhausting our legitimate sources of remonstrance, and repeated application, and solemn warning, that it is

not the business of the Church to vindicate the constitution further,—that it is not the duty of the Church to set herself in opposition to the supreme power of the State, in its present actings, however those may seem to be at variance with what it formerly sanctioned. Now, this is the precise position which, so far as I understand it, the fathers and brethren of the Scottish Church, assembled in Convocation, have taken up. They have not relinquished the constitutional agreement, they still think that, according to the Treaty of Union,—that according to the constitution of the kingdom,—they have a right to all the independent and exclusive jurisdiction which they claim. But they say that the Church of Christ is a kingdom not of this world,—she has no power of the sword,—she has no right to enforce her demands, except in the way of remonstrance and warning, and a solemn call upon the civil magistrate to do his duty,—that if the Treaty of Union is broken, that is for the nation of Scotland to look to, but not for the Church,—that if the Constitution is violated, that is for the people of Great Britain to take heed to, but not for the Church of Christ. The Church of Christ in this land, was led to believe, that she received certain temporal advantages from the State, certain immunities, endowments, and exactions, on terms which fully recognized her spiritual and inherent jurisdiction as a Church of Christ. But if the supreme power of the State, if the Legislature, after we have exhausted all our powers of persuasion and remonstrance, shall persevere in acknowledging this to be the law of the land, that the immunities which were given to the Church were given on condition of her subjection to the civil magistrate, the Church, as a kingdom not of this world, has no more to say. That is the civil magistrate's business; that is the civil magistrate's sin.—And this explains the reason why the Church of Scotland, in the opinion of the fathers and brethren assembled at the Convocation, is not called upon immediately to take this step of resigning her position as an Establishment by giving up the immunities which, as an Established Church, she enjoys. There can be no doubt that in an ordinary case, the case of an individual, or even the case of an ordinary corporation, a deliverance of the supreme court, in terms such as those which were adopted in the Auchterarder judgment, would finally and conclusively settle the condition on which an individual or a corporate body held any property conferred on it. But the Church of Scotland is not an individual, nor an ordinary corporation. She is a kingdom,—a kingdom, it is true, not of this world; but still a kingdom, which the governors of the State, out of regard, as we are bound to presume, for the glory of Christ, whose kingdom she is, have been pleased to acknowledge, and on which they have conferred certain immunities. Now, in this view, the Church is not entitled, and still less bound, hastily to interpret a decision of the supreme civil court as if it were finally and conclusively the mind of the State. The Church is entitled, when such a decision is given forth, practically qualifying her tenure of her civil endowment by an unlawful condition—to pause, and go to the supreme power, the Legislature and say, "Surely this is not your mind respecting the condition in which the Church holds the temporalities of the State—assuredly this was not the mind of your fathers, certainly this was not the mind of our fathers, when at the Treaty of Union they surrendered their independent Legislature; and, at all events, this is not the mind of God, this is not the mind of Christ. We assume that you, the supreme power of the State, were animated by an anxiety for the honour of Christ, seeking to do His will and glorify Him, by establishing and endowing the Church. Now, we come forward and testify to you, that if you insist on this unlawful condition, you are not honouring Christ, you are dishonouring Him; you are establishing His Church, but it is on terms which He forbids and disowns." But still, while we thus remonstrate, while we appeal to treaties, while we appeal to the constitution, while we appeal, above all, to the Word of the living God, which the civil magistrate is bound to take as the rule of duty as much as we,—if, after all, the Legislature should suffer things to remain as they are; if they shall substantially and effectually say, whatever be your ideas of the Constitution, of the Treaty of Union, of the in-

terpretation of the Word of the living God, we think these are the only terms on which the State can ever endow the Church—the terms implied in the judgment of the civil court—to do so on other terms than those of the obligation of the Church to the State, would be dangerous and impossible, and is not required by the will of God; if, I say, the Legislature should finally and conclusively say so, then we, the Church, have exhausted our legitimate weapons. The weapons, in reference to the State, are those of argument and persuasion, and expostulation, and appeals to the conscience of the State, for the State has a conscience and responsibility as well as the Church. We cannot take up arms, for we cannot draw the sword. We cannot refuse obedience, for we are bound to honour the king. We can simply say, that as you, the State, refuse to honour Christ by establishing His Church as free as Christ would have it, we, the Church, will not dishonour Christ by renouncing our freedom, but neither will we disobey God by resisting your authority. Now, I think that this is the position which the Church of Scotland is now taking up,—a position which is clearly defensible, and which gives the lie to a thousand misinterpretations, and which removes the practical difficulties and embarrassments experienced even by our friends beforehand. They were tempted to say,—Are we never to have an end of this controversy,—are we to stand upon our constitutional rights, and carry on this unseemly contest with the Civil Courts for ever? We say no,—we will not. We will not do so, because it is contrary to Christ's will. We cannot do so, because we have not the power of the sword. We say, that as long as the Constitution remains unviolated, we will stand upon our constitutional rights. If the Constitution is violated by an inferior, and subordinate Court, we will not assent to that violation. If the Constitution is violated by the supreme Civil Court, we will still not hastily assume that this violation is sanctioned by the Legislature. But if, finally and conclusively, the Constitution is violated by the Legislature in the exercise of their legislative authority, imposing unlawful terms, or refusing to relieve us from the terms imposed by the Civil Courts,—then we have no more to say.—It may be a just cause for the people of the land to speak out, it may be a just cause for the nation that entered into a Treaty of Union with a more powerful nation to complain; but that is a civil matter, that is not the business of the Church of Christ,—it is not their province. Having said this, I have only farther to say in reference to the proceedings of the Convocation, that as I hold the principles now brought out in these proceedings to be principles clearly defensible, as also I have said to say in testifying humbly to my fathers and brethren in the eldership, and to my brethren in the Christian community, that the position which we have taken up is not a position which has been hastily taken up, nor a position from which we shall be easily either driven or tempted. There may be manifold trials awaiting us—trials in the way of allurements at first, and intimidation afterwards. There are no doubt influences now at work against the Church which may put men's principles to the severest test. The very prospects held out by what the Convocation have resolved—prospects, not indeed of immediate vacancies in churches and parishes now filled, but yet the prospect of vacancies occurring possibly much sooner than men think of,—these may be turned to account for the purpose of alluring or tempting some to let go their integrity. Attempts are made, not to argue men out of their opinion, not to convince them they are wrong; but to hold out inducements to persuade them to give way, and such is the infatuation of those that make these attempts that they count success a victory. But, notwithstanding such temptations, and notwithstanding such intimidations as may be held out, I argue, from the very deliberation with which this position has been taken up, and from the prayer and consultation with which it has been accompanied, that our fathers and brethren have taken it up seriously and finally. They go to the nation of Scotland, and especially to the praying people of Scotland—they go to the Legislature and the Government of the country,—they go to the supreme power of the State,—they go to the whole community, and say to them—It is by you, the nation, not the Church