

of what has been done by these courts, (though it would be no answer to a charge of Erastianism against these courts or against the Church), to prove, if that could be done, that the Church had been deprived of these rights by the act imposing Patronage, or by some other statute, and had, therefore, acted against the law in passing the Veto Act; but that charge is but a trifling fraction, so to speak, of the whole charge which is made against these courts, and sinks into comparative insignificance when the whole is brought forward. The whole charge is, that the civil courts have both in opposing the Veto Law, and in a great many other cases, with some of which the Veto Law had nothing to do, advanced claims to Erastian supremacy, and enforced Erastian principles; and that the melancholy result is, that they have now thoroughly enslaved the Church,—that they have stretched their hand over the whole ecclesiastical province,—and that the Church, once free with the liberty conferred upon her by Christ, exists now as the mere creature of the State, and has only so much power, and so much freedom of action as the State is pleased to allow. How preposterous, as an answer to this charge, to tell us that the Veto Law was illegal! Suppose that a dispute arose between two sovereigns respecting the boundary line between contiguous provinces of their dominions—and suppose the dispute ended in the stronger of the two taking the settlement of the question into his own hands, and not only running the boundary line in his own favour, but occupying, as his own, the whole province hitherto possessed by his neighbour,—or, it may be subduing and enslaving his whole kingdom,—in what state, we ask, would the wits of the man be considered, who should attempt to disprove the statement that the province in question had been occupied, or the kingdom enslaved, not by referring to the evidence on which the statement rested, but by discussing the question of the boundary line, and proving, that he whose province or whose kingdom was alleged to have been wrested from him, had been in the wrong regarding it. One can scarcely realize conduct so absurd; yet, if you think of it, just as absurd and ludicrous an evasion of the real question is it, to meet the assertion that the civil courts in Scotland have enslaved the Church, by attempting to prove that the Veto Law was illegal, that those who brought it forward were in favour of Patronage, or that it was condemned by Dr. McCrie. It is, indeed, lamentable to think of the tortuous aberrations from common sense, not to speak of logic, of which sane men sometimes become capable in defending a bad cause, and of the gravity with which those who wish to be convinced by them, will sometimes listen, to what they would