

Establishment followed upon the enactment of what had been called the Veto Law by the governing body of that church ; and those who were desirous of making it be believed that the Free Church party were in the wrong, were eager in making and repeating the assertion, that it was the Veto Act itself which was the cause of all the disunion and strife ; that it was illegal, and did not meet the evil it proposed to correct ; and therefore, that the disruption was uncalled for, because of the illegality of the source out of which it had arisen. But he begged once for all to say that this was a delusion,—a crafty and cunning misleading of the judgment ; for the Veto Act had nothing whatever to do with the question. In what way could it be assumed that the passing of an Act of the supreme ecclesiastical court of the Kirk of Scotland before the disruption, could in any way answer the accusation that that church had become Erastian, and denied the Headship of the Redeemer ? The two things had no sort of connexion or reference. Suppose that two parties differed on the doctrine of free grace, and that the minority separated from the majority, alleging that such majority had adopted Arminian doctrines, would it be thought any answer to such an accusation that an advocate should say that the other party were Antinomians ? If such charges were proved, the course for an upright man would be, to leave both parties, and hold fast by the truth ; but the sin of the one formed no justification for the other. When the Kirk was charged with having lapsed into Erastianism, and proof was ready to make good the position, what answer was it to say, that the party making such accusation had passed the Veto Act ? The thing was so manifest an evasion,—so palpably a shift, a device, a quibble, to divert attention from the real matter in discussion, that it never would have been adopted by any but those who were the advocates or defenders of an unrighteous cause, and felt themselves driven into a dilemma out of which they could not be rescued, except by throwing dust in the eyes, and diverting the attention, of those who were anxiously enquiring for the truth. Besides, it was a notorious fact to those who studied the history of this disruption, that it did not take place on the Veto Act at all, but on much higher grounds, namely, the Spiritual Independence of the Church, and the sole right of the Redeemer to reign over his own house ; and under the circumstances, it must have taken place even if the Veto Act had never been passed, and patronage itself had been abolished ; for even then, those who had now gone forth from her would have felt it their duty to abandon a Church which submitted to an interference from the State, incompatible with the great truths of the Gospel and her own constitution. These positions might be clearly proved in a variety of ways,