

and whether, on the ground of that enactment, the door has not been opened for our return to the Establishment.

In answer to this inquiry, we think it scarcely necessary to do more than quote a description which one of our number has given of the enactment referred to:—"It gives," said our reverend brother, "as much power to the people as the Presbytery chooses to grant, and as much power to the Presbytery as the Court of Session will allow." The Act of Lord Aberdeen has sealed the fate of the Established Church—it has extinguished at once the Non-intrusion principle, and the doctrine of the Supremacy of Christ. Far from remedying the mischief occasioned by the illegal judgments of the Civil Courts, it has confirmed them by the greater power of an Act of the Legislature. It mocks the people by professing to give them a right of objecting for reasons assigned; whilst it renders the possession of that right altogether nugatory by the nature of the evidence required in proof of the objections. It gives them nothing—it has taken everything away.

We wish it to be particularly observed, that in bringing forward the Bill, it was not professed by Lord Aberdeen, or any of his coadjutors in Parliament, that it was their intention to restore the spiritual jurisdiction of which the judgments in the Auchterarder Case had deprived us. On the contrary, every one of them repudiated in the strongest language that great and essential principle, and our determined adherence to it has been the cause of the dissolving of our connexion with the Established Church; and Sir Robert Peel, referring to this subject in his speech on the Irish question, has expressed himself in language so strong as to leave not the shadow of a doubt respecting the meaning and intention of the Act. The Civil Courts have, under form of law, done that in our day which the Sovereign did, in a more arbitrary manner, in the 16th and 17th centuries. The liberties, in defence of which our forefathers shed their blood are no more—at least they no longer exist in the Established Church. Bereft of the freedom which was its chief glory—despised and deserted by the people, it stands forth the miserable fragment of a once noble edifice, about to be razed to its foundations by the first popular commotion, or by the powerful hand of a strong hostile Administration.

All our Missionaries, and almost all the Protestant Churches, in our own and foreign countries, have declared in the warmest manner their approval of our principles, and of the course which we have pursued. We earnestly invite you seriously and prayerfully to consider the Statement which we have considered it our duty to lay before you, and to avow your adherence to those sacred principles for which we, after the example of our forefathers, have been required to contend and suffer. We need hardly say that we address this invitation to you, from no hope or desire of receiving any temporal advantage from your compliance with our request. It is not union, (that is, incorporation with you), that we desire; we wish to see you, as free and independent of us, and of every other Church