

promise made (Matt. xvi. 19) of the power of the keys." Bishop Andrews finds "the accomplishment" in another scripture: "Then said Jesus to them again," (to his assembled disciples,) "Peace be unto you, as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." In favour of his view, the Bishop asserts, "the plain consent of the Fathers." Passing by other writers whose testimonies, original or selected, appear in the series, we add only the words of Archbishop Laud: "Christ promised the keys to St. Peter. (Matt. xvi.) True; but so did He to all the rest of the Apostles, (Matt. xviii., John xx.) and to their successors, as much as to him. St. Augustine is plain. 'If this were said only of St. Peter, then the church hath no power to do it,' which God forbid! The keys therefore were given to St. Peter and the rest, in a figure of the church, to whose power and for whose use they were given. But there's not one key in all the bunch, that can let in St. Peter's successor to a 'more powerful principality' universal than the successors of the other Apostles had."

Such witnesses will surely be regretted, and those of our censors who are least wary and most violent, and who unhesitatingly assert their own descent from Peter, must show cause why none of us may humbly claim kindred, though remote, with James, or John, or Paul. In spirit, in labour, in success, let us seek to follow these ever-honoured men, while we cannot aspire to be, in any other respect, their successors.

IV. There is no public effort to establish the theory by fair and intelligible argument.—On the authority of the Oxford Tracts, it has been urged with entertaining reiteration, that "the fact of the apostolical succession" is "too notorious to require proof." This is a very convenient assertion for a writer who evidently disdains to be "involved in an argument;" and we cannot say whether his triumphant plea was in the thoughts of a latter Tractarian, when the kindred statement was penned,— "I shall not prove this at length, for it has been done by others, and, indeed, the common sense and understanding of men, if left to themselves, would be quite sufficient in this case." These authors are mindful of the hint which is given by their leader, that the object is "not to prove, but to remind and impress." Their style of maintaining the claim of "apostolical descent" is indeed singular. "We have been born," they write, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."† But this is an inexcusable perversion of a text which the beautiful connexion shows to belong to all who receive Christ, and who share the "power," or privilege, "to become the sons of God;" even to all "that believe on His name."‡ Of "the dissenting teachers," it is oracularly pronounced that they "have not" the ministerial commission of the Romish Clergy, that "they are mere intruders in this country" of the Moravians, that "they lay claim also to an apostolic or episcopal ministry, though it is believed that they are unable to substantiate the succession."§ Consistently do the authors of these summary notices decry "the cold spirit demanding rigid demonstrations," and repel inquirers as "hard-headed and subtle reasoners," and "proud-hearted intellectualists." They know the weakness of their own cause; and if, in any stratagem of disputation, they venture to refer to the existence of proofs, it is sufficient to beg that they may be adduced.—If these are taught at college, let them at length escape the academic halls. Surely they are not like Popish miracles, which are wrought only in the presence of the faithful.

More than fifty years ago a venerable Presbyterian of the Church of England declared,— "The uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or could prove." This is a bold statement; but, for its ample justification, let the careful inquirer refer to the Oxford Tracts. What does he find in the "CATEWA PATRUM," "the testimony of writers in the later English Church to the doctrine

of the apostolical succession? With unfeigned respect for many of these names, we must reply that, on the one point in dispute, they offer no valid argument; and even their "testimony," unsupported by Scripture or other conclusive evidence, cannot settle the momentous question. If Bishop Wilson finds the authority of the Apostles still "living in their succession," we acknowledge it rather as "living" in their writings. We have never maintained that the ministry is derived from any but the Head of the church; and we are, therefore, unscathed by the appeals of Hooker, though vivid and powerful as lightning. Nor are we silenced by the assertions of Bishop Andrews, respecting the "grace" which the ordaining church is said to give; especially as we believe, with him, that "the saving grace the church cannot give," and that "none is either the holder or the learner by his ordination." Bishop Heber attempts to place prelacy on a footing with "the observance of the Lord's day, and our participation in the Lord's supper;" but will any one contend that for these there is no "explicit direction," of divine authority, as the Bishop concedes that there is none "for the form of our church-governments, and the manner of appointing our spiritual guides!" In fine, the "writers in the later English church," exhibited in this celebrated "CATEWA," fail to convince us either that the excellencies and usefulness of the Bishops depend on their prelacy, or that episcopal ordination is identical with the divine call. The Oxford Tractists tell us that no man has a right to minister who is not called of God; we admit the solemn truth, and commend it to their deep consideration and to our own. They add, that we are not ordained by Bishops; we assent; but wait to hear how these premises are connected, before we can allow the conclusion, which has been a thousand times proclaimed, as if the regularity of the whole argument were unquestionable.

