

all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting whereof, he hath power to call synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God."—(Conf. chap. 23, sec. 3.) This article, in the most explicit terms, teaches the headship of the civil magistrate in and over the church. If the magistrate is to "provide that whatsoever is transacted in *synods and assemblies*, be according to the mind of God," he must be, in himself, the highest appeal-court of the Kirk. The scripture evidence adduced in support of the divine right of the civil magistrate to this headship over the church, is, with the exception of one passage, all from the Old Testament; but the one passage from the New Testament, is the most extraordinary evidence that could have been adduced. It is Matt. ch. 2: 4, 5—"and when he (Herod) had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet." It was the dread of a rival which prompted Herod to make this enquiry about the place of Christ's birth, and doubtless he intended to put him to death before it was generally known that he was born. It is therefore worse than trifling with scripture—it is obviously a wresting of scripture, even to attempt making such a passage teach the doctrine, that the civil magistrate is, in any sense, the head of the church. The Kirk of Scotland may complain of the civil magistrate interfering with her spiritual independence; but so long as she retains such an acknowledgment in her creed, of the civil magistrate's authority and power over her; she has certainly no right whatever to complain. This ratified acknowledgment of her subordination to the civil power, is the real cause of her present deep distress, and of the utter weakness of her arguments, in defence of her spiritual independence, before the courts of law, and until she abandon the doctrine of human headship over her, she is *constitutionally* antichristian.

Kirkmen, Cameronians, and Old light Seceders, have labored hard and written much, in defence of this their chief characteristic *dogma*, and have often denounced those, who contended for the supreme and exclusive headship of Christ over his Church, as the opposers of the true religion, and the defenders of national infidelity. They must, however, admit, that the history of the practical working of the principle, clearly evinces, that the Church has suffered infinitely more loss than she has gained, by the human supremacy over her, which is directly acknowledged by herself in her own confession of faith. The carrying out of the principle puts it within the power of the civil magistrate to make the Church subserve his own personal aggrandizement and his views of civil policy; and it is obvious from the history of State Churches, that this has hitherto been the great object of the civil magistrate in exercising authority in and over the Church. The nature and tendency of the principle is therefore decidedly antichristian; and consequently, those who contend for it, are the abettors of antichrist; and