

the same strength of evidence to challenge contradiction:—"Moses was a murderer by killing the Egyptian; But no man is subject to capital punishment for the commission of one crime." "Mary Magdalene was a harlot." And that "Temperance Societies are founded on Mahomet as their original." And, treating in his preaching of the general domination of Satan in this world, he asserted that "it is by the instigation of this evil spirit that the Bulls are in the habit of covering their mates on the Lord's day." But enough of this disagreeable stuff. Mere delicacy of feelings, regarding both myself and others, should make me entirely waive this last quotation, but for my sincere zeal that the Lord would please in his sovereign mercy, to open the minds of any of my auditors, to consider the awful depth of shameless idiotism, at which some of our clergy are arrived; and in the fellowship of which all of them are involved. It is by no means in order to excite lightness, or laughter, that I expose the folly of our Ministers. For, if I were sure that men would freely discharge me on this ground, I would still tremble to fall under the charge of heaven: "to speak evil of no man;" &c. Tit. iii. 2.

*Angus.*—I think any man can hardly transgress that scripture more than yourself; who can never cease from meddling and finding fault with others.

*Bruce.*—I hope you can distinguish between speaking evil of men and speaking necessarily of their evil.

*Angus.*—I suppose their evil, or erroneous, doctrine cannot kill you. Why are you so uneasy about Ministers, when your head is in no danger from them.

*Bruce.*—I should thank Providence on that ground; for I have by me some sound evidence, that one of your Clergymen said in a late conversation among some of his associates, "Were it not from fear of the civil law, I would break the skull of neighbour Bruce." But I have no pleasure in being so personal and particular; I would, therefore, rather waive just now this branch of the subject, and enter upon some other points far more general and open to the view of the world.

*Angus.*—What do you think then of the present state of the Church of Scotland, as to her religious life and reform?

*Bruce.*—I rather beg to recoil the question, and first to enquire of yourself how far do you rest satisfied as to the general account given of her flourishing state by her own admirers and supporters, and particularly through her chief organ in this country, "The Guardian!"

*Angus.*—I cannot for a moment hesitate to believe that the gross and scope of the statements, from time to time, given in that very medium or religious information, which you have just mentioned, must be well founded.

*Bruce.*—If your belief is not then ill grounded, your query is solved to purpose; for the Church of Scotland, according to the testimony of the modest Guardian, is not far now from the centre of a millennial state, in spiritual life and growth.

*Angus.*—But you slyly evade my first interrogatory—you have not disclosed your own judgment on the subject.