SPEECH OF THE REV. DR. CANDLISH AT THE CONCLUDING MEETING OF THE CONVOCATION OF THE SCOTTISH CHURCH.

The Rev. Dr. Candlish then rose and said,—If my fathers and brethren have expressed the honour which they felt at being privileged to address this meeting, and the satisfaction with which they looked back upon having sat in the Convocation, how much does it become me to be humble when, by their appointment, I have been called upon to offer some explanations regarding the proceedings. Like my fathers and brethren, I do look back upon the proceedings of the week which is now drawing to a close, as a scene which, assuredly, a few short years ago, I never expected to witness, and the like of which, I venture to say, the church of Christ from the beginning has scarcely ever seen. I cannot resist the temptation, at the outset, of repeating my own humble sense of the manifest interposition of Almighty God in the proceedings of this Convocation. It is not my business to detail anything which took place in that Convocation. The consultations of the meeting were friendly and confidential, and it is only with the result of these consultations that I am about to trouble you. Still, without betraying confidence, and without saying anything that can at all reflect upon any member of the Convocation, but in the way of suitably acknowledging the good Providence of God, and the manifest interposition of the Holy Spirit, on more than one occasion, I may be permitted to remark, that at several times, as was to be expected in a meeting consisting of men compassed about with infirmities, it did seem as if the elements of discord were about to be sown amongst us,—as if Satan had got an advantage,—as if we were on the very brink of something unseemly; and yet, I will be borne out in what I say by my fathers and brethren, when I bear my record,— "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory,"—that never, never on any occasion was the spirit of brotherly love—the spirit of Christian unity, more signally manifested than just immediately after such scenes of temptation and trial; and in these scenes I cannot but recognise the good hand of God upon us, encouraging us to go forward in his good and holy work, whenever trials and persecutions may yet await us. There is one general remark which I cannot help making to my fathers and

brethren, that I believe the misrepresentations which may go abroad from rumours of various kinds respecting the Convocation may greatly mislead our enemies, while the true reports of it will cheer and encourage our friends. Things did pass at the Convocation which were capable of misrepresentation and perversion,—things which will unquestionably reach the ears of our enemies,—and perhaps it is for this very end that Satan is permitted occasionally to gain an advantage, that he may thereby encourage those who would combine against the Church,—but whether it be so or not, some things did pass at the Convocation which our enemies, in their ignorance, might take advantage of to persevere in their infatuated course, and to presume on our internal divisions,—the wish being rather to the thought,— "while, on the other hand, our friends will be greatly cheered and encouraged when they are made to know that, often when we seemed in danger of disagreeing, unanimity in a marvellous manner was brought about, and the brethren enabled to dwell together in unity; for such is the effect of honesty of purpose,—such is the effect of cordiality and union, in regard to the great essentials of the gospel of Christ, that where brethren seem not to see eye to eye all at once, yet by prayer and mutual explanations, by patience and forbearance, the Lord sheds light upon them, and they all come to be of one mind, as from the beginning they were of one heart. How we are to interpret such scenes as those to which I have referred, what we are to augur from them, I cannot say. It were not surprising, that instead of laying to heart the solemn views addressed to them by so many servants of the Lord, with one consent, and without ultimately any difference of opinion,—it may be that those who are set against the Church may still be infatuated, and blinded, and encouraged by incidents, distorted and perverted, to persevere in their mad course. If so, Satan's end, so far as outward circumstances are concerned, may seem to be accomplished. If this was his design, he may seem to have triumphed, as far as the outward position of the Church is concerned. But the good Spirit of the Lord has signally disappointed him in all that really concerns the interests of the Church of Christ. The good Spirit of the Lord has enabled the brethren, met in solemn Convocation, to lift up a calm, clear, and consistent testimony in behalf of the truth of God as it regards the crown of our Redeemer! and they were of one mind and one heart,—not to anticipate Providence, not to make haste; but to stand still, and to await the salvation of the Lord, whether our deliverance is to come from the temporal power, or whether it is to come, as it has often come in days past, in the midst of persecution by the temporal power, from the hand of the Lord giving us unexpected aid. I hold in my hand the two sets of resolutions to which my respected father, Dr. Candlish, has referred. But I shall not now trouble the Convocation, or the meeting assembled to sympathise with us.—I shall not trouble the meeting by reading these resolutions,—they are somewhat long, and they will be more calmly considered by our fathers and brethren when reading them at their leisure, but I may take leave to state, what I understand to be the substance of these two sets of resolutions, which, taken together, bring out, clearly and consistently, our testimony to a great scriptural truth in relation to the connection, or alliance, between the Church and the State. If I were to characterise these two sets of resolutions shortly, I would say that, in the first set of resolutions, testimony is borne by the brethren to the duty of the Church, as Christ's house, to acknowledge the authority of Christ, and of Christ alone, and that, in the second set of resolutions, testimony is borne to the duty of the civil magistrate as bound to acknowledge Christ, and to protect Christ's servants. The first set of resolutions, then, testifies to the duty of the Church as subject to the authority of Christ alone, and, therefore, as necessarily free from all other subjection,—to the duty of the Church as called to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and, therefore bound to resist the servitude of every other master. This duty is clearly set forth in the declaration that the Church cannot recognise the authority of the Civil Courts, or even of the supreme power of the state,—the Legislature of the country; that the church cannot recognise the authority of the Civil Magistrate as binding

