

the rescuing of immortal beings from everlasting burnings—from the floods of eternal wrath! It has already saved millions from that fearful doom. Ah, reader! it is the only enterprise that *will pay*, both in this world and that which is to come. "I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

## THE CARDROSS CASE.

"There is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ." "The Lord Jesus, as king and head of the church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate. To these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed." Such is the expression given in our Confession of Faith to the great Scripture doctrine of the spiritual independence of the Church, and its subjection to Christ alone. He is the only Head and Governor of the Church purchased by his own precious blood, and his servants—the officers of the Church—are responsible to Him for the manner in which they employ the authority with which He has invested them. It is theirs, and theirs alone, by censures and absolution, to shut or open "*the Kingdom of heaven*"—to expel from communion or to admit into holy fellowship. Christ gave them this power; and no earthly authority can divest them of it.

The Scottish Reformers, from John Knox down to Thomas Chalmers, were clear on this point. They could never bear to see a King or Queen or Court of Session, or any other authority, usurp the place due to Christ alone. King JAMES was informed by the sturdy Churchman that there were two kings in Scotland—that King Jesus was there as well as King James and His authority was paramount and exclusive in matters ecclesiastical. It was for this doctrine of the independence of the Church that the Scottish people endured the extremity of persecution—died on the gallows and the block, were shot down like wild-fowl on mountain and moor—were mured in dungeons—were expatriated—were subjected to every species of oppression and cruelty which ingenuity could invent or malice could apply. Our fathers endured, struggled, conquered: but the foe still lives and the battle has had to be renewed. Once and again and yet again the old enemy has come in like a flood, threatening to sweep away the very foundations of the "beautiful house" which our fathers reared in the name of the Lord and consecrated with their blood. Even at this moment the conflict is sounding in our fatherland. Scotland is once again the arena of a struggle which attracts the eyes of Christendom. The issues are grand and simple: a child may understand them. The result of the contest is in the hand of God, but we cannot doubt for a moment what it will be. He will vindicate his own cause and cover the enemies of His own Church with everlasting confusion. The victory may not come in the manner or at the time we would expect: but that it shall come—that it shall rest gloriously on the BANNER OF THE COVENANT—is as certain as that the gates of hell shall never prevail against the Church.

We have said that the issues between the contending parties in the Cardross Case are simple. The Church claims her right to expel from her communion a minister who disgraced himself by drunkenness and improper conduct towards a woman, and who when suspended and deposed by the Church applied to the civil courts to be reinstated in the sacred office. The Church says that Mr. McMillan is no longer fit to be an office-bearer in Christ's house, and accordingly she deposes him. Mr. McMillan goes to the Court of Session to have the Church's sentence of deposition "reduced, retreated, rescinded, cased, annulled, decerned and declared by decree of our said Lords to have been from the beginning, to be now, and in all time coming, null and void, and of no avail, force, strength, or effect in judgment or outwith the same in time coming, and the pursuer restored or reponed there-against *in integrum*."