

what shred of spiritual independence is left in the courts of the Established Church of Scotland. And I must own, that the cause which leads to this extraordinary measure, giving all the weight which is due to the decisions of this court and the House of Lords, does not at all affect my opinion of the illegality and total incompetency of the course which it is now proposed that this court should adopt.—According to any knowledge which I possess, either of ecclesiastical or of civil law, it appears to me to be impossible that any lawful ordination to the office of the ministry can be thus obtained.

(Signed) "J. W. MONCREIFF."

This was all in vain. A tide had set in which was not to be restrained by the barriers which former occupants of the Judicial Bench had respected. By a majority of eight to five Judges, this civil court pretended to grant the spiritual authority that was applied for: and, in doing so, assumed a supremacy in causes ecclesiastical which, according to the statute quoted in an early part of this Article, the Sovereign herself does not possess in Scotland. But the Free Church, against which as at that time the Established Church of Scotland these assaults were directed, would not allow the ignominious fetters to be fastened upon her. She left the Court of Session to find their compliant tools where they might; and, renouncing temporalities which were now to be enjoyed only on the condition of servitude, her ministers were willing a second time to become "outed ministers", that they might be free to obey Christ. The Establishment that now is thinks it better to comply with "*the courses of the times.*"

POSTSCRIPT.

It is high time now to deal with Mr. Trotter about his gross misrepresentations of the conduct of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, in reference to the Confession of Faith. He says, "The clerical members of the Westminster Assembly were generally speaking men of the highest character and attainments, and admirably qualified for the work entrusted to them, *had they been left entirely to their own judgments.* But they derived their authority from and were under the controul of the Long Parliament"—This remark is made in order to prepare the way for the exposition of a theory of his, to the effect that the Assembly was controlled by a prevailing influence of

Erastianism, and that, however well qualified the generality of the clerical members were for the work entrusted to them, we have not, in the Confession, the expression of their own free judgment; and particularly that the Articles of the Confession on the extent of the magistrate's power in reference to ecclesiastical affairs, was all that could be got through, not all that was wanted. Mr. Trotter tells us, "In a constitutional monarchy like that of Britain, the king is a fiction, and acts only through and by his constitutional agents. Though the government is administered in his name, it is by his Executive Council. The country is defended in his name by his fleets and armies, and were he to appear in person on a field of battle, he could not lawfully or constitutionally interfere with the arrangements of the General. Justice is administered in his name by his civil courts, and the Church is governed in his name by his spiritual representatives. This was the theory of the Long Parliament, and what is meant in Confession of Faith chap. xxiii. 3. is that the magistrate shall exercise the power assigned to him, by and through the agency of Synods assembled by his authority, and acting in his name." That is, the Assembly of Divines, who were summoned (but not as an ecclesiastical court) by the English Parliament to give their advice in circumstances of great difficulty—the Assembly who were commissioned in the ordinance calling them together, "to confer and treat among themselves of such matters and things touching and concerning the Liturgy, discipline, and government of the Church of England, or the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the same from all false aspersions and misconstructions, as shall be proposed to them by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament, and no other, and to deliver their *opinions and advices* of or touching the matters aforesaid, as shall be most agreeable to the Word of God,"—that Assembly, every member of which, on taking his seat, came under a solemn vow "not to maintain any thing but what he believes to be truth in sincerity, when discovered to him."—that Assembly who left not an inch of ground for Erastianism to stand upon, when they proclaimed, in the thirtieth chapter of the Confession, "The Lord Jesus, as king and head of his church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of church-officers, distinct from the civil magistrate;" such an Assembly as that