upon her conscience in matters spiritual,—as laying her under any obligation to act contrary to her own convictions of duty,—these convictions being founded on the Word of God alone. The part which matters referred to, in which the Church believes that her spiritual province has been invaded, are set forth in these first resolutions. They refer to the various encroachments made on the spiritual province by the Civil Courts, in reference to the admission of ministers,—in reference to the deposition of ministers,—in reference to the general exercise of discipline, and, in particular, to the precise bearing of the recent judgment in the Auchterarder case. I may, however, say a single word on this subject. I understand that a great change has been produced in the position of the Church by the recent decision of the House of Lords, and it is this,—that it seems to give the sanction of the supreme Civil Court to the principle, by which the inferior Court, the Court of Sessions, has been all along actuated; to the principle by which all the encroachments on the spiritual province have been dictated. It sanctions the principle of the subjection of the Church to the Civil Courts in things spiritual,—it sanctions that principle; and if once that principle be sanctioned and admitted by the Courts of law, it is impossible to deny that all the proceedings of the Court of Sessions,—the interdicts, the actions for damages, the fines, all flow fairly out of this principle. Before the recent Auchterarder decision there was only one judgment of the supreme Civil Court against the Church; and its finding was, that it did not recognise what the Church had done in rejecting an unacceptable presentee as a lawful act. To a certain extent the Church acknowledged the competency of such a finding; in the sense that it did not allow the decision of the Church to be followed by civil consequences; or in other words, that it would not give the fruits of the benefice to the man whom the Church might set over that parish. But the recent decision, in the judgment of the brethren, goes much farther, and makes out that the rejection of a presentee, in respect of the dissent of the people, is not only an act which the Civil Courts will refuse to give effect to, but that it is a civil wrong,—an offence which they will visit with the powers and penalties of the Courts of Law. Or to state this otherwise. While all along we were ready,—however we might protest against patronage,—to yield obedience to the law of patronage as long as it remained the law, on the understanding that we were bound to receive and admit a presentee, solely on the ground of a moral and religious obligation, to be enforced in the ordinary way by civil pains and penalties. Yet this is the precise principle which has been brought out by the recent decision,—the principle that the Civil Courts may compel the Church by pains and penalties to act contrary to her own conscience, and to her sense of duty founded on the Word of God,—the principle that the Civil Courts are entitled to interfere with the proceedings of Church Courts,—not merely to determine whether they shall give civil effect to what the Church does or no, but to exercise a direct control over the Church Courts in the exercise of her spiritual functions. It necessarily followed from this view being taken by the brethren of the bearing of the recent decision, and of the position in which it places the Church,—it necessarily followed, that they should direct their attention to the single point of the jurisdiction of the Church, and the freedom which the Church ought to have in the exercise of her spiritual functions from all civil and secular control, beyond that control which the state properly exercises over the temporalities of the Establishment. In this view, the question which the Convocation had to take up was the best kind of remedy which they thought would meet the grievance. I believe that the great majority thought the best remedy was the abolition of patronage. But that was not the point. The precise point was to bring out the kind of remedy by which the State would secure the Church from the interference of the civil courts in the exercise of those spiritual functions for which she was responsible to her Great Head, and to Him alone. This brought out clearly the testimony of the Church in the great and glorious truth of the Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ,—of his Mediatorial Crown as King over His own house,—as the Redeemer of his people,—as the Supreme

* John 21. 21-23. † Oxford Tracts, No. 74. ‡ See especially Oxford Tracts No. 33. § Oxford Tracts, No. 74. ¶ Oxford Tracts No. 7. † Oxford Tracts, No. 23. ‡ Oxford Tracts, No. 1. § Oxford Tracts, No. 1. ¶ John 1. 23. † Oxford Tracts, Nos. 30 and 31. ‡ Wesley's Works, vol. 2nd, p. 288.