

If these charges were proved, there would be no longer any hesitation in deciding whether or not the Church of Scotland was an Erastian Church. And then for the proof.

What was ordination? Was it any thing other than a spiritual matter, whereby, through a visible sign, a person was set apart and dedicated to the Ministry, and to become an office-bearer in the service of his Great Master? What was Deposition, but the power of the Keys, which the great Head of the Church had vested in those who were called to hold office under him? What were Church Courts, but assemblages of such office-bearers, so set apart and ordained, administering the laws laid down for their guidance by the Head of the Church. If these powers and their exercise had been interfered with by the Civil Courts, and such interference submitted to and sanctioned by the Church of Scotland, would anything more be required to prove that that Church had lapsed into Erastian heresy, by giving up and abandoning a power which Christ had committed to the Church alone, to another and conflicting body?

First, then, as to the settlement of Ministers. In the case of the Parish of Marnoch, the Civil Courts issued an injunction to the Presbytery of Strathbogie to proceed with the settlement of a presentee who was obnoxious to the great body of the people of that parish; and in the Auchterarder case, the Civil Court held the majority of the Presbytery liable in an action for damages as for a civil wrong, in refusing to proceed with the settlement of a Minister whom the people had rejected. Were these not interferences of the civil courts in things purely spiritual? In the case of the Presbytery of Strathbogie a part of that body had first been suspended and then deposed for conduct inconsistent with the principles and fealty of the Church; but the civil law immediately interfered in their behalf, and, in spite of the Church, and its office-bearers, decided that they were entitled to hold their places, and set the Church and its powers at defiance. Was that not interfering in ecclesiastical matters?—was that not wresting the Keys from the hands of our Saviour, and transferring them to a civil magistrate?—

The Chairman here intimated that the Reverend Speaker had exceeded his allotted period for addressing the meeting; but being in the midst of his argument, on receiving the assent of Dr. Liddell, he continued his address.—

I regret (said Mr Bayne) having occupied your time more fully than your regulations permitted; but the importance and complication of the subject, from its extensive ramifications, have compelled me to be more diffuse than I intended. However, what I